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**UMARIAN KARTA (MALI, WEST AFRICA)  
DURING THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY:  
DISSENT AND REVOLT AMONG THE FUTANKE  
AFTER UMAR TAL'S HOLY WAR**

**By**

**John Henry Hanson**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **UMARIAN KARTA (MALI, WEST AFRICA) DURING THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY: DISSENT AND REVOLT AMONG THE FUTANKE AFTER UMAR TAL'S HOLY WAR**

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This dissertation examines the aftermath of Umar Tal's holy war in Karta. Umar's armies conquered Karta in 1855 during the course of the more extensive Umarian conquests in the Western Sudan (1852-64). Most of Umar's followers were Futanke, residents of Futa Toro, the Fulbe state in the middle Senegal valley. As the main Umarian army marched to Segou in 1859, several thousand Futanke soldiers remained behind in Karta. In the years following the Umarian conquests, many Futanke men and women left the Senegal valley to reside in the Western Sudan. Most migrants settled in Karta, the Umarian territory closest to the Senegal valley. The process of Futanke colonization altered the terms of Umarian domination in Karta, creating a powerful immigrant community with diverse interests in the region. Until the French conquest of Karta in 1891, this state was the most viable Umarian successor state in the Western Sudan. Drawing on Arabic documents produced by the Umarian elite, oral accounts transmitted in western Mali and French materials produced by travellers and officials stationed in French posts in the Senegal valley and Western Sudan, this dissertation reconstructs the Futanke migration to Karta and the social and political history of Umarian Karta during the late nineteenth century.

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## INTRODUCTION

Shaykh Umar Tal declared a holy war against the non-Muslim regimes of the Western Sudan in 1852. Until his death in 1864, Umar led his followers in a conquest of the upper Senegal valley, the Bambara states of Karta and Segu, and the Fulbe regime in Masina, which he felt had betrayed the vision of its Muslim founders. Most of his followers were Futanke, residents of Futa Toro, the Fulbe state in the middle Senegal valley. As the main Umarian army marched to Segu in 1859, many soldiers remained behind in garrisons which they had established in Karta and in the upper Senegal valley region of Tamba. Shaykh Umar spent the remaining years of his life on the march in the east, and never devoted much attention to creating an imperial Umarian state in the conquered territories. After his death, the Futanke found themselves scattered throughout the Western Sudan without a state structure nor even a common agenda for the process of consolidation.

During the late nineteenth century, many Futanke men and women continued to migrate to the Western Sudan. Most of the ferganke (migrants in Pulaar) settled in Karta, the conquered territory closest to the Senegal valley.



The process of Futanke colonization altered the terms of Umanian domination in Karta, creating a powerful immigrant community with diverse interests in the region. Karta straddled trade-routes connecting the Saharan desert-side to the markets of the upper Senegal valley and Western Sudan. After the Umanian conquest, some Futanke invested in economic activities associated with Karta's status as a commercial crossroads. As they withdrew from the military to manage their economic affairs, subsequent ferganke assumed their positions in the army in hopes of gaining wealth through wars and raids in the name of Islam. Tensions mounted among the Futanke and political groupings eventually emerged which were defined internally as "war" and "peace" factions.<sup>1</sup> Futanke factionalism greatly influenced the history of the Umanian era in Karta.

Previous historians have not perceived the emergence of factions among the Umanian Futanke and argue that they formed a monolithic "warrior elite".<sup>2</sup> The inability to discern these political cleavages distorts historical analyses of the revolts which twice divided the Umanian community in the late nineteenth century. Both revolts occurred in Karta and involved the sons of Umar Tal. Amadu Sheku, Umar's oldest son and successor as the Umanian Commander of the Faithful, felt that his title gave him claims to rule the entire Western Sudan. During the late 1860s, Amadu's half-brothers Habib and Moktar rallied communities of Futanke in Karta to join their challenge to Amadu's authority. In 1869, Amadu Sheku marched to Karta from his base in Segou, captured Habib and Moktar, and imprisoned them in Segou upon his return in 1874. Although Amadu Sheku tried to consolidate an imperial Umanian state from his Segovian base, his hopes were dashed by Muntaga, another half-brother who organized a second revolt in Karta in the mid-1880s. Amadu Sheku marched to Karta in

1884 to defeat the challenge, but never was able to unite the Futanke in the Western Sudan under his leadership.

In the standard analyses of the revolts, historians emphasize the succession dispute and focus merely on the actions and motives of the Tal brothers. No one has examined the reasons why the revolts occurred in Karta nor discussed the roles which the Futanke from Karta played in events. This dissertation breaks from previous works and emphasizes the interests and actions of the Futanke community in Karta. This focus reveals the broader political dimensions of the revolts and shows how local Futanke influenced the decisions of the main protagonists. Amadu Sheku's brothers mounted their succession challenges in Karta because the continuing influx of ferganke allowed them to recruit soldiers for their armies. Amadu responded to the challenges in large part because he wanted to dislodge the Futanke settlers from Karta and move them to Segu where he could exercise greater control over their actions. The revolts themselves made the Futanke settlers choose between loyalty to Amadu Sheku, Umar's successor, and their interest in an autonomous state which they had helped to establish. The revolts also forced the Futanke to reassess their commitment to the ideals of Shaykh Umar's holy war and the mission which had brought them into the Western Sudan.

This dissertation also challenges the previous assumption that Shaykh Umar created an imperial Umarian state or "Tukulor Empire" which declined after the death of its founder.<sup>3</sup> In the first chapter, I examine the historiography of the rise and decline of the "Tukulor Empire" and show how this thesis reflects the convergence of Amadu Sheku's aspirations and French imperial interests in the late nineteenth century Western Sudan. I also discuss the data in written and oral sources which allows me to break from the

standard literature. In the second chapter, I examine the Massassi Bambara regime in Karta and assess the political changes which occurred in the years immediately following Umar's conquest. I argue that the initial Futanke settlers and Umar's appointed leaders successfully established an Umarian successor to the Massassi state in Karta. By the late 1860s, Umarian Karta's emergence as a strong and autonomous state made it the locus of political competition among the Tal brothers. Rather than evidence of imperial "decline", the revolts reveal the political vitality of the post-conquest era.

Chapters Three through Five provide additional perspectives on the vitality of the Umarian state in Karta. Chapter Three examines the Futanke migration to Karta after the Umarian conquest and analyzes its impact on the forms of Futanke domination in Karta. I show how Senegal valley migrants responded to both "push" and "pull" forces during the late nineteenth century. Chapter Four discusses regional trade in Umarian Karta, and describes Karta's links to the Saharan desert-side and the upper Senegal valley. Chapter Five focuses on Futanke involvement in the Kartan economy, drawing on economic data from the grain trade at the upper Senegal valley market of Medine to reconstruct the consolidation of a slave-owning class in the province of Jomboxo.

The remaining chapters turn to a description and analysis of political dissent and revolt in Umarian Karta. Chapter Six examines previous historical reconstructions of the first revolt and exposes the politics associated with the transmission of the extant oral traditions. Futanke political activity in Karta and the narrative of the first revolt follows in Chapter Seven. In Chapter Eight, the focus is Kartan political history of the late 1870s and early 1880s, an era when divisions within the Futanke community in Karta deepened. I also show how French moves into the Western Sudan influenced events in Karta.

Chapter Nine offers an analysis of the extant historical data for the second revolt before moving to a narrative of the political drama. The Tenth chapter describes the final years of Umarian rule in Karta and closes with a discussion of the French conquest and the return of thousands of Futanke to the Senegal valley. The conclusion reflects on the emergence of dissent and revolt among the Futanke in Umarian Karta.

### Notes

1. "War" and "peace" parties emerged elsewhere in pre-colonial West Africa. See, for an analysis of political factions at the Asante court in nineteenth century Kumase, I. Wilks, Political Bi-polarity in Nineteenth Century Asante (Edinburgh, 1970).
2. See, for example, Jacques Mériaud, Les Pionniers du Soudan, avant, avec et après Archinard, 1879-1894, 2 volumes (Paris, 1931); A.S. Kanya-Forstner, The Conquest of the Western Sudan (Cambridge, 1969); Yves Saint-Martin, L'Empire toucouleur (Paris, 1970); B.O. Oloruntimehin, The Segu Tukolor Empire (London, 1972); R. Roberts, Warriors, Merchants and Slaves: the State and the Economy in the Middle Niger Valley, 1700-1914 (Stanford, 1987).
3. "Tukolor" is a colloquial term for Futanke.

## CHAPTER ONE

### The "Tukulor Empire" and the Late Nineteenth Century Western Sudan

The rise and fall of the "Tukulor Empire" is an important thesis in the West African historical literature.<sup>1</sup> References to an imperial Umarian state or "Tukulor Empire" first appeared in the official correspondence from the late nineteenth century Senegal valley, where the French had established a foothold in West Africa. French officials argued that Shaykh Umar Tal created a vast empire in the Western Sudan which he bequeathed to Amadu Sheku, his son and successor as the Umarian Commander of the Faithful. They added that Amadu's empire was in decline and could not stop the French advance into the interior.<sup>2</sup> Historians in recent decades have found the French usage convenient. Narrating the rise and fall of the "Tukulor Empire" simplified the task of summarizing the history of the Western Sudan. Researchers also were able to focus on French-mediated materials at Paris and Dakar, and leave aside Arabic documents and oral accounts produced by the Umanians. These sources provide data and perspectives on the Umarian past which do not appear in the French-mediated materials. Analysis of all the extant historical sources leads to a revised understanding of the Umarian era in the Western Sudan.

References to the "Tukulor Empire" do not appear in the initial French descriptions of the mid-nineteenth century Western Sudan. During the lifetime of Umar Tal, the conquered territories were recognized as such: a vast region which Umar had not organized into an imperial state. The initial agreement negotiated between the French and the Futanke in Karta illustrates the mutual recognition that the Western Sudan was a constellation of independent states: the treaty marked the boundary between "the states of al-Hajj Umar" and the "countries under French protection".<sup>3</sup> Both the French and Futanke recognized Umar's authority over his "lieutenants" in Karta, but neither party stated that it was an imperial relationship. Indeed, Umar probably did not direct the Futanke of Karta to negotiate with the French, and the agreement was never ratified.

The first French references to a "Tukulor Empire" appear after the death of Umar Tal and during the period of direct contact with Amadu Sheku at Segu. Amadu's assertion that he was Umar's successor as Commander of the Faithful clearly influenced French perceptions. Equally as important, Amadu's title served French interests, since they could sign a treaty with the Umarian Commander of the Faithful and claim the entire Western Sudan as their commercial sphere without having to negotiate with several Umarian political leaders. In 1866, for example, Eugène Mage negotiated a treaty between the French Governor of Senegal and Amadu Sheku which, without specific reference to a "Tukulor Empire", implied that Amadu claimed to rule over the entire Western Sudan.<sup>4</sup> Thereafter, the French referred to the constellation of Umarian states in the interior as a "Tukulor Empire" over which "Sultan Amadu" ruled as "Commander of the Faithful".

During the late 1870s and throughout the 1880s, the French advance into the Western Sudan altered their perceptions of the Umarian territories. As the French military established permanent posts along a line from the upper Senegal to the middle Niger valley, they looked for potential weaknesses in the "Tukulor Empire". Amadu Sheku's inability to exercise control over Karta and Beledugu, a region located between Karta and Segu, became salient facts. The French did not abandon their references to the "Tukulor Empire", but spoke instead of its "decline". They clung to the imperial idiom because international competition for territories in Africa meant that French treaties with "Sultan Amadu" could be used to bolster their claims to the Western Sudan as a French "sphere of influence".<sup>5</sup> French references to the "decline" in the "Tukulor Empire" reflected an awareness of internal political developments which had escaped their attention during the initial years of Franco-Umarian interaction.

The autonomy of Karta from Amadu Sheku's control impressed almost every French military official who visited the Western Sudan during the 1880s. Given the change in their interests *vis-à-vis* Segu, they spoke of dismembering the "Tukulor Empire" by luring the Futanke of Karta into an alliance. The first attempt to bring Karta into the French camp occurred in 1882 when the leader of the advance into the interior, Commandant Supérieur Borgnis-Desbordes, tried to send an envoy to meet secretly with Muntaga, the Futanke leader at Nioro. Desbordes hoped that Muntaga would accept French recognition of his autonomy from Segu in exchange for a commitment to trade with the French as they moved against Amadu at Segu.<sup>6</sup> This mission never made contact with Muntaga, but Desbordes' immediate successors never abandoned their hope that Karta could be separated from Segu and drawn into the French camp.<sup>7</sup>



The French also tried to recruit the non-Futanke populations of the Western Sudan into an anti-Umarian coalition. French military officials actively pursued the Bambara of Beledugu, who resisted incorporation into Amadu Sheku's state, as well as Soninke, Malinke and other Bambara leaders in the Western Sudan. The targeting of non-Futanke groups reinforced the French tendency to speak of the "decadence" of Umarian rule. French officials represented their actions as "liberating" the "oppressed" populations of region from the yoke of Amadu Sheku. During the conquest of the Western Sudan, they followed a policy designed to dismantle the "Tukulor Empire" by sending twenty thousand Futanke settlers back to the Senegal valley and recognizing non-Futanke elites as intermediaries in the new administration. They distrusted the Futanke because they were "fanatic" Muslims who could not be trusted to accept French rule. Additionally, Amadu Sheku fled from Karta and eluded capture, causing some concern that the Futanke might revolt against the French. With the expulsion of the Futanke, the French and their allies assumed control over Karta.

After the French conquest, historians combined the image of Umar Tal's vast empire with subsequent judgments of the decadence of Amadu Sheku's rule into narrative accounts of the rise and fall of the "Tukulor Empire". French colonial historians chronicled the defeat of the Umarians in order to celebrate the French conquest, and accepted the late nineteenth statements regarding the "Tukulor Empire" uncritically.<sup>8</sup> A.S. Kanya-Forstner subsequently corrected many of the overstatements of the early colonial writers in his analysis of the French conquest, but he accepted the imperial thesis regarding the rise and decline of the "Tukulor Empire".<sup>9</sup> Similarly, the political histories of the Umarian era by B.O. Oloruntimehin and Yves Saint-Martin reify the "Tukulor

Empire" as a political entity. These works primarily are based on French-mediated materials and fail to tap the perspectives in the oral data and Arabic materials generated by the Umarians. As a result, they merely echo the initial French statements regarding the "Tukulor Empire".

The imperial thesis also is embraced by many Malian historians, who argue that the Umarian era brought about thirty years of raiding and exploitation by an immigrant ruling elite.<sup>10</sup> The Malian version of the imperial thesis accepts French assessments of the oppression of Futanke rule but balks at representing the colonial conquest as "liberation". They prefer to see the Umarian era as a time of foreign occupation which weakened the military power of the indigenous inhabitants and prepared the way for the French conquest.<sup>11</sup> Consequently, they embrace the "Tukulor Empire", fill out its history and accept the imperial thesis created by the coincidence of Amadu's aspirations and French interests in the Western Sudan.

David Robinson's recent analysis of Umar's holy war challenges the conventional wisdom.<sup>12</sup> Robinson drew on Umarian Arabic documents and West African oral traditions as well as French-mediated materials to transcend the perspectives of both the Umarian and French elites. The resulting synthesis undermines several standard interpretations of the holy war. Robinson's analysis of Franco-Umarian relations in the late 1850s shows how the French forced Umar from the Senegal valley but allowed him to recruit soldiers to renew the conquests to the east. This suggests that the campaign against Segu marked a new departure and signalled the end of Umar's dream of establishing an imperial state in the upper Senegal valley. Robinson also argues that parallels drawn between the holy wars led by Uthman dan Fodio and Umar Tal are inappropriate because Uthman's movement was an internal revolution

whereas Umar's holy war was a conquest. References to the "Tukulor Empire" may equally reflect comparisons with the Sokoto Caliphate which obscure rather than illuminate the Umarian past.

Despite Robinson's work and its implications for the imperial thesis, the "Tukulor Empire" continues to influence historical perceptions of the Umarian era in the Western Sudan. Richard Roberts' recent examination of the political economy of the middle Niger valley is an extended thesis about the rise of the economy and its decline under Umarian rule: "my research on the Middle Niger valley had to confront the thirty-year period of economic decline that coincided with the Umarian conquest and subsequent rule".<sup>13</sup> Although Roberts does not refer to a "Tukulor Empire", his "Umarian State" includes the entire Western Sudan as its domain. His work focuses primarily on the historical experience of the Segu area, and he does not develop his ideas about the "Umarian State" at great length. Nevertheless, he speaks of one Umarian state which was created during Umar's life and then divided after his death into "three or four zones".<sup>14</sup> Roberts thereby perpetuates the historiographical conventions regarding the imperial Umarian state and its decline.

The present study breaks cleanly from these conventions and examines the Umarian period in the Western Sudan without the conceptual blinders which the imperial thesis imposes on research and historical reconstruction. In the following chapter, I argue that the Umarians who settled in Karta consolidated an autonomous state in the years immediately following Umar Tal's holy war. Before moving to an analysis of the Umarian consolidation of power in Karta, the last section of the present chapter surveys the nature and limits of the historical sources for the Umarian era in Karta.

### The source materials for late nineteenth century Karta

This reconstruction of Umarian Karta in the late nineteenth century draws on Arabic documents produced by the Umarian elite, oral traditions in Pulaar and other West African languages, and materials written by French travellers and officials who served in the Senegal valley and Western Sudan. These materials provide a variety of perspectives on the past, but each category of data presents the historian with specific challenges. Arabic documents, for example, often do not have a date or place of composition indicated in the text. Careful analysis of the text and its content is required before these sources can be used.<sup>15</sup> Chronicles and other literary materials also reflect the perspectives and interests of the author's patron or social group: they are not neutral statements about the past.<sup>16</sup> Finally, Arabic materials from the Umarian era do not provide sufficient documentation upon which to construct a complete chronology of the past.

Oral traditions and reminiscences are an important complement to the Arabic documents. While oral materials certainly are not first-hand accounts of historical events which are transmitted over time, they do represent coherent reconstructions of the past.<sup>17</sup> The process of oral transmission introduces changes in the content of the traditions, but the transformations occur in predictable ways: oral historians work within historiographical traditions which dictate much of the form of the oral account.<sup>18</sup> Admittedly, local political issues influence the presentation of historical information in oral societies, and expatriate historians alter the transmission of oral data by the questions they ask.<sup>19</sup> An appreciation of the context in which oral historians recount their traditions, however, provides clues to the introduction of bias or novelty in the oral data.<sup>20</sup> When the processes of oral transmission in western Mali are

understood, oral materials yield useful information and perspectives regarding the Umarian past.

Travellers accounts and the official French correspondence of the late nineteenth century also provide information about the Umarian era. These materials also were shaped by political interests, and conditioned by the way in which the information was collected and reported in the written form. The testimony of African informants passed along in the French materials requires careful examination to determine whether colonial officials transformed the information to conform to their expectations or political interests. Even when French officers passed along analyses based on personal observations, they interpreted events in terms of their own understanding of the Umarian situation. The reliability of individual officials varied according to personality and length of tenure in the Western Sudan; in most cases, however, the quality of data reflected changes in Franco-Umarian relations.<sup>21</sup> European materials offer the advantage of having been written contemporaneously with events, but clearly are not authoritative sources for the Umarian past. The aim of this section is to describe the categories of evidence and assess the processes through which the extant source materials were created.

### **Arabic materials**

Most of the Arabic materials concerning Umarian Karta come from the personal archives of Amadu Sheku. He kept administrative records, official and personal correspondence, and literary materials (chronicles and praise poetry) describing his reign. Amadu collected these materials at his main palace at Segu and at the palace at Nioro, where he resided at the time of the French

conquest. Commandant Supérieur Archinard, who directed the French conquest of the Western Sudan, seized the Arabic materials from Segou and sent them to Paris, where they can be found in the Bibliothèque Nationale (BN).<sup>22</sup> Archinard also emptied the palace at Nioro of its Arabic materials, now found in Dakar at the Archives Nationales du Sénégal (ANS).<sup>23</sup> Additional materials are available in private collections in the Western Sudan and the Institut Cheikh Anta Diop (formerly the Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire) in Dakar.

Few historians have worked extensively with these Arabic materials, and no one with an interest in Umarian Karta has examined this rich fund of source materials. As a result of this neglect, my research focused initially on surveying the collections and identifying relevant documents from the mass of Arabic materials. I have examined most of the relevant files of Arabic materials in the archives, and uncovered several runs of important historical documents in the BN and ANS dossiers.<sup>24</sup> The data that I have examined to date allows the present thesis to break from the themes and perspectives of the standard literature on the Umarian past and offer an alternate view of the aspirations and actions of the principal political actors.

Many Umarians in Karta possessed skills in Arabic, but to the best of our knowledge they produced few administrative records or other documentary materials during their rule. The small number of written records does not imply that the Umarians failed to establish a bureaucracy in Karta; tax collection and judicial activities merely occurred without being documented in written form.<sup>25</sup> Umarian court proceedings made reference to written laws, but the judgments were rendered orally. A few written tax records do exist, and date from Amadu Sheku's two residences in Karta, from 1870 to 1873, and from 1885 to 1891.<sup>26</sup> Amadu's initiative was not an attempt to reform the tax system per

se, but an assertion of imperial control over Karta. The records reflect the struggle for power in Karta as well as provide evidence of the amount of the taxes collected at the time.

Most of the Arabic historical materials for Umarian Karta consist of official correspondence and literary materials. Perhaps ironically, given the desire for autonomy from Segu expressed by many Umarians in Karta, the major work of historical writing produced in Karta was a chronicle of Amadu Sheku's reign.<sup>27</sup> Members of the Kaba Jakite family wrote a chronicle which located Amadu Sheku's reign within a long tradition of imperial control beginning with the Soninke state of Wagadu.<sup>28</sup> Several members of the Kaba Jakite family probably compiled the chronicle at various times over the course of the late nineteenth century.<sup>29</sup> The chronicle provides very little information about the consolidation of power in Umarian Karta, but it is valuable as a source because it presents a non-Futanke perspective on the Umarian era.

The only comparable document written from a Futanke perspective is an Arabic chronicle of the construction of the Umarian fort at Konyakary, written by Cerno Yahya Tal sometime in the 1970s.<sup>30</sup> Cerno Yahya primarily relied on the testimony of Demba Sadio Diallo, a local oral historian of the Xassonke and Umarian past.<sup>31</sup> The Umarians constructed the fort at the site of the old Xassonke capital in the late 1850s, and several Umarian leaders made it their base of power during the late nineteenth century. Cerno Yahya's chronicle, however, focuses only on the construction of the fort and the leadership of the initial Umarian leader, Cerno Jibi Ban. While this document provides important details about the period of conquest, it avoids reference to the conflicts of the subsequent era. Indeed, it reflects the current desire among Futanke in

western Mali to emphasize the conquest and forget the subsequent years of Umarian rule in the region.<sup>32</sup>

Amadu Sheku's court produced or received most of the Arabic literary materials and correspondence concerning Umarian Karta. As a result, I have yet to find many Arabic materials concerning Umarian Karta prior to Amadu's first residence in Nioro. Indeed, Amadu produced very little about his own reign in Segu in the early 1860s, as the focus of description and commentary within the Umarian community was directed toward Umar's conquest of Masina. Some documents concerning Umarian Karta in the 1860s survive, but none provide important information on the process of consolidation.<sup>33</sup> Oral traditions from the Nioro area indicate that Mustafa, Umar's appointee as the leader of Karta, received an Arabic letter from Umar which granted Muntaga significant autonomy in the conduct of his affairs, but I have not yet uncovered such a letter.<sup>34</sup> The longest run of correspondence from Karta concerns the negotiations conducted between the French and Cerno Musa, a Futanke leader from Konyakary.<sup>35</sup>

Amadu Sheku arrived at Nioro in 1870 in response to the revolt which his brothers Habib and Moktar had organized in Karta. While the volume of Arabic documentation increased during this period, Amadu's actions and opinions regarding the revolt are not specified in any written materials of the era.<sup>36</sup> Given local Futanke outrage over the capture and imprisonment of Habib and Moktar, Amadu probably forbade his court officials from writing about the revolt. This instance of official neglect illustrates one way in which the imperial court influenced the transmission of historical traditions during the late nineteenth century.



The court also tried to create an historical tradition focused on Amadu Sheku's military victories against the Bambara. Prior to Amadu's march to Nioro, his forces defeated the Bambara of the middle Niger valley at Kejje. While Amadu was in Karta, he led a military campaign against the Bambara of Gemukura, a Massassi stronghold in the southern marches of Karta. Uthman Kusa compiled a collection of materials concerning Amadu's victories at Kejje and Gemukura.<sup>37</sup> Uthman Kusa's collections celebrate Amadu's military actions in language which marks a return to the rhetoric of Shaykh Umar's holy war. Since Futanke at Segu and other locations were writing chronicles of the holy war at this time, Uthman Kusa seems to have responded to the initiative by linking Amadu's reign to the emerging historical tradition of the holy war.<sup>38</sup>

Amadu Sheku returned to Segu in 1874, but he maintained correspondence with Umarians in Karta during the 1870s and 1880s. The material includes correspondence with Muntaga, Amadu's half-brother, and the other political leaders whom he appointed to rule in Karta. The official correspondence is not very extensive, nor does it provide much information on the tensions between the brothers which surfaced during the 1880s. Much more revealing of these tensions is Amadu's correspondence with Futanke notables from Nioro. This material includes correspondence with Cerno Mamadu Khayar, a religious leader who challenged the policies of both Amadu and Muntaga.<sup>39</sup> Other notables wrote Segu to keep Amadu abreast of the activities of Muntaga and Cerno Mamadu.<sup>40</sup> These materials are perhaps the most important documents in the archive, since they provide unedited insights into Amadu's deteriorating relationship with the Umarian community in Nioro.

In 1884, Amadu Sheku left his son Madani at the helm in Segu as he left to confront Muntaga at Nioro.<sup>41</sup> Amadu never returned to Segu, and resided at

Nioro until the beginning of 1891, when the French conquered Umarian Karta and Amadu began his seven-year *hijra* to the east. The Arabic materials from this era mostly are letters and records; the pace of events discouraged the creation of chronicles and treatises. While no chronicle of the 1885 siege of Nioro exists, Amadu received letters and reports from some of his agents in the southern garrisons of Karta.<sup>42</sup> Amadu's official correspondence in the period after Muntaga's revolt includes correspondence with French officials as well as with his political subordinates in Karta.<sup>43</sup> Amadu also received letters from Fulbe who migrated to Nioro in large numbers during the late 1880s.<sup>44</sup> The official correspondence for this era is most abundant, and provides insights into the Umarian state in Karta as it confronted the French advance.<sup>45</sup>

Most of the Arabic materials from the late nineteenth century reflect the interests of Commander of the Faithful Amadu Sheku, and present his imperial perspective on the Umarian era. The perspectives of Amadu's brothers and the Futanke of Karta do not emerge directly in the extant materials. Besides these Umarian perspectives, the views of the indigenous communities of the Western Sudan do not appear in these Arabic materials. The search for the Umarian past, therefore, must tap other perspectives as they are revealed in oral traditions and French documents.

### **Oral materials**

Once the French established control in Karta, they collected historical traditions from the conquered populations. Several French officials gathered oral materials about the Umarian era, and published their results in colonial journals and monographs.<sup>46</sup> In the 1950s, as the French conducted a general

census of the region, officials gathered additional oral historical data.<sup>47</sup> Most of these colonial efforts at oral canvassing suffer from authoritative methods of data collection, and were followed by discrete efforts by Malian and American researchers in the post-independence period. Beginning in the mid-1970s, David Robinson and Oudiary Makan Dantioko focused on gathering oral data of Umar's holy war in western Mali.<sup>48</sup> Abdoul Aziz Diallo subsequently began to collect oral accounts of the fergo Nioro (migration to Nioro) among the Fulbe of the Nioro area.<sup>49</sup> During the early months of 1986, I joined this effort and interviewed informants about the Umanian era.

Amadou Ba of Nioro also has conducted numerous oral interviews regarding the Umanian past in Karta.<sup>50</sup> He is a local historian who collected his data over the course of the last three decades.<sup>51</sup> He did not tape any of his sessions with informants; his data consist of several volumes of notes taken during his interviews. Amadou wrote a brief history of the Umanian era and published it in mimeo form, and currently is working on a longer history of the Umanian era based on his work with oral informants.<sup>52</sup> He shared his insights into and knowledge of the local traditions with me, and provided names of informants to interview. I interviewed Amadou several times during the course of my work in western Mali. He did not allow me to record the sessions, but I took copious notes.

Most of my other informants were elders and heads of families in Nioro, Konyakary and their surrounding villages. I selected informants who were suggested to me by Amadou Ba and Abdoul Aziz Diallo as well as informants who were reputed by their peers to be the custodians of historical traditions. In many cases, the informants asked me not to tape the interviews, and I honored their requests. I conducted many interviews in the presence of a

research assistant, and we compared notes at the conclusion of the session. The sessions generally began with the main informant narrating the history of Umar's holy war. He would then add what he knew about the others aspects of the Umarian past. If the interview included other informants, they would add comments as well. After the main narrative, I probed the memory of the informant with a set of questions which I had carefully prepared to elicit comments regarding the holy war and its aftermath.

Frequently when I was collecting oral testimony, informants brought documents and published materials to the session: an Arabic chronicle of Umar's holy war, Paul Marty's examination of Islam in the region and Yves Saint-Martin's examination of Franco-Umarian relations were the most common written materials in the libraries of western Mali.<sup>53</sup> The informants often used the published texts to show how the French had perpetuated myths about the Umarian past, but always offered the Arabic chronicle as a primary source. Some informants merely read the chronicle and claimed to know very little about the jaamanu al-diina (the period between Umar's holy war and the French conquest). Even informants who did not possess the Arabic chronicle knew the content of the document: their narratives drew on the chronology and imagery of the Arabic chronicle.

Oral and written forms of historical representation are not considered separate genres in western Mali. The custodians of the Arabic chronicle told me that they read it publicly at the great feast celebrating the end of Ramadan (the month of fasting). Others have heard the chronicle, committed it to memory and added fragments of their own family history to the main narrative. While this process preserves family traditions associated with the holy war, reminiscences of life in the period after Umar's death are not celebrated

publicly. The result is that the history of the jaamanu al-diina is being forgotten. The custodians of family traditions are dying as young men migrate to urban areas in Mali and the Ivory Coast without learning them from their fathers and grand fathers. The influence of the Arabic chronicle on the oral historiography will only increase over time.

The emphasis on the holy war equally reflects current ambiguity regarding the jaamanu al-diina, a period during which Amadu Sheku twice marched to Karta and defeated challenges to his authority organized by his brothers. The existence of an Arabic chronicle of Umar's conquests merely facilitates the shift away from the fraternal conflict which plagued the Umarian movement in the wake of Umar's death. Persistent canvassing of oral informants by Malian and American researchers has elicited important oral accounts of the jaamanu al-diina, but the general ambiguity regarding the Umarian era still informs the transmission of oral data. In Nioro, for example, public reference to the suicide of Muntaga Tal is socially unacceptable, and many informants asked that their sessions remain unrecorded and confidential. In the villages around Nioro as well, informants asked me not to tape the session.

In addition to embarrassment, the reluctance to speak about the jaamanu al-diina involves respect for Cerno Hadi Tal, the leader of the Tijaniyya community of western Mali. Cerno Hadi is the grandson of Muntaga who moved to Nioro in the 1950s. He welcomed my research, but stated that he personally knew nothing about the past since he was occupied with religious issues.<sup>54</sup> Cerno Hadi's reputation clearly rests on his scholarship in the Islamic sciences, but many informants stated that his descent from Muntaga also was a factor in his rise to religious authority in Nioro. Cerno Hadi's religious authority is rooted in history, and he clearly has a vested interest in public memory of the

past. Although he did not initiate public readings of the Arabic chronicle of the holy war, he encourages the practice. Cerno Hadi also discourages references to Muntaga's death, since suicide is not accepted in the Muslim tradition.<sup>55</sup> His interest in the past, therefore, is to divert attention from the indiscretions of Muntaga and focus on the heritage of the holy war which reinforces the leadership of the Tal family.

In addition to a narrow focus on the holy war, Cerno Hadi encourages the consolidation of a dissident tradition regarding the last words uttered by Shaykh Umar. The tradition, as transmitted in western Mali, states that Umar appointed Muntaga, Bassiru and several other sons to governorships in Karta at a gathering of the Tal family at Degembere in 1864.<sup>56</sup> Degembere is a settlement to the east of the inland Niger delta where Umar retreated and eventually died after a major defeat in Masina. The tradition of Muntaga's appointment by Shaykh Umar circulated in Karta well before the arrival of Cerno Hadi in Nioro; members of Muntaga's court probably were among the first to recount the tradition.<sup>57</sup> Nevertheless, it presently is added as the final episode in most public accounts of Umar's holy war.<sup>58</sup> The focus away from the period of Umarian consolidation and the emphasis on the dissident tradition of Umar's appointments combine to create a revisionist history of the jaamanu al-diina in western Mali.

While Muntaga and his descendants have influenced the transmission of oral data in western Mali, their efforts should not lead to the conclusion that the oral traditions should be discarded as sources for historical reconstruction. The politics of the oral evidence mirrors the efforts of Amadu Sheku, who tried to create a written tradition of his reign and clearly dominated historical discourse in the Arabic materials. In both instances, the historian must subject

the materials to careful analysis. For the oral materials, the existence of various collections of oral data gathered over time facilitates the critical analysis of the transmission of oral data in western Mali.<sup>59</sup> In addition to materials collected by early twentieth century officials and late twentieth century researchers, nineteenth century French explorers and colonial officials transmitted oral data in their accounts, providing a firm basis for the critical analysis of the local oral historiography.

### **French materials**

The French materials include official correspondence and reports contained in the Archives Nationales du Sénégal (ANS), Archives Nationales du Mali (ANM) and Archives Nationales de la France, Section d'Outre Mer (ANF.SOM). The most informative official materials were written by French officials who served in the permanent posts of Medine and Bakel in the Senegal valley. The post at Kita, after its establishment in 1881, also produced quite a bit of material concerning Umarian Karta. The post at Medine bordered the Kartan province of Jomboxo, and its officials were in contact with Umarians from Konyakary throughout the late nineteenth century. Bakel was on one of the major migration routes which linked the Senegal valley with Karta, and the commandants saw caravans of Futanke who streamed out of the Senegal valley. Kita lay some distance from Karta, but it was located on a trade route which linked Nioro with the markets of the southern savanna. In addition to filing official reports, French officials and explorers also published accounts of their experiences in the Senegal valley and Western Sudan.

The French materials include eye-witness observations of the situation in Umarian Karta. The first two French expeditions to Konyakary and Nioro occurred during the mid-1860s, and both missions produced written reports of their experiences.<sup>60</sup> These initial accounts of Umarian Karta are notable for a direct style of communicating information: the official orthodoxy regarding the "Tukulor Empire" had not yet influenced perceptions of Karta. While the authors may have distrusted the intentions of their Umarian hosts, they approached their task with an eye to gathering data on political elites whom they considered as equals. These reports are much more valuable as historical sources than the published account of Eugène Mage, who provides few details of his passage through the Kartan colonies.<sup>61</sup>

The next French mission to Umarian Karta occurred during the late 1870s. The explorer was Paul Soleillet, who visited Jomboxo and the southern provinces of Karta on his way to Segou in 1878, and then passed through Nioro and the Xoolimbinne valley on his return in 1879.<sup>62</sup> His visit coincided with increasing French interest in the commercial life of the Western Sudan, and his perspectives reflected the heightened Franco-Umarian competition of the era. Additionally, he did not write his own account of the mission, but left the task to the French geographer Gabriel Gravier, who edited Soleillet's notes and published an account which would attract a broad audience in France. The text of Soleillet's account, therefore, requires careful scrutiny to discover the degree to which Soleillet's hostility toward the Umarians and Gravier's editing altered the data.<sup>63</sup> Nevertheless, Soleillet was the last French explorer to pass through Karta before the colonial conquest, and his account provides an eye-witness account of Umarian Karta in the late 1870s.<sup>64</sup>



In 1880, the French sent Joseph Gallieni to negotiate a treaty with Amadu Sheku, and his mission resided at Nango for several months before returning without completing the negotiations.<sup>65</sup> Although his mission did not directly observe the provinces of Karta, one of his officers, Camille Piétri, collected an oral account of the revolt of Habib and Moktar and published it in his description of the mission.<sup>66</sup> Piétri presents a version of the revolt which contrasts sharply in essential details with Soleillet's account. Since both Soleillet and Piétri collected their versions after trips which almost overlapped in time, the differences in their accounts point to the need to assess the data in French sources as carefully as the oral data.<sup>67</sup>

In addition to sending missions into the interior, French officials directly observed the activities of Umarians who visited their posts in the upper Senegal valley. At Medine, Futanke caravans brought large amounts of grain to the market which African merchants had established near the post. French statistics of caravan size, composition and provenance provide a detailed glimpse into this aspect of the economic life of the colonies. No one has worked with these statistics with a view to reconstructing commerce and production in Karta. Indeed, Sékéné-Mody Cissoko and Gérard Kisyeti argue that the Umarian grain trade with Medine was insignificant.<sup>68</sup> The present thesis uses the economic data on the Futanke grain trade at Medine to reconstruct the variety of activities in which the settlers engaged during the years after the conquest.

French officials also observed the movement of Futanke from the middle Senegal valley to Karta. Their estimates of the numbers of migrants in the caravans provide a sense of the total volume of the migration flow, but do not form the basis for a definitive statement. The limitations relate to the fact that many migrants did not pass near the posts of Bakel and Medine, a pattern

which increased during the 1880s. French officials nonetheless made qualitative statements regarding the social composition of the caravans (such as the proportion of younger men to older men, etc.). Commandant Soyer, who served at Bakel for several years, provides an incisive analysis of the migration flow based on his own observations as well as oral testimony provided by leaders of the caravans.<sup>69</sup>

French officials at Bakel, Medine and Kita commonly passed along the testimony from Africans who visited the posts. Their informants included merchants, Umarian envoys and African agents whom the French sent to Umarian Karta to gather political and economic information about the interior. Since most French officials did not have command of any African languages, they also employed Africans to serve as their interpreters. These employees could exercise some control over the exchange of information at the post. While in most cases interpreters did not consciously distort the testimony of informants, they could influence the interpretation of the testimony.<sup>70</sup> Since the advancement of interpreters clearly depended upon French assessments of their performance, the interpreters usually tried not to contradict the opinions of the commandant. The result was that the French often left the sessions with African informants without fully understanding the testimony. The French correspondence from the posts to the Governor often passed along distorted assessments of the situation in Umarian Karta.

Despite these problems, some French reports often provide glimpses into the consolidation of power in Umarian Karta. Much of the insight came from African merchants. Their commercial contacts gave them access to a wide range of information, and their interests in trading in the upper Senegal valley made them vulnerable to pressure from commandants who forced them into

revealing information. The French at Bakel and Medine heard about events from merchants who had recently passed through Karta on their way to the Senegal valley. The commandants also cultivated informants from among the merchants who resided in the upper Senegal valley. The resident merchants served as conduits of information from itinerant traders, and funneled information from others with whom they had contacts in the Western Sudan.

Momar Jak is an example of an African trader whom the French cultivated for information. Jak was a gum and grain merchant at Medine who made a fortune in the upper valley. His activities brought him into contact with Umurian officials in Karta.<sup>71</sup> Jak hosted the various Umurian envoys from Karta and Segou who visited Medine or passed through the post on their way to Saint Louis. He also had extensive contacts with Moorish gum merchants. When the French needed information about the gum trade or political events in Karta, they often turned to Jak. As the French expanded into the Western Sudan, they turned to Jak and the other grain merchants at Medine for cereals. The coincidence of interests with the French ultimately led Momar Jak to sever his ties with the Umurians during the conquest of Karta in 1890, but not before he had served many years as an important source of information about economic and political affairs in Karta.

Other sources for qualitative information about Umurian Karta were the Umurian envoys who frequently visited the French posts during the 1860s, 70s and early 80s. These envoys were on diplomatic missions with specific goals, and usually revealed only what their political superiors wanted the French to know. During the first revolt in Karta, for example, the envoys revealed very little about the struggle and the French remained uninformed about the conflict. Some envoys came to establish rapport with specific commandants, and their

conversations with the French reveal Umarian opinions of political struggles or illuminate the attitudes of particular social groups. Since Futanke interests and attitudes changed over time, written reports which can be dated are essential for the reconstruction of the Umarian era.

The French also sent envoys to Karta with specific orders to obtain information about Umarian affairs. The use of envoys increased over the course of the late nineteenth century, as the French sought more and more information about the "decline" of the "Tukulor Empire". In most cases, the envoys received information which the Umarians wanted them to report to the French. Additionally, the envoys also felt pressure from the French to communicate information which conformed to French expectations of the Umarians. Nevertheless, some envoys provide valuable information about social cleavages in Umarian Karta. These envoys often had relatives in Nioro or Konyakary, and resided with them for an extended period. In 1883, as tensions mounted in Umarian Karta, the envoys described the public statements and activities of Cerno Mamadu Khayar, a leading Futanke political figure. Since Cerno Mamadu did not leave many Arabic documents describing his political positions, the accounts of the envoys are crucial to the reconstruction of his activities at the time.

The testimony of African merchants, Umarian envoys and spies combine with eye-witness observations of the French as the main sources of information in the French materials. The analysis of the testimony and its transmission in the late nineteenth century assists the historian in making judgments regarding the bias and reliability of the data. Sensitivity to the interests of the informants and the French officials serves to situate the genesis of written documents within a context which does not differ very radically from the

contexts which influenced the creation of oral materials and Arabic documents. French imperial interests emerge as clearly in the official correspondence and travel literature as do Amadu Sheku's imperial interests in the Arabic materials; other interests clearly shape the transmission of oral data in western Mali. At the same time, the French, Arabic and oral materials overlap, and comparisons across the categories of evidence yield particularly revealing insights into the Umarian era.

The source materials consulted in this study are not complete. Further work in collecting oral data and in surveying the Arabic documents will yield more data and perspectives on the past. Additionally, the distribution of data is uneven: the 1860s are the least fully documented whereas the data increases considerably for 1880s. Nevertheless, this review of the data shows that various perspectives are available for all periods of the Umarian past in Karta. The historiographical emphasis on an imperial Umarian state does not describe the Umarian experience as it is revealed in the oral and Arabic source materials. The data clearly allow for a new synthesis of the Umarian era in Karta.

### Notes

1. Yves Saint-Martin, L'Empire toucouleur et la France: un demi-siècle de relations diplomatiques (1846-1893) (Dakar, 1967); A.S. Kanya-Forstner, The Conquest of the Western Sudan (Cambridge, 1969); Y. Saint-Martin, L'Empire toucouleur (Paris, 1970); B.O. Oloruntimehin The Segu Tukulor Empire (London, 1972). References to the Tukulor Empire appear in most general surveys of African history. See, for some recent examples, Paul Lovejoy, Transformations in Slavery (Cambridge, 1983); and Mervyn Hiskett The Development of Islam in West Africa (London, 1984).
2. The French officer Joseph Gallieni wrote in 1880 that "the Tukulor Empire is nothing more than the debris of [Umar's] vast conquests with none of the political and territorial unity which that brilliant Negro was able to achieve". Other French military officials similarly described the decline of the "Tukulor Empire". See, for Gallieni's statement, Kanya-Forstner, The Conquest of the Western Sudan, p. 76. See, for other descriptions of the "Tukulor Empire", Camille Piétri, Les Français au Niger (Paris, 1885), pp. 98-101; Henri Frey, Campagne dans le Haut-Sénégal et dans le Haut-Niger (1885-1886) (Paris, 1888), p. 98.
3. The text of the agreement is reproduced in Saint-Martin, L'Empire toucouleur et la France, p. 102. The emphasis is mine.
4. Saint-Martin, L'Empire toucouleur et la France, pp. 130-131.
5. Kanya-Forstner, The Conquest of the Western Sudan.
6. ANS 1D68: Bamako, 11 and 14 February 1883, Ct. Sup. to the Governor; and ANF.SOM SEN.IV 77a: "Rapport sur la campagne, 1882-83" (relevant discussion appears in the section marked "instructions").
7. Commandant Supérieur Boilève expressed hope for an alliance with Muntaga. ANS 1D68: Kayes, 3 July 1883, Ct. Sup. to the Governor; ANF.SOM SEN.IV 79bis: Saint Louis, 8 August 1884, "Rapport du campagne, 1883-84".
8. See, for example, Jacques Méniaud, Les Pionniers du Soudan. avant, avec et après Archinard. 1879-1894, 2 Volumes (Paris, 1931).
9. Kanya-Forstner, The Conquest of the Western Sudan, pp. 47ff, 76ff.
10. On numerous occasions when I was in Bamako in 1986, Malian intellectuals told me that Umar's conquest and the period of the "Tukulor Empire" dissipated the resistance forces which the Malians could have employed against the French conquest. I also was informed that this opinion is shared by the Traore regime: no one sings the praises of Shaykh Umar Tal on the occasions when the Malian state celebrates its pre-colonial heritage.

11. Perhaps the most prominent example is Sékéné-Mody Cissoko, who wrote a doctorat d'état on the pre-colonial history of the upper Senegal state of Xasso. He recently decided to publish the thesis in two parts. The first volume, and the only one to appear to date, stops Xasso's history at 1854, with Umar Tal's holy war. One hopes that the second part of his doctorat d'état, in which he discusses the Umarian conquest and its impact on Karta, will appear shortly. The implication in his decision, however, is that the Umarian era signals a break with the pre-colonial past and is a prelude to the French conquest. See Cissoko, "Contribution à l'histoire politique des royaumes du Khasso dans le Haut-Sénégal des origines à la conquête française (XVIIe-1890)", Université de Paris, doctorat d'état, 1979, with Cissoko, L'Histoire politique du Khasso dans le Haut-Sénégal des origines à 1854 (Paris, 1986). A review of the final theses presented at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Bamako reveals that many Malians end their historical analysis of the pre-colonial era with Shaykh Umar's holy war. See, for example, the memoirs de fin d'études of Mamadu Diawara and Ibrahima Barry.

12. David Robinson, The Holy War of Umar Tal: the Western Sudan in the Mid-Nineteenth Century (Oxford, 1985).

13. Richard Roberts, Warriors, Merchants and Slaves: the State and the Economy in the Middle Niger Valley, 1700-1914 (Stanford, 1987), p. 2.

14. Roberts, Warriors, Merchants and Slaves, pp. 129-130.

15. See, for an example of the type of textual analysis that is required, John Hanson, "Historical writing in nineteenth century Segu: a critical analysis of an anonymous Arabic chronicle", History in Africa 12 (1985).

16. See, for an excellent analysis of the historical metaphors in an Arabic chronicle, Murray Last, "Historical metaphors in the Kano Chronicle", History in Africa 9 (1980).

17. Many historians in the 1960s and early 1970s made the error of assuming that oral traditions were equivalent to first-hand accounts.

18. Joseph Miller, "The dynamics of Oral Tradition in Africa", in Fonti Orali, ed. by B. Bernardi, C. Ponti and A. Triulzi (Milan, 1978). See also his introduction in The African Past Speaks, edited by J. Miller (Hamden, 1980).

19. Africanist anthropologists have argued that contemporaneous social and political forces alter the representation of the past in oral societies, thereby rendering much historical analysis difficult. See, for example, Ian Cunnison, "History and genealogies in a conquest state", American Anthropologist 59 (1959); T.O. Beidelman, "Myth, legend and oral history", Anthropos 65 (1970); Roy Willis, "The literalist fallacy and the problem of oral tradition", Social Analysis no. 4 (1980).

20. David Henige offers some useful suggestions for managing the process of data collection in Oral Historiographies (London, 1982).

21. David Robinson examines this issue in The Holy War of Umar Tal, pp. 35-42.

22. Many may be familiar with this extensive Arabic collection as the "Fonds Archinard". Scholars of West African Islam already have tapped its holdings of religious texts, and historians have worked with the correspondence and chronicles related to Umar Tal's holy war.

23. Most of these documents are in the 15G (Western Sudan) series, but an important group of materials is filed in the 9G (Mauritania) series. David Robinson brought the 9G materials to my attention.

24. More work remains to be done with the Arabic materials. The documents concerning Karta are scattered throughout the BN and ANS dossiers. I worked with two indices to selected dossiers in the two collections. A valuable index to the Arabic materials from Segou in the BN was published recently: Nouredine Ghali *et al.*, Inventaire de la bibliothèque umarienne de Segou (Paris, 1985). David Robinson allowed me to use his personal index to some of the dossiers in the ANS 15G series. He has not published that index.

25. The Massassi and the Umarians generally collected the taxes in the field at harvest, and did not record the assessment. The Umarians also retained the Massassi tolls on commercial caravans. Both of them charged one-tenth the value of the caravan traffic in the region, but the Umarians called their toll ussuru, a term derived from 'ushru (Arabic for "one tenth").

26. Umarian agents also collected tolls annually on the passage of caravan traffic through Karta, but records of these transactions do not appear in any Arabic materials from the region. Tax records and lists of villages from Umarian Karta during the early 1870s are scattered throughout BN.MO.FA. 5713. Tax records for the late 1880s are in ANS 15G78: pièces 49-51, 61, 79, 80. Among the tax records are letters of introduction for Fudi Khalila, who was one of Amadu's tax collectors in the early 1870s. He also served as Amadu's agent at Medine, the Senegal valley post closest to the Umarian territories. The French mention Fudi Khalila in ANS 15G111: Medine, Régistre journal, July, 1877. See, for Khalila's letters of introduction, BN.MO.FA. 5713 fos. 1, 11, 25, 26.

27. French translations of the Kaba Jakite chronicle have been published by Maurice Delafosse and M.G. Adam. My surveys in Nioro did not uncover a copy of the document in Arabic. "Traditions historiques et légendaires du Soudan occidental par Maurice Delafosse", Bulletin du Comité d'Afrique Française. Renseignements Coloniaux nos. 8-10 (1913); M.G. Adam, Légendes historiques du pays de Nioro (Sahel) (Paris, 1904).

28. Arab travellers referred to the state of Wagadu as "Ghana". See, for an analysis of the historical literature on Wagadu/Ghana and a brief discussion of the Kaba Jakite chronicle, David Conrad and Humphrey Fisher, "The conquest that never was: Ghana and the Almoravids, 1076. II: the local oral sources", History in Africa 10 (1983).

The Kaba Jakite are a Soninke clerical family whose founder lived in Bundu before joining Umar's holy war. See, for an historical account of the founder of the Kaba Jakite clerical family, Tiébilé Dramé, "Alfa Umar Kaba Jaxite, fondateur de Kabala, marabout et conseiller de Siixumaru Tal (al-Hajj Umar)", Islam et Sociétés au Sud du Sahara no. 2 (1988).



29. El Hadj Sadiku Kaba Jakite, the current imam of the mosque at Nioro, does not possess a copy of the document, although he remembered that his grandfather and grandfather's brothers produced the document over the course of the late nineteenth century. It is possible that sections of the Kaba Jakite chronicle were produced in Segu: Fode Buyagi Kaba Jakite, the imam of the mosque at Nioro during the 1870s and Sadiku's grandfather, resided with Amadu Sheku at Segu for several years during the late nineteenth century.

30. Cerno Yahya did not want me to microfilm the chronicle, but he allowed me to tape him as he read it. The taping session occurred at Cerno Yahya's compound at Konyakary on 9 February 1986.

31. Demba Sadio was gravely ill when I visited Konyakary in February, 1986, and I was unable to interview him. He is acknowledged by everyone in the region to be the most knowledgeable oral historian about the Umarian period in Jomboxo. I have consulted David Robinson's interview with Demba Sadio Diallo on 12 September 1976. Robinson's interview focused primarily on the period of Umar's conquest and not the aftermath in Jomboxo.

32. I develop this argument at length below in the section on oral materials.

33. I have yet to find any correspondence written by the Umarian leaders in Karta, Mustafa, the leader at Nioro, and Samba Mody, the leader at Konyakary. Mustafa received at least one letter from Amadu Sheku during this period; it concerns a minor affair. ANS 15G78: pièce 5.

34. Adam, Légendes historiques, p. 111. El Hadj Sadiku Kaba Jakite asked me about Umar's letters of instruction when I spoke with him in 1986. He said that the French took all the Arabic materials from the palace at Nioro, and wondered whether I had found the letters during the course of my work with the Arabic materials in Dakar and Paris. El Hadj Sadiku was particularly interested in a letter from Umar which nominated his great grandfather, Umar Kaba Jakite, to serve as the first imam of the mosque. I have found only one letter from Shaykh Umar to Mustafa. It is in Amadu Sheku's Segovian archive and concerns a minor political affair. BN.MO.FA., 5721, fo. 91.

35. The treaty which he negotiated never was ratified but served to define the working relationship in the upper Senegal valley for a good portion of the late nineteenth century. See, for these negotiations and Franco-Umarian relations in the early 1860s, Yves Saint-Martin, L'Empire toucouleur et la France, pp. 91-110.

36. Amadu did receive a judicial ruling or fatwa concerning his succession as Commander of the Faithful, but this document probably was written in Segu before he left to confront his brothers. BN.MO.FA. 5561 fos. 66-69.

37. Uthman Kusa is known in the Arabic documents as Uthman b. Muhammad of Dara Labe in Futa Jalon. Uthman Kusa's collections include prayers offered to God prior to the battle, descriptions of the victory and poems in praise of Amadu Sheku. See, for the Kejje victory, BN.MO.FA. 5716, fos. 42-44. See, for the Gemukura victory, BN.MO.FA. 5640, fos. 25-44. See also, for the Gemukura campaign, BN.MO.FA. 5689, fos. 97-98; 5713, fos. 37-38, 124.

38. See, for an analysis of the historical materials related to Umar's holy war, Robinson, The Holy War of Umar Tal, pp. 9-46.

39. Muntaga's correspondence is in BN.MO.FA. 5737, fo. 51; ANS 15G68/Chemise spéciale: pièces a,b,i; 15G78: pièces 4 and 5; 15G80/2: pièce 149; 15G80/3: pièces 4 and 114; 15G80/4: pièces 25 and 96. Cerno Mamadu's correspondence includes the documents in BN.MO.FA. 5737, fos. 57, 62.

40. Moorish notables complained to Amadu Sheku about Muntaga in BN.MO.FA., 5713, fo. 186. Cerno Mamadu Khayar's activities elicited quite a few letters to Amadu. See BN.MO.FA. 5680, fos. 157 and 168; 5737, fos. 50 and 61. Cerno Abu Bakr b. Alfa Sa'id was a supporter of Amadu, and his correspondence with Segu was voluminous. See ANS 15G68/Chemise spéciale: pièces c,d,e,f,g,k,l; 15G79: pièce 146; 15G80/1: pièces 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135.

41. Some materials from Madani's tenure at Segu are located in ANS 15G76/4 and 15G80/1.

42. ANS 15G78: pièces 6, 69, 92, 95; 15G79: pièce 156.

43. The letters are scattered throughout ANS 9G39, 15G79 and 15G80.

44. These letters include ANS 15G70: pièces 28, 37, 40; 15G78: pièces 91 and 110; 15G80/2: pièces 83 and 139; 15G80/3: pièce 29; 15G80/4: pièce 122.

45. Colonel Archinard sent letters to Umarian notables in Nioro in hopes of getting them to ally with the French. The originals can be found in ANS 15G79: pièces 120-130. French translations appear in ANS 15G76: pièce 54. None of the notables to whom Archinard wrote joined the French.

46. E. Blanc, "Contribution à l'étude des populations et de l'histoire de Sahel soudanais", Bulletin du Comité d'Etudes Historiques et Scientifiques de l'Afrique Occidentale Française 7 (1924); I include Adam in this category, since his translation of the Kaba Jakite chronicle draws upon oral data from informants in Nioro: M.G. Adam, Légendes historiques; I also include the oral traditions provided by Agibu Tal, who was the Umarian leader at Dingiray during the 1880s: A. de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", Bulletin du Comité d'Etudes Historiques et Scientifiques de l'Afrique Occidentale Française 2 (1919).

47. ANM 1D51: "Etude sur le canton de Kaarta-Soninke par Luciani", "Etude sur le canton de Foulankes-Kaartankes par J. Tisserant", "Etude sur le canton des Diawaras par J. Tisserant", "Etude sur le canton des Peuls Rangabe par J. Tisserant", "Etude sur le canton de Kingi-Oulof par J. Tisserant", "Etude sur le canton des Toucouleurs de Boundou par J. Bertin". All these studies were written in 1954.

48. The most relevant Robinson interviews are with Bougouboly Alfa Makki Tal at Bandiagara on 19 and 20 August 1976, with Demba Sadio Diallo at Konyakary on 12 September 1976, and with Lamine Bassirou Tal at Kayes on 13 September 1976. The relevant Dantioko interview is with Djammé Tounkara and Sadio Sakhoné at Balle in June 1980. Robinson and Dantioko allowed me to consult their transcriptions of the interviews.

49. Diallo's material includes the testimony of his father, Mamadou Alfa Diallo, and his uncle, Bassirou Alfa Diallo, both of whom narrated very detailed accounts of the fergo and of the political conflicts in Karta. Mamadou and Bassirou resided in Gavinané, the major Fulbe settlement of contemporary western Mali. Their father, Alfa Idris Diallo, was a prominent jom fergo or migration leader of the late nineteenth century. Alfa Idris was the qadi or Muslim judge at Sambagoré, the major Fulbe settlement of the period. The openness and clarity of Mamadou and Bassirou Diallo's testimony contrasted noticeably with the testimony of Abdoul Aziz Diallo's other informants as well as many of my own informants. Both Mamadou and Bassirou have since deceased. Abdoul Aziz Diallo allowed me to consult his materials.

50. Amadou Ba is the great grandson of Woulibou Ba, an important Fulbe leader who participated in Shaykh Umar's conquest of Karta. Woulibou then accompanied him to Segu in 1859.

51. Amadou served as a teacher in the secondary school in Nioro and then as the mayor of Nioro.

52. Amadou Ba, "Connaissance de la Commune de Nioro-du-Sahel."

53. Marty, Etudes sur l'Islam et les tribus du Soudan, Volume 4 (Paris, 1921); Saint-Martin, L'Empire toucouleur. The Arabic chronicle often was a copy of an anonymous document which other researchers have found in private libraries in Senegal and the inland Niger delta of Mali. The chronicle probably was compiled in Segu sometime between 1874 and 1884. See, for an analysis of the anonymous Arabic chronicle, Hanson, "Historical writing in nineteenth century Segu".

54. I had a letter of introduction for Cerno Hadi from Cerno Muntaga Tal, the leader of the Tijaniyya community in Dakar. David Robinson, who has worked with Cerno Muntaga, introduced me to him in Dakar. Cerno Hadi asked his son, Amadou Cerno, to assist me. Amadou Cerno kindly provided me with accounts of the holy war which he had recorded over the years.

55. Abdoul Aziz Diallo also noted the refusal to talk about the suicide of Muntaga in Nioro.

56. Dantioko's informants from Balle, a region farther east and influenced by the historical traditions of Masina, state that it was Umar's cousin, Amadu Tijani, who turned to Amadu Sheku after Umar died and prophesied that his brothers would hold power in Karta. Amadu Tijani was the Umanian leader who consolidated power at Bandiagara after Umar's death at Degembere.

57. The first French commandant to reside at Konyakary, Lt. Valentin, collected oral materials regarding the Umanian era in Karta. His report notes that Muntaga was governor of Nioro at the time of Umar's death. ANM 1D108: Konyakary, 10 October 1890, Lt. Valentin, "Diombokho et itinéraires à Nioro".

58. I did not notice the dissident tradition in the texts of any of the Arabic chronicles in western Mali.

59. See Chapter Six for a critical analysis of the written and oral materials related to the first revolt.

60. ANS 15G109: Medine, 22 January 1865, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel. This report was published as M. André, "Excursion à Koniakari", Le Moniteur du Sénégal et Dépendances nos. 465-467 (1865); ANS 13G169: Bakel, 4 March 1865, M. Perraud to Ct. Bakel. This report was published as "Rapport de M. Perraud sur un voyage à Nioro", Le Moniteur du Sénégal et Dépendances nos. 488-489 (1865).

61. Mage's account provide invaluable details about the situation in Segou. Eugène Mage, Voyage dans le Soudan occidental (1863-6) (Paris, 1868).

62. Paul Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, 1878-79, rédigé d'après les notes et journaux de voyage de Soleillet par Gabriel Gravier (Paris, 1887).

63. See Chapter Six for an analysis of Gravier's role as an editor.

64. Other missions went into the interior, but few actually travelled into Karta. The only exception is the 1883 mission of Dr. Bayol. Both Soleillet and Bayol were proponents of French expansion, and self-consciously described the economic potential of the Western Sudan with a view towards convincing reluctant officials of French interests in the region. Soleillet had more sympathy for his Umarian informants than Bayol, but both viewed the Umarians as obstacles to French expansion. See, for an example of Bayol's attitudes, "Une excursion au pays de Mourdia par M. Bayol", Le Moniteur du Sénégal et Dépendances nos. 1481-1486 (1884).

65. Joseph Gallieni, Voyage au Soudan français. Haut-Niger et pays de Ségou, 1879-81 (Paris, 1885).

66. Piétri, Les Français au Niger.

67. I subject the two accounts to careful data analysis in Chapter Six.

68. Sékéné-Mody Cissoko, "Contribution à l'histoire politique des royaumes du Khasso", pp. 640-44; G. Kisyeti, "Recherches sur le commerce dans l'empire toucouleur," Université de Dakar, mémoire de maîtrise, 1980. They make their assessment of the Umarian grain trade based on a review of the sparse data in ANS dossiers. The detailed statistical data from Medine, however, appears in the ANM and ANF.SOM dossiers.

69. Governor Brière de l'Isle passed along Commandant Soyer's reports to the Minister of Colonies. ANF.SOM SEN.I 61c: Saint Louis, 22 March and 5 June 1878, Governor to the Minister.

70. In some instances, African employees actively shaped the information to serve their interests in career advancement. The example of the interpreter Alfa Segá suggests the kind of interests which some personnel had in the flow of information. He worked at Bakel and Medine during the 1870s and 1880s, both as a scribe and a translator for their Arabic correspondence. Alfa Segá's career took an upward rise with the French expansion into the Western Sudan:

he accompanied several French missions into the Western Sudan during the early 1880s and then served with Commandant Supérieur during the conquest of the late 1880s. His anti-Futanke sentiments were widely reported, and reflect his interest in gaining and retaining French confidence in his loyalty. His rise through the service also shows how his interests mirrored French interests in territorial expansion. His role as a translator placed him in a position to delete passages from correspondence and shape French impressions of Umarian hostility toward them. Africans who occupied similar positions may have reinforced the Franco-Umarian rivalry to serve their careers.

71. Jak married a daughter of Amadu Sheku.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Umar Tal's Holy War and the Umarian Successor State in Karta

As Paul Soleillet travelled through a sparsely inhabited region of the Western Sudan in the late nineteenth century, one of his guides pointed to several large stones which ran along the boundary between Karta and Segu.<sup>1</sup> Prior to Umar Tal's holy war, the Bambara regimes in Karta and Segu were mortal enemies which had fought numerous battles and conducted countless raids into the frontier zone where Soleillet was travelling.<sup>2</sup> During the early nineteenth century, one Segovian leader marched deep into Karta, won a decisive victory over the armies of the Kartan regime and marked the boundary between the two Bambara states with the stones which Soleillet's guide noted.<sup>3</sup> The Umarian conquest did not alter the boundary, and the stones remained in place to mark the frontier between the Umarian successor states in Karta and Segu during the late nineteenth century.

Despite Umar's vision of a united West African dar al-Islam, he failed to consolidate the conquered territories into an imperial state, and his followers in Karta and Segu resurrected the heated conflicts of the previous era shortly after his death.<sup>4</sup> Amadu Sheku of Segu, Umar's successor as the Commander

of the Faithful, tried to force the Umarians in Karta to acknowledge his authority over their affairs. When the Umarians in Karta resisted, Amadu led his armies into Karta. Twice he marched into Karta, and in both instances his status as the Commander of the Faithful divided the resistance and helped his armies defeat the challenge. Military victories proved much easier to obtain than political unity, and Amadu failed in his attempts to create an imperial Umanian state in the Western Sudan.<sup>5</sup>

Nonetheless, most historians emphasize the imperial dimension of Umanian history. They credit Umar Tal with the creation of a "Tukulor Empire" and blame Amadu Sheku for its decline.<sup>6</sup> This concern leads to an emphasis on Amadu's interests and actions, and consequently diverts attention from Umanian moves to consolidate an autonomous state in Karta during the 1850s and 1860s. Immediately after Umar's conquest of the Massassi Bambara state in Karta, he made Nioro, the former Massassi capital, a central place in a hierarchy of Umanian garrisons in Karta. Mustafa Keita, Umar's appointee as the leader of Nioro during the 1860s, consolidated Nioro's position as a center of Umanian power in Karta, and extended his control over all the regions formerly within the Massassi state. By the time Amadu Sheku turned from consolidating power in Segu to establishing his authority over the Western Sudan, Mustafa and the Futanke in Karta had succeeded in creating an autonomous state in Karta. The post-conquest era in Umanian politics, therefore, was not a time of "imperial decline", but an era of political competition among Umanian political leaders. This chapter focuses on the emergence of an Umanian state in Karta, analyzing the Massassi state, the Umanian conquest, and the actions of Mustafa and the Futanke of Karta as they consolidated power in the 1860s.

### The Massassi state in Karta<sup>7</sup>

During the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Massassi lineages fled from a civil war in Segou and settled among Soninke groups living in the Sahelian area known as Karta. As the Massassi expanded their control over other areas in the Western Sudan, the indigenous inhabitants began to refer to them as the Bambara from Karta.<sup>8</sup> Historians went one step further, and commonly use Karta to refer to the entire region in which the Massassi Bambara consolidated power. I will follow these conventions and use Karta to refer to the large geographical entity in which the Massassi Bambara established control. In order to avoid confusion, when I need to refer specifically to the "original Karta" (i.e., the traditional Soninke region), I will speak of "the Massassi heartland" since this region initially received the Massassi and remained an area of extensive Massassi settlement in the nineteenth century.

At its apogee in mid-nineteenth century, the Massassi state in Karta encompassed communities in a region bounded by the Saharan desert-side in the north, the Senegal River in the west, the upper Senegal and its tributaries in the south, and the buffer zones separating the Massassi state from the Bambara state of Segou in the southeast and the Fulbe state of Masina in the west. The region lay at the center of north-south trade routes which linked the desert-side with the savanna, and east-west routes running between the markets of the upper Senegal and middle Niger valleys. The climate was Sahelian, receiving small amounts of rainfall which supported agricultural communities but favored the production of livestock. The subject populations of the Massassi state were heterogeneous, and spoke one or more of the following languages: Soninke, Bambara, Mandinka and Pulaar (Fulfulde).



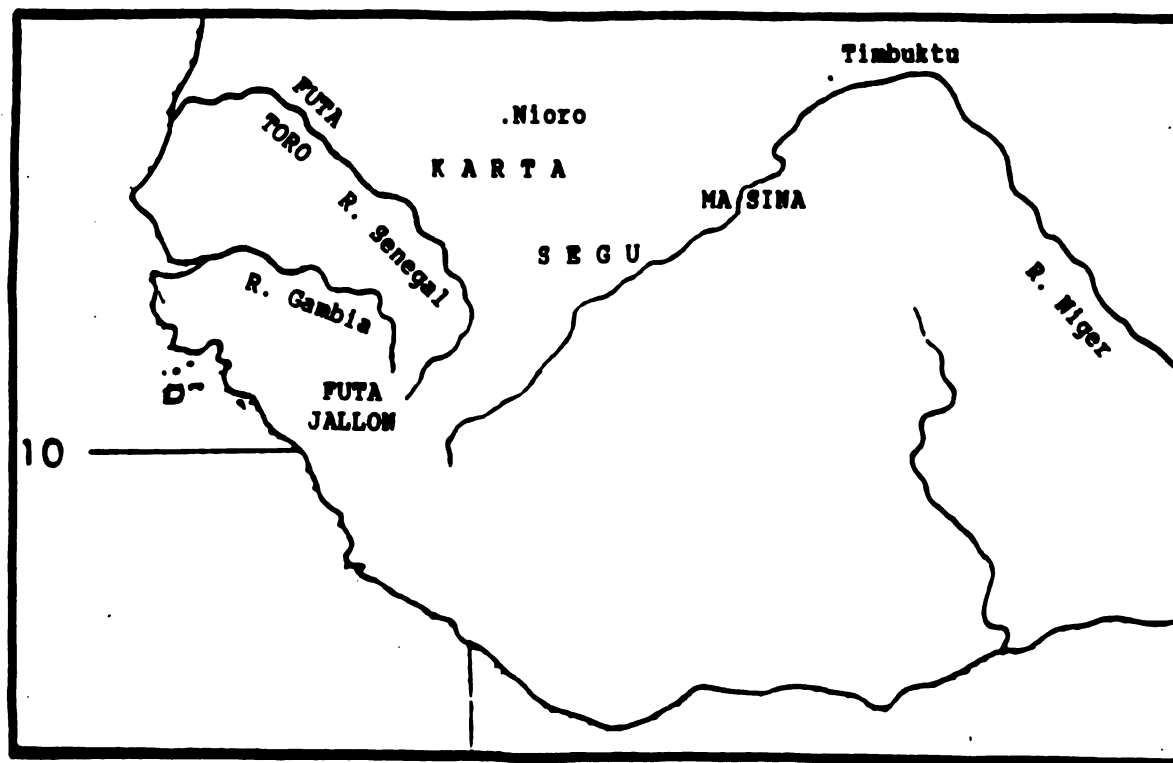


FIGURE A

The Western Sudan in the Nineteenth Century

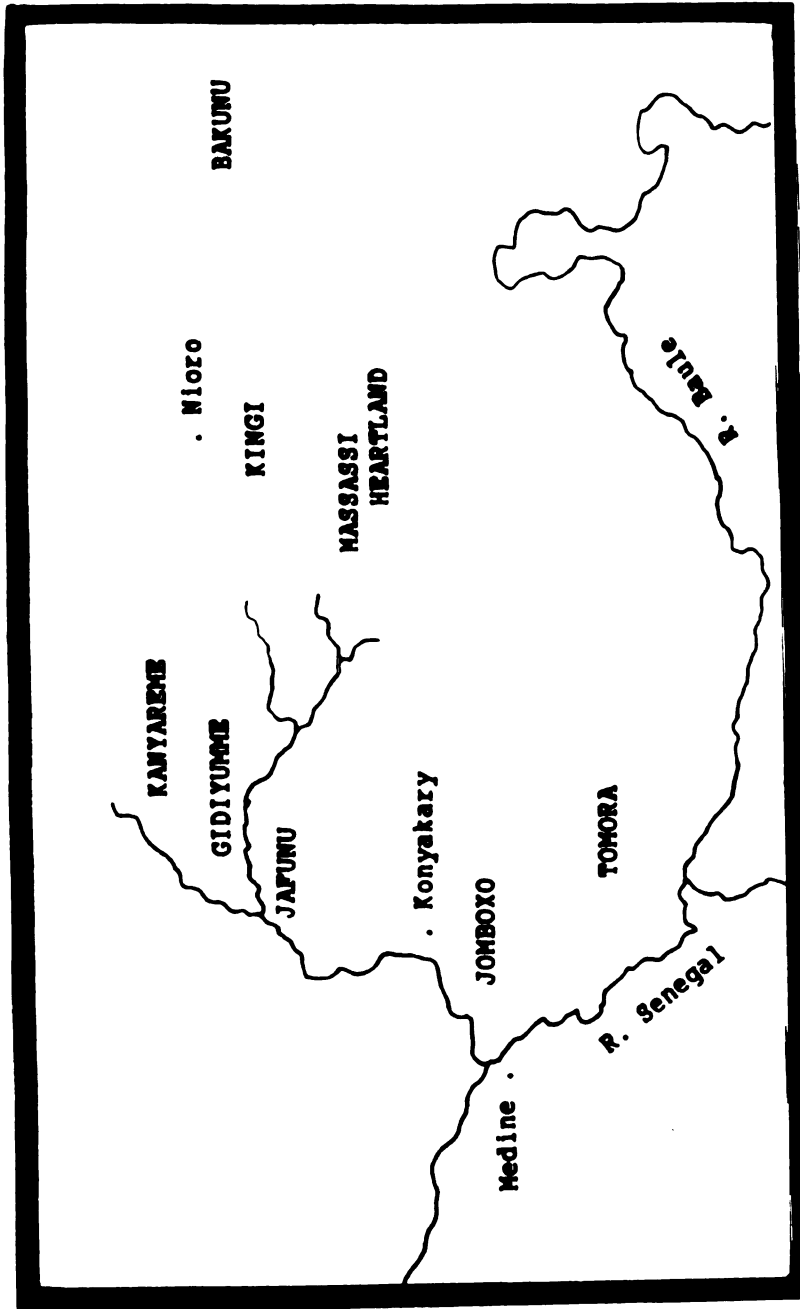


FIGURE B

Karta in the Mid-Nineteenth Century

The Gidiyumme and Jomboxo hills ran through the heart of the Massassi state, forming an axis which divided the northern regions of Karta into two distinct environments: a well-watered region of marshes and river valleys in the north-west and a dry plateau to the north-east.<sup>9</sup> The Xoolimbinne River flowed westward out of the hills and joined the Senegal River near Medine. Its valley provided a corridor for trade with both the desert-side and the Niger River. The valleys of the Xoolimbinne and its tributaries maintained high moisture levels during the first months of the dry season, due to the magnitude of the rainy season run-offs from the eastern hills. Consequently the farmers of the valleys were able to plant and harvest a second crop in the flood plain, ensuring grain surpluses even during years when the rainy season crop failed. Soninke groups inhabited the provinces of the northern Xoolimbinne: Jafunu, Gidiyumme and Kanyareme.<sup>10</sup> Soninke and Mandinka-speaking populations lived in Jomboxo.<sup>11</sup>

In northeastern Karta, on the plateau, the climate and terrain favored extensive livestock production. The Jawara, Soninke agriculturalists who lived in Kingi, raised the Barb horse, a species particularly favored by the cavalrymen of West Africa.<sup>12</sup> Fulbe groups specialized in raising cattle, which they herded in well-defined north-south corridors running from the desert-side to the Baule River. During the rainy season, the herders camped in semi-permanent camps in the north of Karta where they exchanged milk and cattle for agricultural products produced by local farmers. The Fulbe Jawaambe spent the rainy seasons of the early nineteenth century at Karaharo, a village located in southern Kingi.<sup>13</sup> Fulbe Kartanke lineages also camped in southern Kingi, but most lineages stopped in the Xoolimbinne valley or in the Massassi heartland. The Wolaarbe, the last major group of Fulbe in Karta, camped in eastern Kingi

and Bakunu. While some Fulbe leaders looked to the Fulbe regime in Masina for leadership, most Fulbe were integrated into the Massassi state.<sup>14</sup>

The northern boundary of the Massassi state ran along the ecological divide separating the Saharan desert-side from the Sahel. To the north, in the region known as the Hodh, Moorish groups raised camels, horses, cattle and small livestock. Most of the Moors were transhumant, following north-south itineraries which brought them into the northern provinces of Bakunu, Kingi, Kanyareme and Jafunu during the hot, dry seasons of the later pre-colonial era. This contact allowed for annual inter-zonal economic activity, particularly exchanges of Soninke millet and cloth for Moorish livestock, dairy products and dates.<sup>15</sup> Saharan salt also moved into the Sahel via these exchanges.<sup>16</sup> These dry season activities were mirrored during the rainy season by reciprocal exchanges between the Fulbe and the Soninke, whereby they shared the fruits of the rainy season, milk and millet.

The south was inhabited largely by Mandinka and Bambara groups. These farmers lived in villages in which the authority of political leaders did not extend much beyond the village itself. An exception were the Mandinka in the southwest, who were organized into a large, eighteenth century state by the Xassonke.<sup>17</sup> At its height, the Xassonke state included the densely populated Mandinka province of Tomora, the Soninke regions of Sorma, Tringa and Jomboxo, and the multitude of small Mandinka communities along the upper Senegal River. The northern regions of the Xassonke state fell under Massassi domination in the early nineteenth century, and the populations along the upper Senegal felt the ravages of Massassi raids. The Mandinka in the south and southeast who had not been organized into a state suffered from constant Bambara raiding throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The

southeast in particular was an arena of conflict between the Massassi and the Bambara of Segu, who competed for influence in the region.

The Massassi heartland lay in the center of Karta. It did not possess the open plateau of Kingi and Bakunu, the river system of the northwestern provinces nor the relatively abundant rainfalls of the southerly zones. Nevertheless, the region served as the initial locus and continuing base of power for the Massassi Bambara. It was here that the Massassi first settled and formed alliances with Soninke lineages in the province. As the Massassi knit the regions of the north and south into a social formation, members of the Massassi clan settled outside of the province, in Jomboxo, Gidiyumme and Kingi, but the Massassi heartland remained the largest single region of Massassi settlement. The process of Bambara expansion, of which the Massassi colonization of Karta is an example, began much earlier in the middle Niger valley.

During the early eighteenth century, Bambara groups in Segu, led by Mamari Kulibali, created the ton, a military unit modeled on the Bambara age set.<sup>18</sup> These units offered ambitious leaders a means by which to recruit and organize warriors from the ranks of adventurous free men and war captives (ton-jon or "slaves of the association"). Ton-jon recruits were particularly attractive to military elites because their social dislocation through enslavement made them more easily integrated into the army as loyal soldiers.<sup>19</sup> Their desire for booty and enhanced status within the military also made them ambitious warriors.<sup>20</sup> The Kulibali rode the military successes of ton-jon warriors to power in Segu, placing successful ton-jon soldiers at the head of their own battalions and in administrative positions throughout the state. The power and influence of the ton-jon warriors grew with every military campaign,

however, and a ton-jon leader seized power in the vacuum created by a mid-eighteenth century civil war among the Kulibali. The Massassi, members of the Kulibali clan, fled the civil war and settled to the northwest of Segou, in the Massassi heartland of Karta. The Massassi remained enemies of the new regime in Segou throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The Massassi used the ton-jon military institution to acquire power in their new home. They balanced raids and warfare with offers of alliances to Soninke lineages willing to join their raiding parties.<sup>21</sup> After gaining power in the Massassi heartland, they were able to establish tributary relations over Soninke and Fulbe groups in Bakunu, Kingi, Kanyareme, Jafunu and Gidiyumme.<sup>22</sup> To the south, in regions of Mandinka and Bambara settlement, ton-jon regiments attached a southern fringe to the state, but they rarely created formal relations with indigenous elites as in the north; the southern communities surrendered whatever the armies requested during annual military campaigns or risked being enslaved instead.<sup>23</sup> To the west, during the early nineteenth century, the Massassi invaded the Xassonke state and, through a combination of military intervention and political alliance with one of the four ruling Xassonke lineages, incorporated the northern provinces of Xasso into the Massassi state.

Warfare played an important role in the structure of the state as well as its geographic expansion. The need to reward military leaders and their followers forced the Massassi to conduct wars or at least authorize raiding for booty.<sup>24</sup> Successive Massassi rulers supervised the expansion of the state in fairly regular intervals, suggesting a pattern whereby every new generation of princes, war leaders and soldiers pushed for wars of expansion.<sup>25</sup> Once local groups agreed to surrender a set amount of millet, cattle or cloth to a Massassi

prince or a ton-jon leader, however, continued warfare in the region ran counter to the interests of those who received the tribute. Consequently, Massassi leaders directed the military campaigns of subordinate leaders and their followers to the southern regions of the state where the communities never entered into formal relations with the Kartan state. The pattern of political arrangements and raiding led to a division of Karta into a northern region, where the Massassi and their armies settled, taxed the local populations but did not raid for slaves, and a region of predation in the south where ambitious war leaders conducted raids to increase their wealth and military standing.

The Massassi preference for concluding political arrangements in the north related to their need to establish alliances with commercial groups which offered military hardware, luxury items and salt in exchange for the slaves produced by the military apparatus. The major commercial groups of the western Sahel were Soninke families with connections to the Muslim trading diasporas of the Senegal and Niger River basins and the desert-side. These commercial families lived among communities of Soninke farmers in the northern and western regions of the Massassi state.<sup>26</sup> The commercial elites willingly entered into relations with the Massassi warriors, both to ensure a source of slaves and to direct the raids of the state elsewhere. Consequently, the interests of the Massassi and their Soninke commercial allies led to the creation of a social formation in which northern commercial and military groups lived in symbiotic relations with each other, and in parasitic relations with the communities of the south.

The Massassi elite also exploited their strategic position at the center of a network of trade-routes connecting the salt and gum producing centers of the Saharan fringe with the markets along the Niger and Senegal Rivers. A major

salt axis ran from the Ijil salt mines through Tishit and on to the middle Niger markets at Nyamina and Sinsani. A secondary commercial axis ran from Tishit directly south to the upper Niger markets at Bamako and Kankan. The major gum routes connected the Hodh, a major region of gum production, with the upper Senegal escales of Bakel and Makana via the northern provinces of the Massassi state. The Massassi collected payments, in return for safe passage, from both the caravan leaders and, in some cases, the commercial groups who received the merchandise.<sup>27</sup> In the early nineteenth century, the judgement that the Massassi tolls were excessive discouraged extensive Saint Louisian investment in the upper valley gum trade.<sup>28</sup>

The constituent populations within Karta also bristled at Massassi taxation policies. Local traditions assert that the Massassi changed the terms of their rule in the early nineteenth century, asking for a larger (proportional) amount of harvests or herds instead of a fixed tribute.<sup>29</sup> The Jawara keenly felt the decline in their revenues because the new taxes fell at a time when they joined Massassi military campaigns less and less frequently. In the 1840's, the Jawara revolted against the Massassi, and then drew the fighting out over several years. The Massassi ruler at the time, Mamadi Kanja, finally defeated the Jawara and then moved his capital to Nioro in Kingi as a sign of Massassi intent to keep the Jawara subdued. While Mamadi Kanja's victory buoyed his confidence, it also increased resentment of Bambara domination among the Jawara and other groups in the Massassi state.

Umar Tal played upon these resentments as his armies moved through the heart of the Massassi state and toppled Mamadi Kanja from his throne. By the time Umar marched victoriously into Nioro, he counted in his camp most of the leading Soninke, Fulbe and Xassonke groups of western and northern Karta.



Umar also brought numerous followers from Senegambian societies, some of whom eventually settled in Kingi and Jomboxo. The descendants of some of these colonists still live in northwestern Mali today, and remember the holy war as the most dramatic event of the immediate precolonial era. While the conquest of Karta certainly altered the lives of Umar's followers, the question remains whether the holy war and the Senegambian colonization significantly transformed the patterns of social domination which the Massassi had imposed in Karta.

### The Holy War in Karta

Umar Tal was a Muslim from Futa Toro in the middle Senegal valley. His decision to lead his fellow Senegambians in a holy war against the societies and states of the Western Sudan occurred after his pilgrimage (hajj) to Mecca and a lengthy residence at Sokoto, the capital of the Muslim state created through the holy war of Uthman dan Fodio, a Fulbe reformer of the early nineteenth century. After Umar's return to the Western Sudan, he established a residence in Futa Jallon, a Fulbe state in the hills of today's Guinea. After gaining a following of Fulbe from this state as well as his former home of Futa Toro, Shaykh Umar moved his growing community to Dingiray in Tamba, a Mandinka kingdom which neighbored Futa Jallon. He continued to recruit Fulbe from the two Futas, and strained relations with the King of Tamba who had welcomed Umar initially. In 1852, Tamban-Umarian relations reached a point where Umar declared a holy war against the "pagan" ruling elite of Tamba. For the next two years, Umar led his followers in a conquest of the other small Mandinka and Soninke polities of the upper Senegal valley, and then moved into the Fulbe

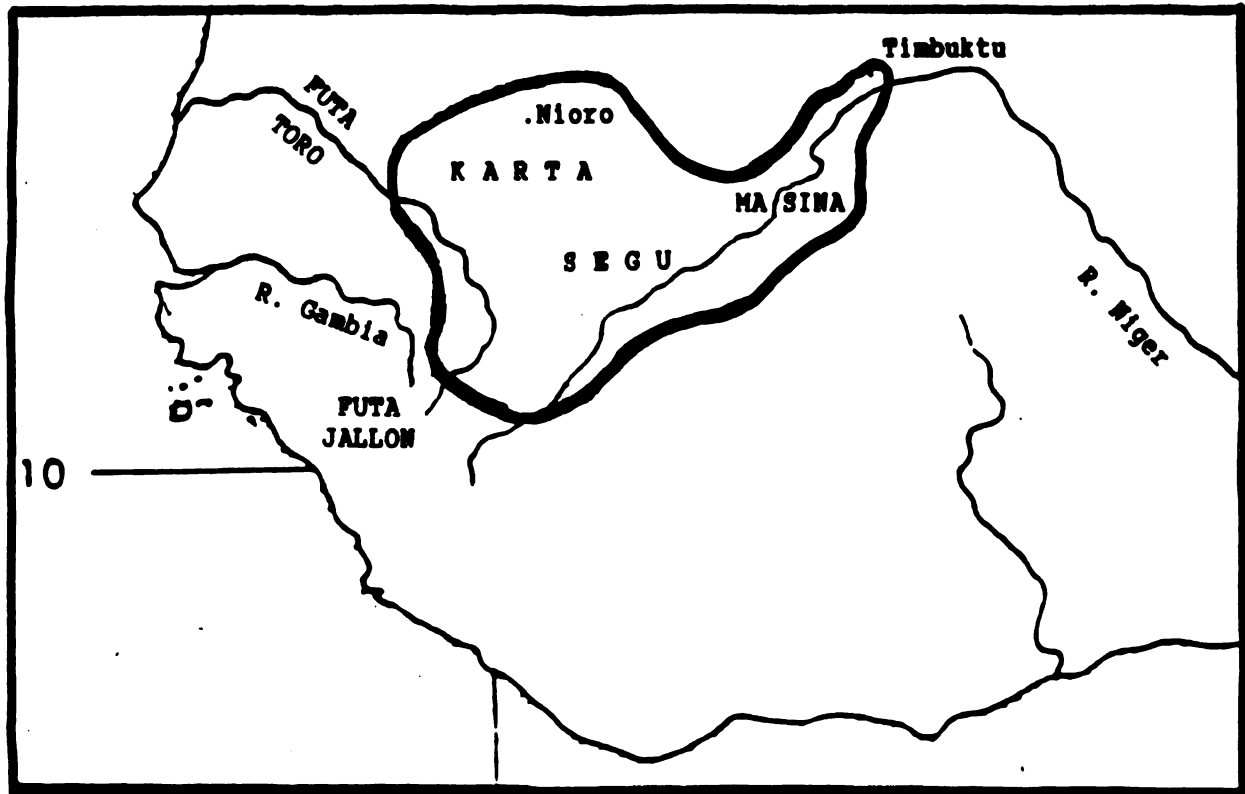


FIGURE C

The Umarian Conquests, 1852-1864

state of Bundu. Shaykh Umar became dominant over the Fulbe elite of Bundu and, by late 1854, demanded and received the submission of the Fulbe elite in Futa Toro.

Umar's position in the upper Senegal allowed him to recruit additional Fulbe soldiers from Futa Toro and Bundu for the extension of his holy war into Karta, which he initiated in January, 1855. His troops engaged their first Bambara regiment at Xolu, near the mouth of the Xoolimbinne River, where they defeated the Bambara decisively.<sup>30</sup> Umar passed through the vacant Massassi garrison at Segala, and camped at Konyakary, the former capital of Xasso, which would become the new Umarian administrative center in the region. As word of Umar's victory at Xolu spread, Xassonke and Soninke leaders in northwestern Karta submitted to Umar. Among Umar's initial group of supporters were the Xassonke of Sero (northern Jomboxo), the Soninke of Gidiyumme and the Soninke of Jafunu. Some of the ton-jon regiments who had engaged the Umarians at Xolu also joined Umar's armies as sofa.

The Soninke of Jafunu may have been involved in the planning of the conquest, if the reminiscences of the Kaba Jakite family are accurate. Umar Kaba Jakite, a Soninke cleric from Bundu who played an important role as advisor to Umar Tal during the holy war, was related by kinship to Soninke lineages in Jafunu. The Kaba Jakite of Jafunu had extensive commercial relations with their relatives in Kankan, a thriving nineteenth century trading center in the southern savanna. The descendants of Umar Kaba Jakite remember that, during Umar Tal's brief visit to Kankan during his return from Mecca, a distant relative met Umar Tal and told him to visit the Bundunke cleric, who would give him important advice.<sup>31</sup> Even informants without ties to the Kaba Jakite family emphasize the importance of the "secret" meeting

between Umar Tal and Umar Kaba Jakite.<sup>32</sup> The meeting may well have allowed the transfer of information about Massassi strength and local discontent to Umar Tal. Whether or not Umar Kaba Jakite played an intermediary role before the holy war, he and his sons were an important link between the Umarian community and Jafunu's commercial families in the post-conquest period.<sup>33</sup>

With the assistance of the Soninke of Jafunu and Gidiyumme, the Umarian armies followed their victory at Xolu with two dramatically successful sieges of the Massassi garrisons in Gidiyumme in February, 1855. News of these victories reverberated throughout Karta, and Umar obtained submissions from the Jawara, the Fulbe Kartanke, the Fulbe Wolaarbe and the Jawaambe. As Umar gained the support of most of the non-Massassi groups of northern Karta, Mamadi Kanja, the Massassi ruler, had no choice but to submit peacefully to Umar. In April, a short four months after Umar's initial move into the Xoolimbinne valley, Mamadi Kanja opened the gates of Nioro and invited the Umarian armies to occupy his capital. Umar's victorious march into Nioro was followed shortly thereafter by a revolt of several Massassi lineages, who drew the Umarians into battle in the Massassi heartland south of Nioro. The Umarians suffered many losses before finally putting down the challenge in late 1855. Another revolt by some Jawara lineages broke out the following year, and the Umarian position in Karta was not secure until the Jawara revolt was defeated at the end of 1856.

In the aftermath of the Massassi and Jawara revolts, Umar encouraged his followers to occupy the settlements vacated by the rebels. The decision to colonize Kingi meant that the Umarians wanted Nioro to remain the major administrative center in Karta. Futanke and Bundunke (residents from Futa Toro and Bundu, respectively) established a ring of villages around the capital to serve as the first line of defense against attack. They put their war

captives to work cultivating millet for the large garrison of troops at Nioro. A similar pattern of defensive settlement also emerged around the Umarian garrison at Konyakary in Jomboxo. The colonization of Kingi and Jomboxo set into motion the process whereby soldiers began to forsake active involvement in the conquests and establish households in the conquered territories.

While the Umarians reinforced the garrisons at Nioro and Konyakary, Umar marched through southern Karta in 1856-57, establishing a string of garrisons to defend against attacks from the Bambara of Segu. As a result of Umar's choice to colonize the north but only to garrison the south, the Umarian occupation of Karta resembled that of the Massassi. The addition of Karta to the earlier Umarian acquisitions in the upper Senegal valley formed the potential basis for an imperial Umarian state in the region. The Umarians controlled the upper Senegal valley and its extension up the Xoolimbinne, as well as the network of trade routes extending from the desert-side to the southern savanna, and from Senegambia to the routes leading to the Niger River markets. Umar also exercised influence as far west as the Fulbe regime in Futa Toro, a source of recruits for his armies. In a sense, Umar had replaced the Massassi elite and replicated the extent of their control at the height of their power in the early nineteenth century.

French actions in the upper Senegal valley, however, prevented the consolidation of an Umarian empire in the region.<sup>34</sup> Up until 1854, the French presence in the Senegal valley had consisted of a settlement in Saint Louis at the mouth of the Senegal River and a few posts scattered along the river. The French were content to dominate long-distance commerce on the river and let Africans control their own affairs. Under the leadership of Governor Faidherbe, however, the French expanded the scope and extent of their

activities in the Senegal valley, and exerted greater control over African political affairs.

In 1855, Faidherbe established a new French post in the upper Senegal valley at Medine, a location at the limit of high-water navigability near the mouth of the Xoolimbinne. He hoped desert-side gum, Bambuk gold and middle Niger trade goods would flow into Medine's market and onto boats waiting to move the merchandise through a French-dominated Senegal valley.<sup>35</sup> Faidherbe convinced many upper valley political leaders who had just submitted to Umar's armies to sign treaties with the French, and this reinforced his hold on Medine. Even as Umar was conquering the Massassi Bambara in Karta, Faidherbe was creating an anti-Umarian coalition under French patronage in the upper Senegal valley.<sup>36</sup> These activities set into motion a sequence of events which prevented the consolidation of an imperial Umurian state in the region.

From the Umurian perspective, Medine's establishment was intolerable, since an expanded French presence implied a political claim to the upper Senegal valley. It also cut the Umurians from their source of recruits in Futa Toro and put the French in position to control the commerce of the desert-side and the Western Sudan. The Umurians met the French challenge with an attack on Medine in April, 1857. The French repelled the attack, whereupon the Umurian forces settled in for a lengthy siege. With the arrival of high-waters in July, Faidherbe brought two gunboats up the Senegal and used their firepower to disperse the Umurians. After breaking the siege, he conducted military raids against Umurian positions throughout the upper valley, effectively destroying the recruitment network linking Futa Toro with Umurian Karta and thereby weakening the overall Umurian position.

The loss at Medine forced Umar to reassess his position in the region. Any hope for an imperial Umarian state in the upper Senegal valley certainly was over. Karta and Tamba remained firmly under Umarian control, but these territories lay at some distance from one another, and did not have the productive capabilities to support Umarian assertions vis-à-vis the French. Umar's options all pointed to continuing the holy war to the east against the Bambara of Segou. He still retained the charisma needed to lead soldiers into battle, and most of the troops favored the continuation of fighting. Indeed, the recruits had joined the holy war with expectations of gaining booty and not fighting the French, and the opening of a new front would more than compensate for the loss at Medine. In the immediate aftermath of the battle at Medine, Umar turned his attention away from competition with the French for control of the upper Senegal and directed his energies toward the defeat of the Bambara of Segou and an Umarian state based on the fertile Niger valley. Karta no longer was the final piece in an upper Senegal valley imperial state but the staging ground for Umar's move on to the east.

Before launching the holy war against the Bambara of Segou, Umar passed through the Senegal valley on one final recruitment effort. He succeeded in forcing most of Bundu's population to emigrate to Nioro in 1858. Umar then travelled through Futa Toro, recruiting some twenty percent of Futa Toro's population for his army. By the time Umar arrived in Nioro in early 1859, he had brought close to fifty thousand persons into Karta. Some of the recruits from Bundu, whom Umar's pressure tactics had forced to emigrate, took every opportunity to return to the Senegal valley. Other Bundunke offered to join the initial Umarian settlers in Kingi who wanted to remain in Karta. Given these expressions of resistance and the need to defend against possible French

moves into Karta, Umar decided to leave a considerable Futanke community in Kingi. Umar appointed Mustafa Keita, a Hausa slave who had fought heroically in the Kartan campaigns, to serve as his leader in Karta. He gave Mustafa control over the Umarian fort in Nioro and command over all the garrisons in Karta.<sup>37</sup> In mid-1859, Umar finally departed from Nioro with over thirty-five thousand followers to launch the holy war against Segu.

In 1860 as he marched from Nioro to Segu, Shaykh Umar appointed his oldest son, Amadu Sheku, to succeed him as Commander of the Faithful and head of the Tijaniyya order for the Western Sudan. The appointment came at that time because Umar wanted to designate a clear line of succession in the event that he died in the course of the holy war against Segu. The Umarians went on to defeat the Bambara of Segu, and Shaykh Umar survived to lead his armies against the Fulbe state of Masina in the inland Niger Delta. After 1862, Umar's involvement in the campaigns against Masina left Amadu Sheku alone to consolidate Umarian control in Segu. The task was enormous, as the Bambara reorganized themselves and fielded an impressive army. Amadu spent the entire first decade of his reign as Commander of the Faithful in defeating this challenge to Umarian hegemony in the middle Niger valley. Segu achieved great fame in Muslim circles of the late nineteenth century as the Umarian capital and the replacement of the Bambara capital which was the symbol of paganism in West Africa.

As Amadu Sheku struggled to keep Segu under his control, the Umarian armies defeated the Masinanke regime, but suffered a major reversal during which most of them died, including Shaykh Umar himself in 1864. The remaining Umarian soldiers reorganized under the leadership of Tijani, a nephew of Umar, and regained a foothold in Masina at Bandiagara, in the hills to the



east of the delta. Neither Amadu Sheku nor Tijani offered assistance to one another, and they consolidated power separately in Segu and Masina. This development illustrates the process whereby two Umarian states emerged in the Niger valley. Elsewhere in the Western Sudan, in Karta and at the initial Umarian garrison at Dingiray, similar processes of consolidation in local contexts occurred. In Karta, the emergence of the Umarian successor state had its roots in developments beginning immediately after the conquest.

### The Emergence of the Umarian Successor State in Karta

After the Umarian conquest of Karta and the suppression of the Massassi and Jawara revolts of 1856, Shaykh Umar encouraged Futanke to settle in Karta. The largest Futanke colony was in Kingi, where their settlements encircled the main Umarian garrison at Nioro. A considerable number of Futanke also settled in Jomboxo, at the garrison at Konyakary and in nearby villages. These two principal garrisons and their surrounding Futanke settlements were central places in an Umarian network which mirrored the Massassi occupation of Karta. The Umarians controlled the fertile Xoolimbinne valley and the vast Kingi plateau in the heartland of the state, and their garrisons in the south served as bases to continue the pattern of wars and raids on the fringes of the state. After the battle at Medine, when the French challenged the Umarian presence in the upper valley, the Massassi pattern regained its value as a system of domination in the area where the Futanke still retained control. The emergence of an Umarian successor state in Karta, therefore, was a partially a result of Umarian losses in the upper valley and the Futanke occupation of the former Massassi garrisons.

Several Umarian leaders at Nioro also took actions which reinforced the emergence of an Umarian state in Karta. Alfa Umar Cerno Baila Wan, who was the Umarian military leader at Nioro from 1857 to 1859, led Futanke armies in Karta to several important victories at a time when the Umarian cause had lost its momentum. Prior to his service at Nioro, Alfa Umar had fought in the major battles of the holy war, recruited soldiers in Futa Toro and then assumed the position as Shaykh Umar's most successful military commander in Karta during the Massassi and Jawara revolts of 1856.<sup>38</sup> Alfa Umar was appointed to serve as leader at Nioro when Umar left Kingi in 1857 to establish a network of garrisons in the south of Karta, and he held the position as Shaykh Umar retreated from Medine to Kunjan and then recruited in the Senegal valley for the holy war against Segou. The Umarian position in Karta was challenged by local groups in the wake of Shaykh Umar's departure, and Alfa Umar won several crucial battles.<sup>39</sup> The most critical victory was in early 1859, when anti-Umarian forces invaded Jomboxo from the Senegal valley and killed Cerno Jibi, the commander of the Umarian forces of Konyakary. Alfa Umar led a force from Nioro, dispersed the invaders and retained the Umarian hold over Jomboxo.<sup>40</sup> His actions reinforced Nioro's status as the center of power in Karta.

Mustafa Keita, Alfa Umar's successor as the leader of Nioro, further reinforced Nioro's status as the Umarian capital of Karta. When Umar Tal returned to Nioro in mid-1859, he asked Alfa Umar to join the Umarian army which was heading to Segou and appointed Mustafa to serve as the military commander at Nioro and the Umarian leader of Karta. Mustafa had gained Umar's trust as a member of the small group of Umarians which had been with the Shaykh since his residence in Sokoto, and further distinguished himself as a

capable military leader during the holy war.<sup>41</sup> While Umar probably did not make the leaders of the other garrisons swear allegiance to Mustafa, he clearly intended that Mustafa continue Alfa Umar's consolidation of power from Nioro.<sup>42</sup> Mustafa used his position as the leader of the largest Umarian garrison in Karta to seize the initiative militarily and to form a multi-ethnic coalition of interest in the region.

Mustafa conducted military campaigns annually throughout the 1860s, directing his efforts against those who challenged the Umarian presence in Karta. During the early 1860s, he focused attention on the Awlad Mbark, the dominant Moorish confederation in the desert-side north of Nioro.<sup>43</sup> Mustafa invited the leaders of the other garrisons to assist him in meeting the Awlad Mbark challenge, but initially received little support.<sup>44</sup> In response to this unwillingness to assist him, Mustafa sent hundreds of Futanke women, children and older men to the other garrisons for "protection"; this move forced the other leaders to share responsibility over the Futanke community in Nioro.<sup>45</sup> Then, Mustafa turned to the Senegal valley and recruited Futanke to help defend Nioro.<sup>46</sup> Futanke migrants from the Senegal valley arrived in 1865 and helped Mustafa's forces deliver a decisive blow to the Awlad Mbark.<sup>47</sup> This victory ensured Nioro's emergence as the dominant center of Umarian influence in Karta, and allowed Mustafa to take the lead in campaigns into Bakunu during the late 1860s. These campaigns launched annually from Nioro included contingents from most of the other garrisons, and suggest that Mustafa had consolidated his position as the military leader of Karta.<sup>48</sup>

Mustafa also built upon the oaths of alliance which Shaykh Umar had obtained from a variety of local Fulbe, Soninke and Moorish leaders to create a multi-ethnic coalition of interest in Karta. This coalition included groups who

fought in the Umarian army during the conquest, as well as those who wished Shaykh Umar well without actually fighting with him. With the defeat of the Massassi, these groups expected Umarian rule to favor their interests in Karta. Some groups continued to fight in the Umarian army and expected an equitable division of booty. Other groups expected that their interests in regional trade would be served by the Umarian administration in Karta. It was left to Mustafa to weave these diverse interests and expectations into a workable coalition. Mustafa had to convince these groups that Umarian rule served their interests in the years after Shaykh Umar's death when many groups reassessed their commitment to the Umarian cause.

Mustafa focused his attention on reinforcing the position of the Kaba Jakite family as the cornerstone of the Umarian coalition in Karta. During the conquest, one of the Shaykh's major supporters had been Umar Kaba Jakite, a Soninke cleric from Bundu. Immediately after the conquest of Karta, Umar Kaba Jakite settled with his family at Munia, a small Umarian garrison near Jafunu.<sup>49</sup> Not long after Shaykh Umar's departure for Segou, Mustafa invited the Kaba Jakite family to move to Kingi and asked Umar Kaba to serve as the imam of Nioro's mosque.<sup>50</sup> In making Kaba Jakite the imam of Nioro, Mustafa may have been following the instructions of Umar Tal; oral traditions from Kingi mention an Arabic letter in which Umar designated Umar Kaba Jakite as the imam of Nioro.<sup>51</sup> While no letter has yet been found to corroborate the oral traditions, Mustafa's choice of Kaba Jakite certainly represented a logical extension of Umar's policies if not the specific order of the Shaykh.

The Kaba Jakite family lived at Kamandape, a village on the outskirts of Nioro. Umar Kaba died shortly after moving to Kingi, and his oldest son, Buyagi, succeeded him as the imam of Nioro.<sup>52</sup> Buyagi and Umar Kaba's other

sons devoted themselves to the Islamic sciences, thereby building upon the religious credentials of their father and creating a Kaba Jakite tradition of Muslim scholarship. From their compound at Kamandape, they successfully recruited students from among Soninke families throughout Karta, and converted many local Soninke clerics to the Tijaniyya affiliation.<sup>53</sup> The Kaba Jakite family also hosted Soninke leaders and traders who travelled to Nioro on official visits. By recruiting a Soninke family to serve such a role for the state, Mustafa made Umarian rule more acceptable to indigenous Soninke groups while simultaneously facilitating the communication between Mustafa and Soninke families with whom the Kaba Jakite had kinship relations or had established particularly strong ties.

Mustafa also strengthened the alliances which Umar had established with other Soninke groups in the region. He recruited Jawara from Kingi into his military and defeated a pocket of Jawara resistance in the mid-1860s.<sup>54</sup> Thereafter, Jawara fought alongside Futanke units in Mustafa's armies, much as Jawara groups had joined ton-jon units during the Massassi era.<sup>55</sup> Another group of Soninke, those who had moved from southern Karta to Yuri after Umar's armies had defeated the Massassi, also served the state as merchants who purchased the slaves generated by Mustafa's campaigns.<sup>56</sup> The Soninke of Yuri included clerical families among them who recruited students from the Soninke areas of Karta and acted as an ideological support for the Umarian regime.<sup>57</sup>

Mustafa also reinforced ties with the Fulbe of Bakunu. Samburu, the leader of these Fulbe herders, had sworn allegiance to Shaykh Umar during the holy war, but, in contrast to Wulibu, the leader of the Fulbe of Karta, had not joined Shaykh Umar's Segovian campaign in 1859. Samburu's knowledge of the

desert-side and his aggressive Fulbe forces helped Mustafa defend the northern boarder of Karta during the early 1860s. The Fulbe Samburu also joined Mustafa's campaigns into Bakunu during the late 1860s. Some Fulbe lineages settled near Nioro during the 1860s, cementing the ties between the Umarian regime and the Fulbe of Samburu. These ties grew in intimacy throughout the Umarian era. Muntaga, Mustafa's successor as leader of Nioro, for example, relied on the Fulbe Samburu as elite troops in his army.

Mustafa also brought desert-side groups into the coalition of interest forming at Nioro. The Laghlal, a zawaya group involved in the Ijil salt trade, were one of the first Moorish groups to join the Umarian camp. As Mustafa quickly discovered, however, this alliance brought the Umarians into the ever shifting and often confusing world of desert-side politics. In 1860, the Mashduff delivered a crushing defeat to a group of Laghlal and Fulbe soldiers operating in the northern Sahel.<sup>58</sup> The Mashduff were not, however, hostile in principle to the Umarian state. Indeed, Mustafa's forces served the interests of the Mashduff by defeating the Awlad Mbark in 1865. Thereafter, the Mashduff seized the initiative against the Awlad Mbark and attacked them several times during the late 1860s.<sup>59</sup> The Mashduff coalition won several decisive victories and thereby became the dominant warrior group to the north of Karta.

The Mashduff eventually joined the Umarian coalition in order to gain access to the commercial corridors leading to the market at Medine. In 1866, negotiations between African gum traders and various Moorish groups led to the opening a major gum market at Medine.<sup>60</sup> This new market was closer to the sources of gum harvested by the Mashduff. More importantly, it lay outside the sphere of influence of the Idaw Aish, a warrior confederation which controlled access to the other gum markets of the upper Senegal valley. By crossing the

Umarian territories and exchanging gum at Medine, the Mashduff avoided having to acknowledge subordination to another Moorish confederation. Mustafa's efforts to bring and retain the Mashduff and the Laghlal in the Umarian coalition ensured that gum and salt would pass through Karta on the way to the markets of the Niger and Senegal valleys.

Under Mustafa's leadership, Umarian rule encouraged the expansion of commercial traffic within and across Karta. The security along the desert-side facilitated exchanges between Moorish groups and Soninke communities which cultivated along the northern boundary of Karta. Umarian rule also extended order along the trade routes which linked the north with the markets of the savanna and forest to the south. Eugène Mage, a French traveller who passed through Karta on his way to Segou during the mid-1860s, commented on the social order and commercial vitality of Karta; his description of southern Karta sharply contrasts with the images of disorder which dominate his discussion of Amadu Sheku's rule in Segou.<sup>61</sup> The social order which Mage observed in his travels reflected Mustafa's success in creating a multi-ethnic coalition of interest in Karta. It also reflected Mustafa's ability to control the Umarian network of military garrisons in Karta. Mustafa consolidated an Umarian presence in Karta which contrasted with the state emerging under Amadu Sheku's leadership in Segou.<sup>62</sup>

As Mustafa's power increased, the Futanke began to wonder whether autonomy was desirable and whether it was appropriate for a former slave to hold such a powerful position. The Futanke combined the issues because they perceived Mustafa's policies as favoring the interests of indigenous groups over those of the Futanke. As more and more Futanke migrated into Karta, their political voice grew in strength, and they pushed for changes at the top in

Karta. As their influence grew, however, they had to resolve two questions. Who should they support as a successor to Mustafa? Would that successor continue to consolidate an autonomous state in Karta, or would he emphasize commitments to the Umarians in other regions of the Western Sudan?

These questions surfaced during the two revolts, and never received a unified response from the Futanke of Karta. Their interests were much too diverse. This diversity was the result of the multi-ethnic coalition, which brought economic wealth into Karta. Some Futanke participated in economic enterprises directly linked to the regional economy. Others, often those who migrated to Karta after Umar's holy war, fought in the Umarian army and came to much different conclusions about the most desirable form of Umarian rule. The political leadership, such as Mustafa and his successors, had yet another view. In the next three chapters, I turn to the Kartan economy and the migration to Karta in order to amplify these diverse interests.



### Notes

1. Paul Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, 1878-79, rédigé d'après les notes et journaux de voyage de Soleillet par Gabriel Gravier (Paris, 1887), pp. 227-28.
2. Bambara oral traditions assert that Segovian generals mounted their campaigns with armies of as many as twenty thousand soldiers. The Bambara of Karta also fielded an awesome force, but they could not match the numbers which the armies of Segou totaled. See Louis Tauxier, Histoire des Bambara (Paris, 1942), p. 83.
3. Tauxier, Histoire des Bambara, p. 171.
4. The Bambara of Segou drove deep into Karta several times in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but they never were able to force the Massassi, the Bambara rulers of Karta, to recognize Segovian suzerainty.
5. Amadu Sheku's desire to create an imperial state emerges most clearly in the account of Camile Piétri, a French military officer who collected oral testimony from officials of Amadu's court during his service in a diplomatic mission to Segou. See Chapter Six for a discussion of the Piétri's role in the transmission of Amadu Sheku's perspectives. C. Piétri, Les Français au Niger (Paris, 1885).
6. See my discussion in Chapter One.
7. The Massassi state in Karta, in contrast to its neighbor in Segou, is not blessed with an extensive historical literature. I base this discussion on an examination of eighteenth and nineteenth century traveller's accounts, the most informative being Anne Raffenel's Voyage dans l'Afrique occidentale française (Paris, 1846). See also Charles Monteil, Les Bambara de Ségou et du Kaarta (Paris, 1924). Sékéné-Mody Cissoko's overview of Massassi history also is useful. Cissoko, Contribution à l'histoire politique du Khasso dans le Haut-Sénégal des origines à 1854 (Paris, 1986). I also draw on traditions of the Massassi era recounted to me by Amadou Ba of Nioro.
8. Monteil, Les Bambara, pp. 4-5.
9. This discussion relies on the late nineteenth century description of northern Karta by the French officer Valentin. ANM 1D108: Konyakary, 1 October 1890, "Diombokho et itinéraires sur Nioro". Lt. Lartigue relied on Valentin's account and published "Notice géographique sur la région du Sahel", Bulletin de Comité d'Afrique Française. Renseignements Coloniaux (1898).
10. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Soninke lineages in the province of Jafunu invested in slave labor and supervised the expansion of millet and cloth production. Eric Pollet and Grace Winter, La société soninké (Brussels, 1971).

11. The Xassonke, Mandinka-speaking clans who claim Fulbe origins, colonized Jomboxo during the eighteenth century. See Cissoko, L'Histoire politique du Khasso, pp. 98ff.
12. Robin Law, The Horse in West African History (Oxford, 1980), pp. 53-58.
13. According to Jawaambe traditions, rebellious Jawaambe slaves were the first groups to settle at Nioro. Jawara lineages later claimed Nioro for their residence. In the nineteenth century, Mamadi Kanja made Nioro the capital of the Massassi state. By this time, the Jawaambe had moved their major camp southward to Karaharo.
14. Amadu Hampate Ba and Jacques Daget, L'Empire Peul du Macina (1818-1853), (Paris, 1962).
15. Pollet and Winter, La société soninke.
16. E. Ann McDougall, "Camel caravans of the Saharan salt trade: traders and transporters in the nineteenth century" in Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch and Paul Lovejoy, eds., The Workers of African Trade (Beverly Hills, 1985).
17. Charles Monteil, Les Khassonkés (Paris, 1915).
18. Regarding the origins of the Bambara state of Segou, I adopt Richard Roberts argument that the ton was based on the age-set and not the hunters' organization. See Roberts, "Production and Reproduction of Warrior States: the Segou Bambara and Segou Tukolor", International Journal of African Historical Studies 13 (1980). Sources for Segou Bambara history include: Maurice Delafosse, Haut-Senegal-Niger, 3 vols. (Paris, 1912); Monteil, Les Bambara; Tauxier, Histoire; Lilian Kesteloot, Da Monzon de Ségou, 4 vols. (Paris, 1972); Jean Bazin, "Guerre et servitude à Segou", in L'Esclavage en Afrique précoloniale, ed. C. Meillassoux (Paris, 1975).
19. Military elites throughout West Africa and the Middle East have relied on slaves for use in the military and bureaucracy due to their perceived virtues of loyalty. See, for an example from the Middle East, Daniel Pipes, Slave Soldiers and Islam: the Genesis of a Military System (New Haven, 1981).
20. Roberts makes this point for the soldiers of the Segou Bambara state, but perhaps overstates the degree to which the warriors relied on warfare and raiding. Roberts, "Production and Reproduction", pp. 406-08.
21. Charles Monteil argues that the intricate web of political ties which the Massassi wove in the region was the feature which most distinguished the Massassi state from the neighboring Bambara regime in Segou. Indeed, unlike the Segovian traditions, which point to conflicts among Bambara and Marka cohorts during the creation of Mamari Kulibali's ton, the traditions of Massassi origins emphasize the alliances between the Massassi and Soninke lineages. See Monteil, Les Bambara, pp. 103ff.

22. Cissoko argues that the Xassonke state established tributary rights over Jafunu during the reign of Demba Sega (1757-96). It seems likely that ruling groups among the Massassi, Xassonke and Moors all competed for control of the Xoolimbinne valley. The Massassi held the upper hand and ultimately won full control after the fall of the Xassonke state in the early nineteenth century. Cissoko, L'Histoire politique du Khasso. The Massassi chronology of expansion can be found in Monteil, Les Bambara, the Kaba Jakite chronicle translated by Delafosse, and the oral traditions of the Massassi recounted by Amadou Ba.

23. The frequency of raids in the south led to a hierarchy of enslavement: Bambara from commoner lineages were eligible for recruitment into the ton-jon regiments, but slaves of Bambara masters and all Mandinka men were best used for exchanges (for weapons, salt or luxury goods). This anecdote was repeated to me by Amadu Ba of Nioro.

24. My argument concerning warfare and the structure of the Massassi state draws on insights into the Segovian state offered by Bazin, "Guerre et servitude". Roberts, "Production and reproduction" also proved helpful in formulating my ideas. My argument differs from these two works on the Segou Bambara state on points of historical difference between the two Bambara regimes and, in some instances, on theoretical grounds.

25. The pattern is apparent in the schematic chronology of Massassi rulers and the history of their reigns by Monteil in Les Bambara.

26. See Philip Curtin's discussion of the Gajaaga commercial diaspora and its western extension in Economic Change in Precolonial Africa: Senegambia in the Era of the Slave Trade, (Madison, 1975), Chapter Two.

27. At Makana, up river from Bakel in the upper Senegal valley, the agents of Saint Louis gum merchants paid a fee to the Massassi to ensure the arrival of the gum caravans.

28. E. Ann McDougall discusses the question in her thesis, "The Ijil salt industry: its role in the precolonial economy of the western Sudan", Birmingham University, Centre of West African Studies, Ph.D. thesis, 1980.

29. The Kaba Jakite chronicle refers to the change, as well as the oral traditions recounted to me by Amadu Ba. I date the change in taxes to the reign of Bojan Moriba (c. 1818-32) from indirect evidence. He is known as the most powerful Massassi ruler, and his reign is associated with establishment of a new capital at Yelimane in Gidiyumme. His choice of residence may indicate the desire to exploit more fully the resources of the northern Xoolimbinne valley. Jawaambe from Kingi reportedly asked the Fulbe of Masina to help liberate them from the Massassi yoke during Bojan Moriba's reign, suggesting changes in tax collection in Kingi as well. See, for Jawaambe oral traditions, Ba and Daget, L'Empire Peul, pp. 173ff.

30. David Robinson provides the details and sources in The Holy War of Umar Tal, (Oxford, 1985).

31. The contact may well have been made while Umar was in Dingiray from 1849 to 1852, given the proximity of Kankan to Dingiray.
32. Amadou Ba of Nioro is a notable example.
33. The Kaba Jakite family initially settled at Munia, a village on the boundary of Jomboxo and Jafunu, before moving to Kamandape, a village on the outskirts of Nioro; Umar Kaba and his sons served as spiritual guides and hosts to Soninke families of Jafunu and other Soninke provinces in the west.
34. Robinson provides a balanced assessment of Franco-Umarian relations during the holy war, one which contrasts with the polemic works of many historians who write about this era. Robinson, The Holy War of Umar Tal, Chapter Six.
35. French hopes of tapping into a lucrative source of gold proved futile. See Philip Curtin, "The lure of Bambuk gold," Journal of African History 14 (1973). Curtin discusses the importance of Medine within the context of the regional economic system of Senegambia. Curtin, Economic Change, Chapter Two.
36. See, for the anti-Umarian coalition, Robinson, The Holy War of Umar Tal, pp. 167ff.
37. Umar's last days in Nioro are not remembered as clearly as his triumphal first entrance into the town. Umar's charge to the inhabitants of Nioro is usually reported as a prophetic statement made just before his death in Masina. The Arabic chronicle written by Thierno Yahya Tal of Konyakary recounts some of the details associated with Umar's last visit there. See Chapter One for my analysis of Yahya's Arabic chronicle.
38. Robinson, The Holy War of Umar Tal, pp. 148, 154, 161, 187, 190, 195.
39. ANS 15G108: Medine, 13 and 27 October 1858 and 7 January 1859, Ct. Medine to the Governor.
40. ANS 15G108: Medine, no date (pièce 81) and 7 April 1859, Ct. Medine to the Governor.
41. Robinson, The Holy War of Umar Tal, p. 338.
42. The Kaba Jakite chronicle from Nioro indicate that Mustafa was to serve as the leader of all the Umarian garrisons in Karta. "Traditions historiques et légendes du Soudan occidental; traduites d'un manuscrit arabe inédit par Maurice Delafosse", Bulletin du Comité de l'Afrique Française. Renseignements Coloniaux no. 10 (1913), p. 362.
43. ANS 15G108: Medine, 2 October 1860, Ct. Medine to the Governor.
44. ANS 13G169: Bakel, 4 May 1865, Ct. Bakel to the Governor.
45. ANS 13G210: Medine, 8 July 1864, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel; ANS 13G169: Bakel, 8 and 15 July 1864, Ct. Bakel to the Governor.

46. The only direct reference to Mustafa's involvement in the recruitment of Futanke soldiers in the Senegal valley is: ANS 13G169: Bakel, 18 October 1865, Ct. Bakel to the Governor. References to recruiters from Nioro first appear in 1864.
47. ANS 13G169: Bakel, 4 March, 4 April, 4 May and 2 July 1865, Ct. Bakel to the Governor.
48. Mustafa had no problems recruiting forces from the other garrisons for his annual campaigns of the late 1860s. ANS 13G213: Medine, 25 February and 12 March 1868, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel.
49. ANM 2E61: Nioro, 1 January 1897, fiche de renseignement. See, for a history of the founder of this clerical family, Tiébilé Dramé, "Alfa Umar Kaba Jaxite, fondateur de Kabala, marabout et conseiller de Siixumaru Tal (al-Hajj Umar)", Islam et Sociétés au Sud du Sahara no. 2 (1988).
50. Umar Kaba Jakite had moved to Kingi before mid-1865. Interviews in Nioro with Amadou Ba and El Hadj Sadiku Kaba Jakite. He is described as "Mustafa's marabout" in ANS 13G169: Bakel, 4 September 1865, Ct. Bakel to the Governor.
51. Colonel Robert Adam, Légendes historiques du pays de Nioro (Sahel) (Paris, 1904), p. 111.
52. Paul Marty, Etudes sur l'Islam et les tribus du Soudan, Volume 4 (Paris, 1921), pp. 212-214.
53. Despite current ambiguity in Nioro regarding the question of Umar Kaba Jakite's affiliation with the Tijaniyya order, it seems very likely that Umar Tal inducted Umar Kaba Jakite into it. Kaba Jakite's sons without question were Tijaniyya. Interviews in Nioro with El Hadj Hatta Oumar Kaba Jakite and El Hadj Sadiku Kaba Jakite in February 1986.
54. ANS 15G108: Medine, 1 February 1866, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel.
55. Interview with Amadou Ba, Nioro, 26 January 1986.
56. Interview with Amadou Ba, Nioro, 26 January 1986.
57. Emile Blanc, "Contribution à l'étude des populations et de l'histoire du Sahel soudanais", Bulletin de Comité d'Etudes Historiques et Scientifiques de l'Afrique Occidentale Française (1924), p. 273.
58. Paul Marty, "Les Chroniques de Oualata et de Néma (Soudan français)", Revue des Etudes Islamiques 1 (1927), p. 368.
59. Marty, "Les Chroniques de Oualata", p. 370.
60. I discuss the gum trade in greater detail in Chapter Four.
61. Eugène Mage, Voyage dans le Soudan occidental (Paris, 1868), p. 86.

62. Amadu Sheku never was able to weave the diverse groups of the middle Niger valley into a coalition of interest. Overt use of force remained the primary expression of state involvement.

## CHAPTER THREE

### The Fulbe Migration to Karta During the Late Nineteenth Century

During the course of the late nineteenth century, tens of thousands of Fulbe from the Senegal valley migrated to the Western Sudan. Most migrants (ferganke in Pulaar) settled in the Kartan provinces of Jomboxo and Kingi, with Nioro and its environs receiving the largest population influx. Oral traditions from the Senegal valley refer to the migration as the fergo Nioro, expressing Nioro's status as the primary destination of the migrants. According to the late nineteenth century French officer Joseph Gallieni, the fergo helped Nioro emerge as "the most important center of Futanke influence" after Amadu Sheku's capital at Segu-Sikoro.<sup>1</sup> Gallieni added that many Futanke whose fathers had settled in Segu after the holy war also wanted to migrate to Nioro, but Amadu prevented them from doing so. Amadu coveted Karta's growing Futanke population, and tried to attract them to Segu. Despite his efforts, most Futanke preferred Karta to Segu, and their settlement in Karta made it a powerful rival to Segu during the final years of Umarian domination in the Western Sudan.

The migration strategies associated with the fergo Nioro differed from the dominant patterns of movement in the late nineteenth century Senegal valley. Farmers and herders frequently moved to new settlements in response to several years of poor rains or increasing raids from desert-side groups from the north. When the cycles of rains returned or the threat of raids dissipated, migrants often returned to the areas which they had abandoned. In contrast, the fergo Nioro usually occurred after a good harvest, and reflected years of discussion and planning with others thinking of making the migration. The ferganke, too, often were responding to a specific invitation to join their relatives or neighbors who had migrated to Karta prior to them. The final decision to migrate often hinged on the ferganke's confidence in the abilities of those who were leading the fergo, since the journey to Karta was long, arduous and often dangerous. Many migrants lost all their cattle to raids along the route to Nioro, or had to sell them to acquire guns and grain for the long trip. The risks associated with the trip were considerable, but migrants who decided to go to Karta hoped to regain it all as booty when they fought in the Muslim armies led by the disciples of Umar Tal.

The French presence in the late nineteenth century Senegal valley also shaped the context in which the fergo Nioro occurred. Although the migration began before the French established formal colonial control in the valley, the French felt that the fergo of lower and middle valley Fulbe ran counter to their political interests in the region. They tried to stop the migration from time to time during the late nineteenth century, but their efforts proved to be unsuccessful. As the French began their advance into the interior in the 1880s, the fergo acquired an anti-colonial tone: Futanke leaders argued that the



region was falling under the control of Christians, and they advocated migrating to join Muslim armies in the "holy lands" of Umarian Karta.

The dynamics of the fergo Nioro challenge the historian to situate the migration within a matrix in which the ferganke were both "pushed" from the valley and "pulled" to the Futanke colonies in Karta. Neither the data nor historical circumstances of the fergo lend themselves to economic models which assume an economic order shaped by wage-employment.<sup>2</sup> Neo-marxist analyses which focus on the capricious penetration of foreign capital and the coercive power of colonial policies are equally as inappropriate, since the French had not established formal colonial control over the entire valley.<sup>3</sup> The French presence, nevertheless, was an important historical factor, and the migration of lower valley Fulbe herders suggests that French efforts to create a new economic order in which raiding was discouraged may have influenced the fergo Nioro.

The present chapter examines the fergo within a diachronic framework in which the importance of a range of forces operating at different periods can be assessed. After providing an historical overview of the population flow, the discussion moves to an analysis of the historical forces which "pulled" and "pushed" the migrants to Karta. The data is not complete, but it does allow for a general assessment of the fergo Nioro. The chapter concludes by discussing the implications of the arrival of the ferganke on Umarian Karta.

### The migration to Karta: an overview

Quantitative statements regarding the migration flow are difficult to make with much certainty. Even estimates of the net outflow from the Senegal

valley over the course of the late nineteenth century require qualification. These reservations are due to the nature of the extant data. Tax records from the Umarian era are virtually non-existent. Most of the population figures in Umarian Arabic documents focus almost exclusively on troop strength, and even these materials document only a few periods and are not even complete for those eras. While the French commandants of the Senegal valley reported on the movement of migrants making their way to Karta, their documents do not provide sufficient data to estimate the total volume of the population flow into Karta. The reports often describe only those migrants whose caravans passed close to the posts; many ferganke followed a northern route to avoid French attempts to halt the migration flow. All quantitative statements, therefore, are at best informed estimates based on incomplete data.

Early colonial census records are the best sources for an estimate of the total number of immigrants who arrived in Karta. These materials put the early colonial population of the Senegambian immigrants at twenty thousand.<sup>4</sup> This figure is too low, since it does not include the twenty thousand Futanke whom the French forced to return to the Senegal valley during the early 1890s.<sup>5</sup> Colonial officials, too, had trouble counting the number of Fulbe herders in Karta, who used their mobility to evade contact with the French; colonial census reports fluctuated widely over the course of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>6</sup> Resistance to enumeration by colonial census takers also was evident among sedentary groups, who knew that the French used the figures to assess taxes.<sup>7</sup> Finally, the military losses suffered by the Futanke community during the French conquest also need to be included.<sup>8</sup> My estimate of the size of the Futanke community on the eve of the French conquest is 50,000. If this figure is accurate, then the immigrant community constituted

close to a third of the total population in Jomboxo and well over half the population of Kingi.

This estimate of the immigrant Futanke community indicates the total during the last few years of Umarian domination in Karta. While the increases associated with natural population growth cannot be discounted, the arrival of ferganke after Umar's holy war accounted for most of the expansion during the late nineteenth century. The initial settler population probably numbered less than ten thousand Futanke. The largest concentration of immigrant settlement was in Kingi, where Futanke and Bundunke settlers resided at Nioro and in villages vacated by Bambara and Jawara communities in the aftermath of their revolts against Umarian rule. Jomboxo also was a locus of Fulbe settlement: Futanke and Bundunke settled at Konyakary and in nearby villages. When raids by desert-side groups made life difficult in Nioro and its environs during the early 1860s, Jomboxo received an infusion of Futanke settlers from Kingi. Smaller communities of Futanke had settled at other garrisons in Karta after the holy war, but Kingi and Jomboxo were the largest settlements by a wide margin.

Many Futanke soldiers who had participated in Umar's campaigns in Segu and Masina returned to Karta during the early 1860s to rejoin wives and children who had been sent back during the movement east.<sup>9</sup> The crucial role which the returning Futanke played in bolstering the colonies is reflected in oral traditions associated with the construction of the main mosque in Nioro. All variants stress that it was not built during Umar's era but constructed with the assistance of Futanke who had returned from the east.<sup>10</sup> The stories of Bambara resistance to Umarian rule in Segu which the returning soldiers repeated certainly contributed to the colonists' resolve to construct a large

mosque in the region. It also strengthened their growing conviction that they had to expand their ranks with additional Senegal valley migrants in order to ensure that Umar's holy war had an enduring impact on Karta.

The Futanke colonists of Karta began to send recruiters to the Senegal valley beginning in 1864. This effort produced results almost immediately: the arrival of a group of ferganke in 1865, led by Samba Umahani Sal of Toro province, helped break the siege of Nioro by the Awlad Mbark, a desert-side warrior confederation.<sup>11</sup> The fergo of Samba Umahani Sal demonstrated that the Futanke colonies depended upon an influx of new settlers to strengthen their position in Karta. Ferganke continued to arrive in Karta over the course of the 1860s at a rate of several hundred annually.<sup>12</sup> French officials in the valley were alarmed by the numbers of Fulbe leaving the middle valley, who often migrated just after the harvest and did not pay their taxes.<sup>13</sup> Some commandants tried to stem the tide by stopping migrants and sending them back. Others encouraged their African clients to attack passing caravans, a policy which led to severe injuries to the migrants.<sup>14</sup> In 1865, Cerno Musa, a Futanke notable at Konyakary, protested these actions to the French, arguing that anyone making the fergo was accompanied by envoys of the Umarian state and deserved to be protected.<sup>15</sup> French migration policy was inconsistent throughout the 1860s, with the result that thousands were able to make the fergo successfully.

Amadu Sheku's arrival and residence in Nioro during the early 1870s altered the fergo. The Commander of the Faithful came to Karta to put down a challenge to his authority led by his younger brothers, Habib and Moktar, who had rallied some of the Futanke of Karta to their banner. Amadu sent recruiters to the Senegal valley in advance of his arrival in Nioro, in hopes of

increasing his forces with ferganke who responded to the call.<sup>16</sup> He continued to recruit in the Senegal valley throughout the early 1870s, to bolster his army for campaigns against the Bambara of Gemukura. The numbers of ferganke for the years 1869 through 1872 increased, but the volume did not approach the level of recruitment which Umar Tal had obtained over a decade earlier. I estimate that the total did not surpass four thousand migrants.<sup>17</sup>

French policy toward the increased population flow of this period was ambiguous.<sup>18</sup> The French initially confused supporters of Amadu Sheku for supporters of Amadu Mahdiyu, the Futanke cleric who preached holy war against the French in the lower valley, and consequently prevented some ferganke from going to Karta. Direct orders from the Governor at Saint Louis clarified French policy toward the Commander of the Faithful: he advocated tolerance for the ferganke as long as Amadu Sheku did not make advances toward the French position in the Senegal valley. The Governor hoped to retain commercial ties with the Western Sudan, and Amadu's insistence on access to the Futanke of the valley was perceived as a compensation for the ensuing commercial benefits. From the French perspective, too, four thousand migrants was a much smaller number than the forty thousand followers whom Umar recruited in the late-1850s.

While thousands of Futanke migrated to Karta, some returned to the valley during this period. The out-migration occurred in 1871 and 1872, and included Futanke who had settled in Karta immediately after the holy war as well as recent arrivals.<sup>19</sup> The reverse flow partially reflected disagreement with Amadu Sheku's treatment of his dissident brothers, Habib and Moktar, whom Amadu imprisoned. However, a similar return movement back to the valley occurred after Umar Tal's recruitment of the late-1850s; at that time, it expressed the

reaction of those who had been forced to migrate. Some of the returnees of the early 1870s may also have been migrants who had been swept up in the fergo and became disenchanted with life in Karta.

In this context of recruitment and return, Amadu Sheku tried to convince the remaining Futanke in Karta to join him and migrate to Segu in 1873.<sup>20</sup> At first Amadu threatened to force the Futanke into leaving, but his threats precipitated active resistance among the Futanke of Karta. Cerno Mamadu Khayar emerged as a leader of the Futanke resistance, and successfully argued in defense of remaining in Karta and completing the task which Umar Tal had given the initial Futanke colonists. While Amadu Sheku's arrival had accentuated the migration flow from the Senegal valley, it did not have the result of shifting the locus of attraction from Nioro to Segu. By returning to Segu without many Futanke migrants, Amadu virtually conceded that the population influx associated with the fergo was outside his control and would benefit Karta to the exclusion of Segu.

The return of Futanke dissidents and those dissatisfied with the fergo may have dampened enthusiasm for migrating to Karta for a time, since the number of migrants who made the fergo in the years immediately following the return of these Futanke dropped off considerably. However, the coincidence of two events in the mid-1870s served to launch the fergo into yet a new phase. In early 1875, five ferganke returned to their Fulbe herding communities in western Futa Toro and began to recruit additional migrants to return with them to Nioro.<sup>21</sup> At the same time, one of the leading French-designated Fulbe chefs in Dimar, Alfa Samba Coki of Botol, decided to join the ranks of those making the fergo.<sup>22</sup> Alfa Samba's fergo not only added legitimacy to the initiatives of the ferganke recruiters, but his migration attracted many Fulbe

herders from the lower valley.<sup>23</sup> The migration led by Alfa Samba launched the migration of lower valley Fulbe herders which would gain considerable momentum over the next decade.<sup>24</sup>

Migrations from Futa and the lower valley continued during the late 1870s and early 1880s, when several thousand made the fergo. The movement then took on dramatic proportions between 1885 and 1888, when thousands of Fulbe migrants made the fergo annually. French estimates of the population loss from the area near Saint Louis alone approach twenty thousand for the entire area; well over half of these losses occurred after 1875.<sup>25</sup> Thousands more joined the fergo Nioro from the western and central provinces of Futa Toro. Most of the ferganke were herders, but the exodus included farmers as well.<sup>26</sup> In the 1880s, farming communities from Toro and the Halaybe village cluster joined the caravans as they passed through Futa Toro.<sup>27</sup> Also, several prominent Futanke leaders made the fergo independently from the mass movement.<sup>28</sup>

The military leaders of Karta actively encouraged the fergo. During the late 1870s, French officials at Bakel stopped Umarian recruiters heading for the Senegal valley and learned that most were recent arrivals who were encouraged to return to Senegal valley and ask relatives and friends to join them in Karta.<sup>29</sup> A pattern of recruitment emerged in the late 1870s whereby ferganke joined the armies of Umarian Karta and the most distinguished soldiers returned to the Senegal valley to become leaders of subsequent migrations. Muntaga and Bassiru Tal, who served as military leaders at Nioro and Konyakary, respectively, rewarded the recruiters with booty and promotions within the army. They accommodated the growing influx of ferganke by establishing new settlements on the outskirts of their capitals. The Tal brothers also prevented any disenchanted ferganke from returning to the Senegal valley by encouraging

their allies in the desert-side to raid any unauthorized groups trying to return. Amadu Sheku continued these policies regarding the fergo Nioro upon his second return to Karta in 1885.

As the caravans of ferganke grew in size and included migrants who had not planned their participation in the fergo as carefully as the earlier immigrants, the demand for grain along the migration route increased. Some quantities of grain probably were obtained by exchanges with producers along the migration route, but direct purchases from grain merchants at the major Senegal valley markets also occurred. Records are not complete for the period, but French documents from the mid-1880s indicate that grain prices at Bakel increased as ferganke caravans moved through the region.<sup>30</sup> Guinée cloth was the currency accepted by the grain merchants, but they probably accepted cattle and slaves in exchange for grain as well. The fergo, therefore, drew the migrants into the markets of the Senegal valley as they made their journey to Karta.

Given the uncertainties associated with the long migration up the valley, some ferganke chose to forgo caravan travel. The French steam ships which moved up the Senegal River from Saint Louis to Medine after the annual rains provided an alternative to caravan travel. Ferganke could board the ships at one of the stops along the lower valley and then descend at Medine, which was merely one day by foot from Konyakary. Several migrants traveled by ship in the 1870s, but the option grew in popularity during the 1880s.<sup>31</sup> In response to the growing interest in travel by ship, Gaston Dèves, a Saint Louisian merchant, offered passage up the Senegal River on the French ships in exchange for the cattle of lower valley herders.<sup>32</sup> The grain merchants and butchers of the



Senegal valley provided crucial services in support of the mass migration of ferganke.

The loss of Fulbe herders from the hinterland of Saint Louis attracted the attention of the French as early as 1875, and the Governor of Senegal ordered the commandants of the valley to gather information about it beginning in the late 1870s.<sup>33</sup> The French tried to stop the fergo through various strategies, including the imprisonment of returning ferganke recruiters, the surveillance of and discussions with those groups which were planning to migrate and the seizure of slaves, cattle and other goods from those Fulbe who made their way to Karta. The French asked various Futanke leaders in the middle Senegal valley to attack caravans, but these efforts only led the ferganke to travel in increasingly larger caravans to protect themselves as they moved up the valley. Nevertheless, the migrants usually arrived in Karta without cattle, slaves and material goods, and joined the Umarian armies without hesitation.

Four patterns emerge from the data regarding the fergo Nioro. Firstly, the western regions of Futa Toro consistently provided the largest number of migrants. Toro province was the largest single contributor, but the Halaybe village cluster (to the east of Toro) and communities in the lower valley contributed a large number of migrants. Secondly, the participation of herders increased over time, and came to dominate the numbers of ferganke. Thirdly, ferganke tended to be young males. While some caravans included women, children and heads of household, many groups consisted almost entirely of men between the ages of twenty and thirty. Not surprisingly, the French report that the armies of Karta in the 1880s were composed almost entirely of young men who had recently arrived. Young men were able to withstand the hardship of the long fergo, and more willing to take risks than men who were

establishing households in the lower valley. Oral traditions of the fergo of prominent notables often narrate the exploits of the notables' sons, which suggest that younger men were the most eager to join the fergo and best suited for the demands of the migration trail.

Finally, an ethnic factor also emerges in the fergo Nioro. While Soninke from the upper valley and Wolof from the lower valley joined the fergo from time to time during the late nineteenth century, the overwhelming majority of ferganke were Fulbe. The importance of ethnicity is magnified by the fact that lower valley Fulbe herders, who comprised an important ferganke component in the 1870s and 1880s, left in large number while Wolof communities who farmed in the same area did not join the fergo in the same proportions. Oral traditions collected from descendants of lower valley Fulbe ferganke note the desire to leave Wolof areas as one of the motivations for making the migration. While French policies regarding the interests of Fulbe herding activities may in part account for the lower valley Fulbe participation, the participation of many Fulbe farmers from Futa Toro suggests that ethnicity was an important factor in the fergo Nioro. Why did the Fulbe of the Senegal valley migrate to Karta in large numbers during the course of the late nineteenth century? Some answers emerge from a careful analysis of the data.

### The Push and the Pull of the Fergo Nioro

The reasons that Senegal valley Fulbe participated in the fergo Nioro are numerous. The efforts of agents who targeted the Fulbe for recruitment into Umarian armies proved to be the most important factor. Beginning in the mid-1860s and continuing throughout the next two decades, Umarian agents travelled

to the Senegal valley, rallied Fulbe under the Muslim banner, and led them to Karta. Few ferganke would have made the long trip to Karta without the active encouragement of the recruiters. Historical circumstances in the western Senegal valley made certain groups more receptive than groups farther east to recruitment into the fergo. The French presence was closer, and in the case of Dimar, the effects of French policies were quite evident. Farmers in Toro province also felt both the demands of the torodbe elite and the French presence in the Senegal valley. Herders in Toro and the lower valley resisted French attempts to halt their raids against Moorish groups on the right bank and the sedentary populations of the left bank. The result was significant participation in the fergo at various junctures of the late nineteenth century.

**Pull factors.** The importance of recruiters, those who already had left the Senegal valley and returned to encourage others to join the fergo, cannot be overstated. During Umar Tal's recruitment campaign in Futa Toro during the late 1850s, Eliman Seydu, a leading notable of Dimar, expressed the sentiments of many Futanke when he reportedly said: "we prefer our country to one which our fathers have not seen".<sup>34</sup> This argument against migrating diminished as the inhabitants of the valley heard about Karta from those who resided there. Sons who had left Futa Toro ten years earlier returned as heads of household who had several wives, children and slaves in Karta. The knowledge that those who had followed Shaykh Umar were safe and calling for their relatives to settle with them in the conquered territories altered how they received the invitation: the Futanke realized that the holy war had succeeded and the immigrants lived as a ruling elite in Karta. The Umarian armies were no longer fighting on the march as invaders, but launching their wars from the security of large Futanke settlements in Kingi and Jomboxo.

The fergo of Yero Balel, a prominent Fulbe notable, illustrates the role of recruiters and how information about Karta encouraged participation in it. Oral accounts from the Nioro area report that Yero decided to visit Karta prior to leading his followers on the fergo because he wanted to make certain that the region was suitable for settlement by herding communities. The informants note that he was so impressed by the Kingi area that he returned to lead several caravans of ferganke there. French documents indicate that Yero Balel and a companion made such an exploratory trip to Karta prior to the mass migrations of the 1880s, travelling by French steamship upriver in 1878.<sup>35</sup> Since Yero became an important military commander in Karta, it was less the pasturage of Karta than the military opportunities which moved him to recruit so many Fulbe to make the fergo. Yero's emergence as a leading jom fergo of the 1880s clearly shows how a recruiter with knowledge of conditions in Karta succeeded in convincing Fulbe to make the final decision to migrate.

Oral accounts of Yero Balel's leadership also emphasize his ability to protect his ferganke from attacks along the way due to his experience as a jom fergo. Yero was not unique in that regard; most recruiters were Fulbe who had already made the fergo and could reassure reluctant migrants that they knew the migration route and how to avoid its many dangers.<sup>36</sup> All residents of the valley knew that attacks might occur as they passed through Toro, Law and Bossea, since the Laamdo Toro, the Almamy of Law and Abdul Bokar Kan often raided caravans. They also knew that the migration to Kingi involved a lengthy passage through the Sahel east of Bakel, where knowledge of the locations of wells was essential. Many communities waited several years to make the fergo with an experienced recruiter who had made the trip often.<sup>37</sup>

Recruiters were a crucial human link between Karta and the Senegal valley without whom the fergo Nioro would not have occurred.

Recruiters often carried letters from relatives who made specific requests for relatives to join them in the conquered territories. An Arabic letter confiscated in 1866 by a French commandant at Podor reveals the tone and sentiments of the immigrant community in Karta.<sup>38</sup> The author of the letter, Moktar Soogi, was a leader of a Fulbe Wodaabe group which had participated in Umar's conquests in both Karta and Segu and returned to Karta to settle at Sambagore, a village to the west of Nioro.<sup>39</sup> He wrote on behalf of the Fulbe Wodaabe who had fought in the holy war, and addressed the letter to the Wodaabe who had remained in the Senegal valley. He mentioned several Fulbe leaders by name, and informed them that:<sup>40</sup>

... we are well and wish the same for you. We want to encourage the Muslims among you to respond to God's will [and emigrate]. Do not fear that those who have come to Nioro have lost their possessions and their families. Know that God will provide for those who follow His commands. . . .

Shaykh Umar told us . . . your relatives [who remain in the valley] prefer Christians [the French] to Muslims. . . . It is much easier to extract water from dry soil than it is to separate them from the Christians. . . . [Those who remain] are infidels. . . . They are damned [to go to Hell].

Moktar's letter illustrates another factor pulling the ferganke to Karta: religious arguments in favor of leaving a region which was coming increasingly under the domination of the French. The religious arguments exerted pressure upon the populations of the valley to emigrate. Moktar's letter was clearly intended to provoke a response by suggesting that those who remained in the valley would go to Hell. The reference to Umar Tal's statement that the Fulbe of the valley preferred Christians to Muslims served both to embarrass those

who had not joined the holy war and encourage them to make up for their mistake. French reports from the nineteenth century Senegal valley often noted that the fergo Nioro was the result of the "fanaticism" of the Futanke;<sup>41</sup> Moktar's letter suggests that the migration was a response to specific religious arguments made by relatives and other ferganke who wrote or returned to the Senegal valley.

The religious arguments for making the fergo cannot be separated from an invitation to join Muslim armies. Moktar's letter mentioned that God would provide for those who headed the call: the recruiters probably were more direct in their references to the material rewards from participation in Muslim armies in Karta. The recruiters often served as regimental commanders of the ferganke upon arrival in Karta. The jom fergo expected to lead their recruits into war, and rise within the ranks of the army based on both their success in enlarging the Muslim armies with ferganke as well as in fighting in Karta. The ferganke were equally desirous of gaining booty, since they often lost or sold most of their material possessions during the fergo. Thus, the "fanaticism" noted by the French also reflected the ambition of those who migrated to Karta in hopes of making a name and wealth for themselves through participation in religiously sanctioned warfare.

Recruiters described the material wealth awaiting the ferganke who joined Umurian wars in Karta, reminded the Fulbe that emigration was incumbent upon all Muslims and carried specific invitations from relatives who already had made the fergo. Perhaps most importantly, they knew the migration route and promised to lead the ferganke safely from the Senegal valley to Karta. The recruiters embodied the "pull" of Karta for the populations of the Senegal valley. Specific groups of Senegal valley Fulbe responded to this encouragement

at different historical moments in the late nineteenth century. French reports indicate, for example, that sedentary groups from Dimar migrated in much larger numbers than herders during the 1860s;<sup>42</sup> the pattern reversed during the 1880s, when herders migrated in considerably greater numbers than sedentary populations. While the actions of specific recruiters may have played a role, other factors also explain the changed pattern. The fergo Nioro involved historical forces which pushed specific Senegal valley populations from their regions of origin at certain times in the past.

**Push factors.** The push factors which encouraged specific groups to leave the valley when they did are difficult to reconstruct. Impersonal forces such as overpopulation and land scarcity may have been a factor, but none of the oral informants or written records provide any direct references to these issues. The complaints registered in the data concern resistance to the emancipation of slaves at French posts, excessive taxation and French attempts to halt the practice of raiding in the Senegal valley. These complaints may have been the manifest factors, whereas impersonal forces were latent. Given the difficulty in determining population size and changes over time, it is impossible at this stage of my research to relate the fergo Nioro to such forces. The burden of the present discussion is to evaluate the importance of several factors which the emigrants themselves suggested were pushing them to Karta.

Resistance to taxation is cited frequently as a reason for making the fergo Nioro. The first recruiters who arrived in the Senegal valley stressed the advantages of living in Karta where the taxes were not burdensome. These arguments seem to have struck a chord in Dimar, a province of Futa Toro which had come under direct French supervision and paid taxes annually to chefs appointed by the French. In the 1860s, recruiters convinced several

Futanke communities not to pay their annual tax and make the fergo after the harvest.<sup>43</sup> Amadu Kadiata, a French-appointed chef, confirmed that excessive taxation was the primary reason that most of the Fulbe threatened to migrate, and added that the migrants would have to pay no taxes if they moved to Karta.<sup>44</sup> Alfa Samba Coki, another chef in Dimar who led a migration in 1875, also played on the themes of excessive taxation as a reason for making the fergo.<sup>45</sup> Elsewhere, ferganke complained about the Laamdo Toro's efforts to collect taxes as a factor pushing them to migrate at various times in the late nineteenth century.

Another reason frequently cited for making the fergo is opposition to the French policy of emancipating "trade slaves" at the French posts. Lower valley commandants often liberated any slave who showed up in their post and asked for emancipation. As a result, disgruntled slaves increasingly left their masters during the late nineteenth century. Fulbe complaints about this policy increased over time, and the anger with the liberation of slaves became the most frequently cited reason for making the fergo Nioro in the 1880s. The French published data on the number of slaves whom they liberated at their posts, and that data correlates with the frequency of Fulbe complaints: the number of slaves liberated in the late 1860s and early 1870s averaged less than 150 annually, but the yearly totals increased to some 400 liberations annually during the late 1870s and then reached over one thousand slaves liberated annually during the mid-1880s.<sup>46</sup> While the data does not allow one to show whether those making the fergo had lost slaves or merely feared losing them, the data suggests that the French policy regarding slave emancipations was a factor contributing to Fulbe migrations to Karta.



For Fulbe herders, another reason for making the fergo was resistance to French efforts to halt the raids traditionally pursued by their bands in the lower valley. French commandants inflicted heavy fines on Fulbe leaders who were caught with possessions taken from others, and these leaders often made threats about making the fergo.<sup>47</sup> The data does not indicate how many actually migrated, but many certainly made the fergo. Other leaders resisted French attempts to keep them from going to the right bank to raid Moorish bands, and then left for Karta, arguing that they could raid with impunity there.<sup>48</sup> This knowledge of the military opportunities reflects the ability of recruiters to target potential ferganke with precision.

While complaints against the emancipation of slaves were registered more often than resistance to the French effort to stop Fulbe raids, it probably was the French effort to halt raids that figured more prominently as a push factor. Young men, those who depended upon raiding to generate wealth, joined the fergo in larger numbers than older men, those who generally would have large slave holdings. The greater frequency of complaints against emancipation may reflect the quality of the relationship which older men would have had with the French commandants. Additionally, Futanke who remained in the valley because they did not want to risk losing their slaves on the long fergo were those who had the most to gain from a reversal of the French policy, and probably argued in favor of French tolerance for slavery by noting that their relatives and neighbors made the fergo in protest of the policy. Their complaints added to French perceptions that most migrants left because of the emancipation policy.

Flight from natural crises in the Senegal valley does not seem to be a dominant pattern in the fergo Nioro. The data do not indicate any relationship between low rainfall/poor harvests and the fergo.<sup>49</sup> The reaction to poor rains

usually involved a movement to another region in the Senegal valley and not the long migration to Karta.<sup>50</sup> Several years of movement within the valley may have encouraged some groups to make the fergo. Poor harvests in the Senegal valley, however, usually encouraged Futanke to wait before making the fergo: most ferganke usually left immediately after the harvest so as to provide adequate grain reserves for the long trek. Oral traditions of the fergo, too, do not even hint at migration as a response to changes in rainfall patterns. The traditions and proverbs regarding rainfall reflect ferganke consciousness that the patterns of precipitation in Karta were less reliable than those in the Senegal valley. These statements illustrate the lack of familiarity with the natural cycles of Karta which one would expect from immigrants.

The only natural crisis which seems to have influenced the patterns of participation in the fergo Nioro is the cholera epidemic of the late 1860s which ravaged populations throughout the Senegal valley. Religious arguments regarding eternal damnation for those who remained in the valley probably had more force as Futanke saw thousands of their relatives die from cholera. The province of Toro reportedly lost close to one-quarter of its population during the epidemic.<sup>51</sup> Perhaps not coincidentally, Toro also was the major region of origin for ferganke caravans during the late 1860s and early 1870s. The direct impact of the epidemic on the fergo is difficult to calculate. The French noted that a few Futanke left for Nioro at the height of the epidemic, but most of them died before getting too far on the route heading east; the experience dampened enthusiasm for the fergo.<sup>52</sup> The era also was the moment when the French began to move against Amadu Madiyu, a Muslim cleric from western Futa Toro. The French destroyed several villages in Toro province, and the Madiyanke's forces responded with an escalation of the armed conflict in the

region. The period was a time of crisis and upheaval in Toro province, the major region of origin of the era.

Toronke informants who made the fergo at this time state that the social upheaval in Toro was the major consideration for leaving the region. These informants made their statements to the French commandant at Bakel who stopped their caravan as it passed through the upper valley in early 1870.<sup>53</sup> They stated, upon direct questioning regarding their support for Amadu Madiyu, that they were not Madiyanke but refugees who left Toro to escape the warfare and raids associated with the Franco-Madiyanke conflict. Since these ferganke knew that the French might halt their fergo, they probably modified their statements to ensure that they would be allowed to continue on to Karta.<sup>54</sup> No other internal evidence points to consciousness of the epidemic as a force which encouraged migration from the region; no oral traditions, for example, refer to the cholera epidemic as the basis for making the fergo Nioro. The impact of the cholera epidemic was indirect, reflected in social chaos, the Madiyanke movement and increasing participation in the fergo.

The push and pull of the fergo Nioro worked in tandem to encourage Futanke to migrate to Karta. Futanke paid no taxes in Karta, could own as many slaves as they could accumulate, and were encouraged to join the Futanke armies of Karta. Recruiters played on these aspects of life in Karta to encourage Futanke who were the most frustrated with excessive taxation, the emancipation policy and the effort to halt raids. The push factors made the populations receptive to recruiters, and the recruiters read letters and described social conditions in Karta until Futanke yielded and joined the fergo. At times of crisis, such as when the cholera epidemic spread through the Senegal valley, the push factors may have been the most influential. However, over the course

of the late nineteenth century, it was the pull factors which most encouraged the Futanke to migrate to Nioro: the fergo Nioro would not have attracted as many participants if not for the activities of recruiters. They were the human link between the two regions. The recruiters were crucial to the dynamic of the population flow as it unfolded in the historical context of the late nineteenth century Senegal valley.

#### The impact of the fergo Nioro on Karta

Besides the changes in the demographic character of the Futanke presence in Karta, the fergo Nioro altered the terms of the consolidation of Umarian power in the region. As additional Futanke arrived in Karta, tensions increased between immigrant and indigenous communities in Karta. Tensions were evident almost immediately after the conquest, as evidenced by the comments of Futanke who were returning to the Senegal valley in 1866. They told the French commandant at Bakel that they were returning to recruit additional Futanke migrants because Karta still was a "Soninke country".<sup>55</sup> Futanke ethnic consciousness also drew upon the ideology that Fulbe were "better" Muslims than the other ethnic populations of the Western Sudan. The association of Muslim commitment among the Futanke preceded Umar Tal's holy war, due in large part to the eighteenth century holy war fought in Futa Toro.<sup>56</sup> This consciousness also reflected the broader participation of Fulbe in holy wars throughout West Africa: the eighteenth century movement in Futa Jallon and the early nineteenth century holy wars fought in Sokoto and Masina.<sup>57</sup> The large numbers of Senegal valley Fulbe who joined Umar Tal's

holy war and then participated in the fergo Nioro increased the Muslim pretensions of the Fulbe immigrants in Karta.

The Futanke remember that Karta had few mosques in its settlements, and that they had to build mosques as one of their first projects in colonizing the region. The main mosque in Nioro can accommodate hundreds of Muslims, and the vast majority of those who prayed at Nioro during the late nineteenth century were Futanke. By the late 1860s, Futanke notables began to push Mustafa Keita, the Governor of Nioro, to replace the imam at the time, a Soninke cleric named Fode Buyagi Kaba Jakite, with a cleric selected from the Futanke community.<sup>58</sup> The Kaba Jakite family also had migrated from the Senegal valley, and claimed solidarity with the Futanke as initial followers of Shaykh Umar. That the Futanke emphasized the ethnicity of the Kaba Jakite family over and above the shared commitment to Shaykh Umar reveals the emergence of Fulbe consciousness in the Kingi area.

Paul Soleillet, a French traveller who passed through Konyakary and the Futanke colonies in Jomboxo, noted the emergence of similar attitudes whereby the Fulbe were considered to be "better" Muslims than the faithful among the indigenous communities of the region.<sup>59</sup> Soleillet also canvassed opinion among some of the non-Futanke, and observed that they resented the pretension of the Futanke. In Jomboxo as in Kingi, the physical hardships which the ferganke endured in making the migration to Karta reinforced the attitude that, since the Futanke had sacrificed the comforts of the Senegal valley to settle in a region which had been conquered during a holy war, they deserved exalted status over the indigenous groups who had submitted to Shaykh Umar. The Futanke, therefore, saw themselves as exemplary Muslims who were establishing Islam

where paganism had previously reigned, and had the right to dominate Karta and its inhabitants because of their divine mission.

For a large part, the religious pretensions of the ferganke cannot be separated from the desire to gain booty through warfare. Recent migrants were forceful advocates of a militant interpretation of the Muslim commitment to holy war, and pushed for frequent campaigns in order to increase their material possessions. These interests were expressed by one informant, who said that those who made the fergo were unlearned Muslims who accomplished through warfare what the learned clerics could not accomplish with their words.<sup>60</sup> Not surprisingly, the former heartland of Massassi settlement was a locus of continued warfare and raiding, where the Futanke attacked the last remnants of the Bambara ruling elite and their allies and left the region virtually uninhabited by the turn of the century.<sup>61</sup> Further south, Futanke raids extended deep into the Baule River basin, against Malinke communities.

The pattern of raiding over time is difficult to determine, but if the reputations of the succession of leaders in Kingi and Jomboxo serve as a general guide, then the raids seem to have subsided during the 1860s only to increase in frequency and violence during the 1870s and 80s. The military commanders of the 1860s, Mustafa and Samba Mody of Konyakary, led several successful military campaigns but did not create a reputation as formidable generals. In contrast, their replacements in Nioro and Konyakary, Muntaga and Bassiru Tal, respectively, were known during their tenure as committed holy warriors and still command that status in the oral traditions of the region.<sup>62</sup> The greater emphasis on the credentials of Shaykh Umar's sons as opposed to those of Umar's appointed is simultaneously the expression of the actual differences in the frequency of combat and the ideology of Futanke superiority

in the conduct of Islam: Mustafa and Samba Mody were chastised by the Futanke community for being former slaves and not Futanke.

The fergo Nioro, therefore, altered the nature of Umarian domination in Karta by bringing thousands of young Futanke who successfully pressured the military leaders to conduct more and more raids against non-Fulbe populations in the region. The increasing number of military campaigns did not result in general social chaos in Karta because the stimulus for military activity was not the need to defend the state against internal challenges but the desire to acquire wealth from raiding populations in southern Karta. These southern communities usually did not organize themselves to resist the Futanke raids, choosing instead to endure them or move out of the region. As one French official commented about Muntaga's army during the early 1880s, it thrived on a type of organized warfare which contrasted with the wars of the neighboring African populations.<sup>63</sup> What the French official did not realize was that the Umarian pattern of warfare during the 1880s resembled the Massassi pattern of raids half a decade earlier.

The Umarian state in Karta was a successor to the Massassi state. Umar Tal's settlement of Futanke after the conquest, Alfa Umar's aggressive leadership during the late 1850s, and the continuing consolidation of power under Mustafa Keita during the 1860s created the conditions for the emergence of an autonomous Umarian state in Karta. The alliances in the north with Moorish and Soninke groups provided a stable and secure area of Futanke settlement from which to launch the raids into the south. The alliances also brought Futanke in contact with merchant groups who willingly purchased the slaves produced by their wars and raids. Without the arrival of so many Futanke from the Senegal valley, however, the return to the Massassi pattern

of wars and raids as a major state activity would not have occurred as completely and successfully as it did.

As the recent immigrants arrived and joined the Umarian armies during the 1870s and 1880s, some of the initial Futanke settlers were moving into economic activities, and became increasingly critical of the warfare pursued by the new arrivals. This tension among the Futanke of Karta influenced the course of Umarian political history. Before the diversity of activities and attitudes of the Futanke can be appreciated, the regional economic history of Karta in the late nineteenth century needs to be discussed. The next chapter focuses on Umarian Karta and the regional economy. Chapter Five then turns to the activities of Futanke who no longer fought in the military and became involved in economic enterprises linked to the regional economy.



### Notes

1. Lt. Commandant Joseph Gallieni, Voyage au Soudan Français (Haut-Niger et Pays de Ségou), 1879-1881 (Paris, 1885), p. 592.
2. See, for a good overview of the literature, Kenneth Swindell, "Labour migration in underdeveloped countries: the case of subSaharan Africa", Progress in Geography 12 (1979).
3. See, for example, Samir Amin, "Introduction", in Modern Migrations in Western Africa, S. Amin, ed. (London, 1974).
4. Most of the relevant census reports are in ANM 1D51 (census reports for 1895 and 1899) and 5D29/5D36 (census reports for 1904). I also examined the statistics on the villages de liberté created in Karta. Most of the slaves owned by Senegambians either were retained by those who remained in Karta or were taken by neighboring Soninke villages. The initial French officials were inundated with complaints about the latter practice.
5. Jacques Méniaud discusses the forced migration in Les Pionniers du Soudan, avant, avec et après Archinard, 2 volumes (Paris, 1931). The sources for the forced migration include the correspondence between various commandants in Nioro and Colonel Archinard (in ANM 2N36, 1E60 and 1E211), the reports of French officials involved in the administrative action (Sensarric in ANM 5D15, Mazillier in ANM 1D74, and Dodds in ANF.SOM SEN.IV 69), and the descriptions of the arriving emigrants as reported by the French officials in middle Senegal valley posts (ANS 13G191 and 13G231). Based on an analysis of these materials, I put a conservative estimate on the numbers of forced migrants at 20,000.
6. The problem persisted well into the twentieth century. ANM 1D82: "Rapport sur la nécessité de donné aux Peuls Toronké du Kingi un état social", 1905.
7. The correspondence written at the time of the various census surveys is filled with complaints of under-reporting by village leaders. See, for example, the correspondence in ANM 5D29.
8. Oral traditions collected by Abdoul Aziz Diallo maintain that 5,000 Umarians lost their life during the French conquest. Diallo discussed this issue with me, and allowed me to work with his taped interviews which he conducted in 1979.
9. Although women and children had travelled with the main Umarian army in 1859, Umar ordered a large number of dependents to return to Karta or the upper Senegal valley when supplies began to dwindle on route to Segou. David Robinson, The Holy War of Umar Tal (Oxford, 1985), pp. 256-57.

10. Interviews with Amadou Ba, 24 January 1986, Baedel Diallo, 17 February 1986, El Hadj Sadiku Kaba Jakite, 25 February 1986. See also Amadou Ba, "Connaissance de la commune de Nioro-du-Sahel" (mimeo), n.d.

11. Samba Umahani responded to recruiters circulating in the valley in early 1864. See, for descriptions of Samba's fergo, ANS 13G102: Dagana, 14 July 1864, Ct. Dagana to the Governor; and ANS 13G169: Bakel, 18 February and 2 July 1865, Ct. Bakel to the Governor.

12. References to migrations led by various Wodaabe ardo or chiefs abound in the ANS Dagana and Bakel dossiers.

13. See, for example, ANS 13G102: Dagana, 24 September 1866, Ct. Dagana to the Governor.

14. See, for one description of the injuries by a commandant who was appalled by the violence inflicted on the ferganke, ANS 13G210: Medine, 4 February 1865, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel.

15. ANS 13G210: Medine, 22 May 1865, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel.

16. I discuss Amadu Sheku's recruiters in Chapter Seven.

17. While French officials in the middle valley spread rumors of a "complete abandonment" of Toro province in 1870, reports of migrants who actually left for Karta and passed near the upper valley posts of Bakel and Medine suggest that French fears were exaggerated. Babacar Coulibaly's estimates of 12,500-15,000 ferganke are much too high; unfortunately, he provides no citations to French archival materials nor Senegal valley oral traditions to substantiate his claims. Alassane Wélé shares my view that the migration increased but not dramatically. See, for the rumors of a "complete abandonment" of Toro, ANS 13G171: Bakel, 31 March 1870, Ct. Bakel to the Governor. See also, Coulibaly, "L'Armée toucouleur du jihad omarien à la fin de l'empire", Université de Dakar, mémoire de matirise, 1978; Wélé, "Le Fergo omarien et son prolongement", Université de Dakar, mémoire de maitrise, 1976.

18. Relevant French correspondence is scattered throughout the ANS dossiers from Bakel during 1867-72. See, for an overview of French policy during this era, ANS 13G172: Bakel, (c. 1873?), "Instructions générales laissées à mon successeur".

19. ANS 13G171: Bakel, 28 February and 30 May 1871, Ct. Bakel to the Governor.

20. I discuss this attempt in Chapter Eight.

21. ANS 13G108: Dagana, Journal du poste, March 1875.

22. ANS 13G108: Dagana, Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, March, 1875.

23. ANS 13G108: Dagana, 29 March 1875, Ct. Dagana to the Governor; Dagana, Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, March 1875.

24. Alassane Wélé shares my view of the importance of the migrations beginning in 1875. Wélé, "Le Fergo omarien", p. 247.

25. ANS 2B75: Saint Louis, 7 February 1889, Governor to the Minister.

26. The proportions of herders and farmers who made the fergo is an open topic among the descendants of the migrants. For the last years of the migrations, however, the young, male herders dominated the ranks of ferganke. See Adboul Aziz Diallo's interviews with Mamadou Alfa and Bassirou Alfa Diallo at Gavinané, Mali in September 1977 and 1979. See my interviews with Amadou Ba of Nioro.

27. Mustafa Kane collected oral traditions regarding the fergo of the Halaybe.

28. Leaders include the Eliman Rindiaaw of Bossea in central Futa Toro, and several members of the Sal family who used the fergo to enhance their claims to the leadership of Toro in western Futa Toro.

29. ANF.SOM SEN.I 61c: Saint Louis, 22 March and 5 June 1878, Governor to the Minister. These two letters provide details of the fergo and insights into the recruitment policy of the Umarian state in Karta. Commandant Soyer, who served at Bakel during the late 1870s, gathered the information which the Governor of Senegal passed along to the Minister. Much of the discussion which follows draws on these letters. Oral interviews collected by Abdoul Aziz Diallo also inform the analysis which follows.

30. See, for example, ANS 13G187: Bakel, Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, February, April, May, June 1887.

31. ANS 13G113: Dagana, Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, September, 1886.

32. See, for a discussion of Devès' role, ANS 13G41: Dagana, 20 June 1886, Ct. Dagana to the Governor.

33. The information which the Governor accumulated can be found in ANS 13G41.

34. ANS 13G118: Dimar, 14 November 1859, Ct. Dimar to the Governor.

35. ANS 13G127: Podor, 14 March 1878, Ct. Podor to Ct. Bakel.

36. The ANS files are filled with references to recruiters who led ferganke to Karta several times. See, for example, 13G127: Podor, 18 March 1878, Ct. Podor to the Governor; 13G112: Dagana, 16 December 1884, Ct. Dagana to the Director of Indigenous Affairs.

37. ANS 13G131: Podor, 25 December 1882, Ct. Podor to the Director of Political Affairs; ANS 13G113: Dagana, Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, September, 1886.

38. Only one such letter has surfaced to date from my work with the Arabic materials of the era. I am persuaded that it reflects the general tone of the numerous letters sent to the Senegal valley from Karta.

39. Alfa Samba Wa (Wane?), a recruiter from Nioro, carried Moktar's letter to the Senegal valley sometime in early 1866. ANS 13G103: Podor, 17 February 1866, Ct. Podor to the Governor.

40. ANS 13G103: pièce 9. Pièce 8 is a fairly accurate French translation of the letter.

41. The mass migrations of Fulbe herders from the lower valley pressed the French to explain the reasons for their participation, since they assumed that the herders of the lower valley were less "fanatic" than the Fulbe farmers of Futa Toro. While Fulbe herders did not have as many mosques nor notable clerics as the farmers of Futa Toro, the religious differences which the French assert are inappropriate. The oral traditions of ferganke herders note differences in Muslim practice among the transhumant and sedentary Fulbe populations of the valley and argue that the herders came to dominate the ranks of the ferganke because they had more to prove than the settled Futanke. One cannot project this sense of rivalry with much certainty into the past, but the oral traditions contradict the French assertions of differences in Muslim commitment between the two Fulbe occupational categories.

42. ANS 13G102: Dagana, 4 March 1864, Ct. Dagana to the Governor.

43. ANS 13G103: Dagana, 4 February 1866, Ct. Dagana to the Governor.

44. ANS 13G103: Dagana, n.d. (c. 1866), French translation of a letter from Amadou Kadiata, Chef de Fanaye.

45. ANS 13G108: Dagana, Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, March, 1875.

46. The figures are reported in Journal Officiel.

47. See, for example, ANS 13G113: Dagana, 12 March 1869, Ct. Dagana to the Governor; ANS 13G111: Dagana, 1 August 1881, Ct. Dagana to the Governor.

48. ANS 13G112: Dagana: 1 April 1883, Ct. Dagana to the Governor.

49. French reports of rainfall patterns at their posts and their assessments of crop size are the only sources available for an analysis of the relationship between rainfall and the fergo. Admittedly, these sources may not accurately reflect the patterns throughout Futa Toro, since rainfall varies considerably within the Senegal valley. Nevertheless, these do not indicate a correlation between years of low rainfall and poor harvests and the ebbs and tides in the migration flow to Karta.

50. ANS 13G102: Dagana, 17 February 1864, Ct. Dagana to the Governor; ANS 13G112: Dagana, 1 February 1883, Ct. Dagana to the Governor.

51. ANS 13G124: Podor, 13 January 1869, Ct. Podor to the Governor.

52. ANS 13G103: Dagana, Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, December, 1868.
53. ANS 13G171: Bakel, 1 March 1870, testimony of Ali Aliou Senou and Tafsir Alioune (French translation of the sessions with the Commandant of Bakel, the informants and the interpreter).
54. Ali Aliou argues that "other" ferganke were followers of Amadu Madiyu who were fleeing to safety in Nioro, but that they were "loyalists" who fled the warfare associated with the conflict.
55. ANS 13G170: Bakel, 8 November 1866, Ct. Bakel to the Governor.
56. David Robinson, "Abdul Qadir and Shaykh Umar: a continuing tradition of Islamic leadership in Futa Toro", International Journal of African Historical Studies 6 (1975).
57. See, for a discussion of Fulbe ethnic consciousness, Robinson, The Holy War of Umar Tal, pp. 81-89.
58. M.G. Adam, Légendes historiques du pays de Nioro (Sahel) (Paris, 1904), pp. 111-112.
59. Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, 1878-1879, rédigé d'après les notes et journaux de voyage de Soleillet par Gabriel Gravier, pp. 168ff. See also, for another reference to the Umarian view that those who lived in Karta before the holy war were not "good Muslims", Paul Marty, Etudes sur l'Islam et les tribus du Soudan, Volume 4 (Paris, 1921), pp. 211-213.
60. Fonds Abdoul Aziz Diallo, interview with Aliou Sow on 4 February 1980 at Leyya.
61. An early French colonial observer described the former heartland of Massassi settlement as virtually uninhabited and overrun with bush and wild animals. See Emile Blanc, "Contribution à l'étude des populations et de l'histoire du Sahel soudanais", Bulletin de Comité d'Etudes Historiques et Scientifiques de l'Afrique Occidentale Française (1924).
62. See, for the oral traditions regarding Bassiru, my interviews with El Hadj Macyal Diako at Konyakary and Bassirou Lamine Tall at Kayes in February 1986. See, for the oral traditions regarding Muntaga, my interviews with Amadou Ba at Nioro in early 1986, and Abdoul Aziz Diallo's interviews with Mamadou Alfa Diallo and Bassirou Alfa Diallo at Gavinané in February 1980.
63. ANF.SOM SEN.I 61c: Saint Louis, 22 March 1878, Governor to the Minister. The source of information was the French official at Bakel, Commandant Soyer.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Regional Trade and the State in Umarian Karta

Shaykh Umar Tal's mid-nineteenth century holy war altered the economic fortunes of the territories which his armies conquered in the Western Sudan. After the fall of Segu and Masina, the depth of local resistance to Umarian rule prevented the successor states in those regions from gaining a firm hold over the economic resources of the Niger River valley. In the middle Niger valley, the major commercial town of the region, Sinsani, revolted against the Umarians, and added to the general social chaos which led to its decline as a commercial center. In Masina, the Kunta, a commercial diaspora which dominated regional exchanges, also revolted, and did not support Umarian attempts to create a successor state in the inland Niger delta. In both regions, wars and raids disrupted the annual cycle of harvests in the countryside. As a result, the previous centers of production and exchange along the Niger valley no longer thrived as they had during the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

The economic consequences of Umar's holy war were not uniformly disruptive. In Karta, the transition from Bambara to Futanke rule did not disturb the patterns of the regional economy.<sup>2</sup> During the 1860s, the efforts of

the Umarian leader at Nioro, Mustafa Keita, helped build a multi-ethnic coalition of interest which worked to ensure that regional exchanges continued to occur as the Futanke moved to consolidate their position in the region. Nioro and several other communities along the southern edge of the western Sahara benefitted from the commercial orientation away from the middle Niger valley: Nioro consolidated its status as a port of trade for the caravan traffic coming from the desert-side. Additionally, the Umarian state in Karta supported the emergence of Medine as a major upper Senegal valley gum market. Medine's rise as a gum market in the late nineteenth century led to a local gum boom which encouraged harvesting of this product from the acacia forests to the north of Karta, and contributed to the circulation of wealth within the region.<sup>3</sup>

Medine's rise as an upper Senegal valley gum entrepot has not commanded the attention of many historians. Philip Curtin comments on the emergence of Medine as a major commercial center, but he does not study it in great detail because its efflorescence occurred after the period of his analysis of the Senegambian economy.<sup>4</sup> Sékéné-Mody Cissoko discusses Medine's economic role in the upper valley in a chapter of his work on the history of Xasso, the region where Medine was established.<sup>5</sup> He points accurately to the gum trade as the reason for its growth, but fails to appreciate the complexity of Medine's commercial relations with Karta. In fact he asserts incorrectly that the Umarians sold very little grain at Medine.<sup>6</sup> Cissoko's error stems in part from an incomplete examination of the archives from Medine.<sup>7</sup> Gerald Kisyeti, who studied the commerce of the "Tukulor Empire" under Cissoko's supervision, fills in some of the lacuna in Cissoko's pioneering study, but largely neglects the

grain trade, the most important dimension of Umarian commercial involvement at Medine.<sup>8</sup>

The present chapter examines the political economy of regional exchanges of gum and salt in the late nineteenth century.<sup>9</sup> I analyze the ways in which the Umarian state in Karta supported the expansion of regional commerce.<sup>10</sup> Since salt and gum were produced in the desert-side and largely exchanged at markets outside of Karta, I begin the discussion by examining economic activity in the Saharan desert-side and in the Senegal valley. I then turn to the Umarian state in Karta and the general patterns of regional exchange which its leaders encouraged during the period after the holy war and before the French conquest.

#### Society and economy in desert-side north of Karta

North of Karta were two desert-side regions of great economic importance in the late nineteenth century. Northwest of the Xoolimbinne valley lay the Tagant, a region with extensive groves of date palms and gum-producing acacia trees.<sup>11</sup> It also supported an oasis settlement at Tishit which serviced caravans carrying salt bars southward from the Ijil salt mines to the markets of the Western Sudan. Tishit, too, was the source of uncrystallized deposits of ground salt which pastoral groups used to feed their livestock. Northeast of Kingi was another desert-side region, known as the Hodh. This region also was well endowed with acacia trees and had an oasis, Walata, which sat at the nexus of trade routes leading from the Ijil and Tawdenni salt mines of the Sahara. The Hodh had fewer wells than the Tagant, and consequently supported fewer inhabitants than its neighboring region.



The Tagant and the Hodh formed part of a belt of sparsely inhabited, arid land which runs south of the Sahara desert from the Atlantic coast to the Red Sea. Most of its inhabitants derived a living from pastoralism, despite the presence of settled life in oases, agricultural activity in low-lying areas and salt mining in scattered desert-side environments. While anthropologists and historians initially considered southern Saharan societies to have been quite distinct from agricultural societies to the south, recent work shows that economic relations between desert-side herders and savanna farmers integrated both groups into regional economic systems.<sup>12</sup> When pastoral groups moved into southern areas during the course of their transhumant cycles, extensive small-scale exchanges occurred, as herders and farmers traded livestock for grain and other goods from the different productive regimes of contiguous ecological zones. When rainfall was abundant, enterprising groups could invest in the expansion of productive activities associated with these exchanges, further encouraging economic integration across the ecological frontier.

The nineteenth century was such an era of abundant rainfall in the Western Sudan.<sup>13</sup> Moorish groups expanded upon the exchange of livestock for grain by investing in increased production of bar salt in the Saharan mines at Ijil and Tawdenni. Much of this salt entered the commercial networks of West Africa at the middle Niger valley, which was a southern terminus for many Moorish groups, a crossroads for commercial traffic going further south and the locus of a considerable population of its own. Commercial groups living in the middle Niger valley invested in slave-based production of grain and cloth for exchange with the Moors. The Bambara state of Segou also facilitated the long-term patterns of regional economic integration by capturing slaves for sale to

both the plantation owners and Moorish investors who constantly needed replacements for the slaves who died in the harsh conditions of the salt mines.

Elsewhere along the upper Niger and in the Xoolimbinne valley east of Medine, local commercial groups established similar patterns of exchange with Moorish groups.<sup>14</sup> The amount of investment in slave labor in these regions did not compare with that in the middle Niger valley, but increases in slave-use were noticeable throughout the Western Sudan.<sup>15</sup> Considerable debate surrounds the question of the historical factors contributing to the vitality of the nineteenth century economy;<sup>16</sup> the relevant point here is that the most successful economic activities of the era involved production for and exchange with inhabitants of the desert-side. Integration across ecological boundaries served to bring social groups from diverse regions into commercial networks and powerful communities of interest.

Moorish social charters influenced which desert-side groups participated in these economic activities in the Western Sudan. The charters were based on the outcomes of late seventeenth century social conflicts in which warrior groups received submissions from the other southern Saharan lineages.<sup>17</sup> Warrior groups lived by raiding and collecting tribute from subordinates, and left the management of economic activity to the zawaya, groups distinguished by the scholarship in the Islamic sciences of an ancestor or a lineage fraction. Zawaya lineages often traded on their clerical heritage to demand gifts and labor from non-warrior groups.<sup>18</sup> They also used their credentials as Muslim jurists to mediate disputes among warrior lineages. In return, enterprising zawaya lineages asked the warriors for access to transport corridors and regions of productive potential, and directed their clients to engage in economic activities which increased the wealth of the zawaya. These clerical groups were

the Moorish actors who moved to integrate the desert-side with the Western Sudan.

Zawaya groups dominated the production, transport and sale of Ijil and Tawdenni salt bars in the Western Sudan.<sup>19</sup> The Kunta zawaya confederation exercised monopoly control over the production of Ijil salt, and dominated its transport from the Sahara to Shinqit, a major oasis northwest of Tishit. Other zawaya confederation of lineages, most notably the Laghlal, who controlled vast camel herds, transported Ijil salt from Shinqit to the oases of Tishit and Walata and on to the northern markets of the Western Sudan. Other zawaya groups with ties to these lineages involved themselves in wholesale marketing of Ijil salt, and had resident agents in all the major markets of the Western Sudan. Production and transport of Tawdenni salt similarly involved zawaya groups. The most notable was the Ahl Sidi al-Mukhtar, an eastern branch of the Kunta confederation, who transported the salt overland through Walata or directly to the Niger River via Timbuktu.

Zawaya groups also managed the harvesting, transport and sale of gum arabic. The dispersed nature of this resource prevented one lineage or group from asserting the type of control that characterized the salt economy of the desert-side.<sup>20</sup> As a result, access to the routes leading to the gum markets of the Senegal valley proved more important than control over gum forests. In order to defend their gum caravans, many zawaya groups purchased guns, and used them to protect their loads of gum against raids. Warrior/zawaya competition over control of the gum trade resulted in several major military confrontations, the results of which altered the political history of the southern Sahara during the nineteenth century.

In the Tagant, the Idaw Aish, a group with zawaya background, became the dominant "warrior" group in the eighteenth century in part through their control over the transport corridors from southern Saharan gum fields to the upper Senegal valley markets.<sup>21</sup> With the opening of a gum market at Medine, which was some distance from the Idaw Aish base of power, the Ahl Sidi Mahmud, another zawaya lineage from the greater Tagant region, launched themselves into gum harvesting and gained control over the routes leading to Medine.<sup>22</sup> This assertion of zawaya autonomy angered the Idaw Aish, who challenged the Ahl Sidi Mahmud throughout the rest of the century and finally defeated them in the early 1880s.<sup>23</sup>

The outcome of these warrior/zawaya struggles ultimately depended upon which group could recruit support among the mass of commoner lineages which inhabited the southern Sahara. Since tributaries could transfer their allegiance from one group to another, astute commoner lineages manipulated the conflicts to gain advantageous positions. In the Hodh, a commoner confederation known as the Mashduff followed this strategy to obtain a share of the profits from their involvement with the gum trade.<sup>24</sup> By the mid-nineteenth century, the Mashduff had been able to purchase enough guns and to gain sufficient support among other commoner and zawaya groups to overthrow the Awlad Mbark, the dominant warrior confederation in the region.<sup>25</sup> As a result, zawaya groups who supported the Mashduff gained access to large tracts of acacia forests of the Hodh and increased the amount of gum arriving at the market at Medine.<sup>26</sup>

While the production, transportation and exchange of salt integrated the Hodh and the Tagant with Karta and the other regions of the Western Sudan, the gum trade brought these desert-side regions into another commercial area, the Senegal valley trading zone. Zawaya merchants who invested in the gum

trade depended upon the markets in the Senegal valley to realize exchange value for a resource that had no commercial value elsewhere. Indeed, zawaya access to gum-producing forests and trade corridors would have meant very little if links to European markets had not been provided by commercial agents in the upper Senegal valley. In the next section, I explore the Senegal valley gum trade and the factors behind the rise of Medine as a gum entrepot during the late nineteenth century.

### The Senegal valley gum trade and the rise of Medine

Gum arabic is the exudate of the acacia tree which grows in abundance along the arid Saharan desert-side.<sup>27</sup> Inhabitants of this region used gum for medicinal purposes, but Europeans found gum arabic's bonding qualities made it suitable for the sizing of cloth. As Western European firms industrialized textile production in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, they obtained most of the gum from the western Saharan region now known as Mauritania. The West African commerce in gum arabic was managed by French merchants who operated from the trading town of Saint Louis at the mouth of the Senegal River. These merchants imported blue fabric from India (known as guinée cloth) and lent it to African intermediary traders, known as traitants, who travelled by boat to zawaya gum markets which appeared along the Senegal River during the months of January through July. At the end of the trading season, the traitants repaid the loans of guinée in gum arabic, and the French merchants sent the gum by ocean freighter to Europe.

The traitants obtained most of their gum in the lower Senegal valley, but they also traded farther up the upper Senegal valley as well. The creation of a

French post at Bakel in the first decade of the nineteenth century ushered in a new era in the upper valley trade. While transportation costs to Saint Louis were high and the quality of the gum arabic generally was less satisfactory than that available in the lower valley markets, Bakel's market thrived during the early nineteenth century. Increasing world demand for gum was responsible for the interest in the upper valley, but political problems with Moorish groups in the lower valley also encouraged the expansion of the trade. Additionally, the French established amicable relations with the leader of the Idaw Aish, the warrior group in the Tagant. The Idaw Aish leader was paid a fee proportional to the amount of gum that arrived in the market to encourage the arrival of gum arabic. Moorish caravans loaded with gum flowed into Bakel from the forests of the Tagant and the Hodh, despite some zawaya resistance to Idaw Aish control over the market.

In the 1850s, several developments altered the nature of the gum trade in the Senegal valley. The arrival of Governor Louis Faidherbe at Saint Louis marked the assertion of imperialist interests in the valley. He consolidated French control in the lower valley, and pushed the French presence up to Medine in the upper valley. Faidherbe also passed an ordinance which allowed French commercial houses to establish bases upriver where the traitants had claimed exclusive access.<sup>28</sup> Almost simultaneously with the passage of the ordinance, however, world prices for gum arabic experienced a precipitous decline, which discouraged French expansion far from Saint Louis.

Traitants moved into the upper valley markets because the absence of European firms enhanced their profit margins. Medine was the most attractive market because its recent establishment meant that newcomers faced few if any entrenched interests in the gum trade. The volume of gum purchased at Medine

increased considerably over the course of the 1860s and 1870s (see Table A). While the rate of traitant gum purchases reflects several factors, such as environmental conditions in the southern Sahara and price fluctuations related to world demand, the meteoric increase at Medine can be attributed primarily to traitant initiative. Admittedly this initiative came at a time when the commerce in Senegal valley gum was in decline and French interests directed themselves increasingly to the peanut basin of western Senegal. The upper valley gum boom, nevertheless, was an historical phenomenon of major economic importance in the region.

Medine grew from a small village of less than five hundred inhabitants in the late 1850s to a commercial town of close to four thousand residents in the late 1880s.<sup>29</sup> This growth depended upon several factors, the most important being traitant decisions beginning in the late 1860s to make Medine their permanent residence.<sup>30</sup> The French encouraged this trend by granting Medine's traitant community a measure of political autonomy through the creation in 1876 of a town assembly which had jurisdiction over market disputes.<sup>31</sup> Medine also received an annual influx of Moors, who camped on the right bank of the Senegal River directly across from the commercial center. Finally, Medine attracted seasonal migrants from the Umorian colony in Jomboxo, who worked in various capacities for the traitants.<sup>32</sup>

The traitants at Medine sold luxury goods such as silverware, china and paper, guinée cloth and European military hardware. Moorish caravan leaders and Umorian officials bought large quantities of the latter. Very little data exists in the archives regarding the firearms trade; the only extant reference to this commerce puts Umorian purchases at 1,500-1,800 guns in 1871.<sup>33</sup> This purchase occurred as Amadu Sheku prepared for a major campaign and may not

TABLE A:  
VOLUME OF TRAITANT GUM PURCHASES AT MEDINE AND BAKEL, 1860-90<sup>34</sup>

<u>Year</u>	<u>Medine</u>	<u>Bakel</u>
1860	0	221,780k
1861	0	300,175k
1862	0	n.f.
1863	0	265,727k
1864	0	295,000k
1865	0	306,807k
1866	30,000k	301,387k
1867	42,000k	105,316k
1868	176,875k	121,464k
1869	211,459k	511,825k
1870	n.f.	n.f.
1871	n.f.	362,611k
1872	483,300k	438,755k
1873	85,000k	416,553k
1874	580,545k	368,671k
1875	575,000k	375,483k
1876	363,672k	414,667k
1877	576,069k	405,962k
1878	360,758k	522,508k
1879	523,533k	471,176k
1880-1890	n.f.	n.f.



reflect an annual rate of weapons purchases. That the traitants were able and willing to supply that amount suggests that the weapons trade was considerable. Guinée cloth was the other major item of exchange: it served as both a currency and a consumptive item in the southern Sahara. Unfortunately, figures on the amount of guinée cloth exchanged at Medine are not reported in the archives.

The Moors also wanted grain in exchange for their loads of gum. This demand mirrored the pattern of regional exchanges throughout the Western Sudan, as desert-side commercial groups continued to supply their dietary needs from surplus production in the sahel. The traitants, in contrast to the merchants in the commercial centers of the Niger valley, were not producers of this commodity. The growth of Medine meant that they, too, needed to find grain for their own consumption. The traitants obtained most of their grain from Karta, and in particular, the Umarian colony of Jomboxo. The grain commerce began in the 1860s and thrived throughout the 1870s and 80s, only disintegrating in the early 1890s as a result of the French conquest of Karta. The French archives from Medine provide data on the grain trade during much of its efflorescence. The next chapter examines the rise of Medine's grain market and the involvement of Futanke immigrants as grain producers. Before the grain trade can be understood, however, the political economy of the Umarian state needs further elaboration.

#### The regional economy and the Umarian state in Karta

Simultaneously with the Umarian political consolidation in Karta, Nioro emerged as a major commercial center and retained that status throughout the

remaining decades of the late nineteenth century and beyond. Prior to Umar Tal's holy war, gum and salt caravans passed only infrequently through Karta, as most salt caravans travelled along trade corridors which ran east of Karta, and most gum caravans moved north of Karta along trade routes in the desert-side.<sup>35</sup> Nioro was merely one of several Jawara settlements in Kingi when Mamadi Kanja decided to make it the political capital of the Massassi state. Nioro's status changed after Umar Tal's holy war. Shaykh Umar made it his capital and a locus of Futanke settlement. Additionally, he altered the patterns of commercial traffic in the region by forging alliances with various Moorish groups and encouraging Tishiti salt merchants to settle at Nioro.<sup>36</sup> These initiatives helped Nioro begin to fulfill its potential as a commercial center on a crossroads between the desert-side and the Western Sudan.

The economic fortunes of Tishiti salt merchants had risen with the expansion of the Ijil salt trade in the Western Sudan over the course of the nineteenth century, so Shaykh Umar's initiatives merely reinforced the dominant patterns of the era. Nioro was not the most attractive salt market from the perspective of Moorish salt merchants interested in optimal rates of exchange, since prices for salt bars increased the farther south the commodity was sold in the Western Sudan. However, Nioro did offer the advantage of less travel time in the Western Sudan, where increased humidity took its toll on camels and the insecurity of trade routes could diminish profits due to losses. Also, the opening of commercial houses in Nioro allowed Tishiti merchants to stockpile salt bars and sell them when salt prices reached their highest.<sup>37</sup> Finally, the Tishiti merchants could obtain grain and slaves for their salt at Nioro.

Shaykh Umar's initial contact with Tishiti salt merchants involved the exchange of slaves for salt, and the slave/salt exchange remained the primary

basis of the trade throughout the late nineteenth century.<sup>38</sup> The wars and raids which the Futanke conducted in the name of Islam provided some of the slaves exchanged for salt in Nioro; the Futanke military, however, did not meet the demand for slaves. Soninke merchants who travelled from Nioro to the major slave markets of the southern savanna provided the bulk of slaves which entered the desert-side from Nioro.<sup>39</sup> The creation of a warrior state south of Karta by Samori Ture made its commercial center of Wassulu the largest slave market in the Western Sudan. Consequently, the Wassulu-Nioro and Wassulu-Banamba-Nioro trade routes were quite active during the late nineteenth century.<sup>40</sup>

Mustafa's efforts to forge a multi-ethnic coalition in Karta reinforced Umar Tal's initiatives with the salt merchants, and brought gum-producing groups into Nioro's sphere. Mustafa's encouragement of the gum trade stood in contrast to Umar's call for an embargo against the French during the holy war.<sup>41</sup> Too much wealth was involved for the embargo to endure, however, and the Umarian army also desired weapons from the upper Senegal valley markets. Mustafa thus pursued the opening of the gum market at Medine. He sent several representatives from zawaya groups to Medine, and instructed the Umarians at Konyakary to assist in the negotiations for the Umarian claim to tax revenues from the trade. As Medine's status as a gum market rose, the Nioro-Medine trade route became as frequently travelled as the Nioro-Wassulu and Nioro-Banamba-Wassulu routes.

Karta in general and Nioro in particular lay between two major economic zones. To the east was the middle Niger valley with its large population densities, its access to the major markets of the southern savanna and forest zones, and the cowrie shell as its currency. To the west was the Senegal

valley and its access to world markets and the guinée cloth as its currency. Karta itself was a distinct economic region in which local cloth served as the primary currency.<sup>42</sup> During the late nineteenth century, Karta remained tied to its local currency, but guinée cloth also expanded to rank as an acceptable item of exchange. Cowrie shells never penetrated the Kartan economy, indicating that the middle Niger region did not pull Karta into its sphere.<sup>43</sup> That Karta did not come under the influence of the middle Niger economy reflected the ability of Kartan groups to supply and obtain the major commodities which drove regional economic exchanges without having to trade with the middle Niger.

Karta's economic autonomy from Segu and the middle Niger reinforced the emergence of the Umarian successor state in Karta. The Umarian military elite obtained guns from the upper Senegal valley and salt from the desert-side, and did not need to keep a line of commerce open between Nioro and Segu. When revolts in the middle Niger valley and Beledugu closed the Nioro-Segu route at various times during the late nineteenth century, the Umarian military leaders had no interests in re-opening the road, beyond the sense of obligation to the wider Umarian community in the Western Sudan. As the sense of obligation to the wider Umarian community dissipated among the military leaders and the Futanke of Karta, the absence of economic ties to Segu gained greater importance as a factor which shaped the autonomy and internal integrity of the Umarian state in Karta.

From the perspective of Amadu Sheku, however, the Nioro-Segu route was crucial to the emergence of Segu as a powerful Umarian successor state. The trade corridor between Nioro and Segu funnelled guns from the Senegal valley markets and salt from Tishit to the middle Niger valley. When the corridor was

closed at various points of the late nineteenth century, Ijil salt was scarce in Segu.<sup>44</sup> Difficulties in procuring weapons from the Senegal valley prompted Amadu Sheku to pursue weapons from British sources. Nevertheless, the need to keep the Nioro-Segu route open encouraged Amadu Sheku's imperial ambitions vis-à-vis the Umarian successor state in Karta.

Amadu Sheku's interests in controlling the commercial traffic of Karta led him to assert his control over this domain during his residence in Nioro during the early 1870s. He obtained recognition as the Commander of the Faithful from Moorish groups in the desert-side north of Karta. Amadu also claimed tolls on the gum trade at Medine which Umarian officials in Karta had collected up to that time. He designated an official to collect the tolls, and also sent him on missions to Saint Louis to communicate Amadu's interests in obtaining French weapons. Amadu also established a commercial center at Guigne on the Nioro-Segu route during his return to Segu in 1873-74. His agents at Guigne asserted imperial control over the traffic which passed along the commercial corridor.

The Nioro-Segu corridor did not remain an open very long. Rebel Bambara groups attacked caravans moving along it almost immediately after Guigne's establishment, and the town itself fell to a Bambara attack in 1879, never to regain its status as an imperial outpost. Amadu Sheku asked the Futanke army in Karta to keep the route open, but they refused to assist. His commercial official at Medine had more success in maintaining Amadu's control over the revenues associated with the gum trade, but the agent no longer collected the tolls by the early 1880s. The attempt at imperial control of the regional trade of Karta proved unsuccessful. Despite the closure of the Nioro-Segu route, Nioro retained its status as a major commercial center between the desert-side

and the upper Niger and Senegal valleys. The vitality of the Kartan economy did not depend on the maintenance of the Nioro-Segu route.

Members of the initial Futanke settler community in Karta benefitted from the prosperity of the Kartan economy. Soldiers who captured slaves sold them to Moorish merchants. Others invested in production, putting slaves to work in the production of grain for exchange with Moorish merchants. This diversity of economic activity among the Futanke of Karta contrasted with the situation elsewhere in the conquered territories, where the Futanke lived in armed garrisons and continued to depend on warfare and raiding for their livelihood. The next chapter turns to the productive activities of the Futanke in Karta.

### Notes

1. Richard Roberts, Warriors, Merchants and Slaves: the State and the Economy in the Middle Niger Valley, 1700-1914 (Stanford, 1987).
2. In the 1880s, the French military official Camille Piétri noted that Niore was a wealthier commercial center than Segu, a reversal of the early nineteenth century patterns. Since Piétri did not personally visit either Umari capital, his statement probably reflects the opinions of West African merchants, who would be able to make such a comparison. Piétri, Les Français au Niger (Paris, 1885), p. 251.
3. Karta's economic vitality impressed several French travellers, and seems to have whetted the appetite of French military officials for the conquest of Karta in the early 1890s. Nevertheless, the middle Niger valley remained the focus of French attention throughout the late nineteenth century. See William Cohen, "Imperial mirage: Western Sudan in French action and thought", Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria 7 (1974).
4. Philip Curtin, Economic Change in Precolonial Africa: Senegambia in the Era of the Slave Trade (Madison, 1975), pp. 144ff.
5. Sékéné-Mody Cissoko, "Contribution à l'histoire politique des royaumes du Khasso dans le Haut Sénégal des origines à la conquête française (XVII<sup>e</sup>-1890)", Université de Paris, doctorat d'état, 1979, pp. 604-675. Unfortunately, the recently published version of Cissoko's thesis includes only material up to the Umari conquest (1854).
6. Cissoko, "Contribution à l'histoire politique", pp. 640-44.
7. Cissoko seems not to have consulted the ANM and ANS files which provide detailed data about the grain trade.
8. G. Kisiyati, "Recherches sur le commerce dans l'empire toucouleur," Université de Dakar, mémoire de maîtrise, 1980.
9. Most of the conclusions regarding the gum trade reflect the findings of my research on the topic. E. Ann McDougall's work on the salt trade informs much of my analysis of the salt trade, but I also add details based on my own research. McDougall does not discuss the gum trade at great length in her thesis. François Manchuelle recently completed a dissertation which touches on the gum trade of the upper Senegal valley. His work also notes the importance of the gum trade in the late nineteenth century upper Senegal valley, but it came to my attention only after I completed my dissertation. McDougall, "The Ijil salt industry: its role in the precolonial economy of the Western Sudan", University of Birmingham, Ph.D. dissertation, 1980; Manchuelle, "Origins of Black African emigration to France: the labor migration of the Soninke, 1848-1987", University of California, Santa Barbara, Ph.D. dissertation, 1987.

10. I do not raise, for the purposes of the present discussion, the question of local trade which, from the point of view of most inhabitants in late nineteenth century Karta, was equally as important as regional exchanges of gum and salt.

11. What I call Tagant might well be called "greater Tagant" because I mean it to include the Affolle and the Assaba, two areas which local Moorish groups might distinguish from the Tagant. The use of Tagant or "greater Tagant" to refer to the entire region reflects the historical dynamics of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Idaw Aish, a Moorish group from the Tagant, came to establish their hegemony over groups in the Affolle and Assaba. I will interchange usage of Tagant and "greater Tagant" since this overview of the desert-side does not require detailed examination of the intricacies of Moorish politics in the late precolonial era.

12. Frederik Barth, Nomads of South Persia (Oslo, 1961); F. Barth, editor, Ethnic Groups and Boundaries (Bergen, 1969); Stephen Baier and Paul Lovejoy, "The desert-side economy of the Central Sudan", International Journal of African Historical Studies 8 (1975).

13. See, for an extended discussion of this point and much of what follows, Roberts, Warriors, Merchants and Slaves.

14. See, for a brief discussion of this phenomenon for the Soninke communities of Jafunu in the upper Xoolimbinne valley, Eric Pollet and Grace Winter, La société soninké (Brussels, 1972).

15. Martin Klein, "The demography of slavery in the Western Sudan in the late 19th century", in African Population and Capitalism: Historical Perspectives, eds. D. Cordell and J. Gregory (Beverly Hills, 1986). Claude Meillassoux first drew attention to the increases in slavery. See his editor's introduction in Esclavage en Afrique précoloniale (Paris, 1975).

16. See, for example, Richard Roberts, "Linkages and multiplier effects in the ecologically specialized trade of precolonial West Africa" and the commentaries which follow the article by Paul Lovejoy and Stephen Baier in Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines 20 (1980-81).

17. Charles Stewart provides a concise analysis of the social charters of the southern Sahara in "Southern Saharan scholarship and the bilad al-Sudan" Journal of African History 17 (1976) and "Emergent classes and the early state: the southern Sahara" in Modes of Production in Africa: the precolonial era, eds. D. Crummey and C. Stewart (Beverly Hills, 1981).

18. Stewart illuminates the economic power of one zawaya lineage in Islam and Social Order in Mauritania (Oxford, 1973).

19. See, for a full exploration of the Ijil salt trade, E. Ann McDougall, "The Ijil salt industry".



20. Anthony Hopkins makes a similar argument regarding the differences in the slave and palm oil trades along the West African coast. Historians have shown that, in some cases, the palm and slave trades were controlled by the same entrenched interests. These useful correctives need not detract from the point that some productive regimes are more amenable to monopoly control than others. See A.G. Hopkins, An Economic History of West Africa (London, 1973).

21. See, for a classification of the Idaw Aish as warriors, Stewart, "Southern Saharan scholarship", p. 77n. See, for the emergence of the Idaw Aish as the dominant group in the Tagant, Pierre Amilhat, ed. and trans., "Petite chronique des Id ou Aich, héritiers guerriers des Almoravides sahariens", Revue des Etudes Islamiques (1937).

22. The reports and correspondence of the French officers at Bakel in the 13G series of the ANS narrate the rise to power of the Ahl Sidi Mahmud. See also, ANS 1G224: "Notice sur les Maures", by Ct. de Lartigues, 1897.

23. ANS 13G175: undated letter to Ct. Bakel (pièce 76). This letter, found in the dossier with materials from 1880, describes a major confrontation in the Tagant between the Ahl Sidi Mahmud and Idaw Aish. Additionally, chronicles from Tishit and Walata report the confrontation between these two groups in the early 1880s. Vincent Monteil, ed. and trans., "Chroniques de Tichit", Bulletin de l'Institut Français de l'Afrique Noire (1939) and Paul Marty, ed. and trans., "Les chroniques de Oualata et de Néma (Soudan français)", Revue des Etudes Islamiques 1 (1927).

24. ANS 1G224: "Notice sur les maures".

25. Once in power, the Mashduff acted as most emergent groups and sought to legitimate their position by claiming hassani status. The majority of the warrior groups of the region traced their ancestry back to Hassan, the leader of the Arabs who migrated into the southwestern Sahara during the fifteenth century. P. Marty, Etudes sur l'Islam et les tribus du Soudan, Volume 3 (Paris, 1921).

26. ANS 1G224: "Notice sur les maures".

27. This discussion draws on Philip Curtin, Economic Change, and James Webb, Jr., "The trade in gum arabic: prelude to French conquest in Senegal", Journal of African History 26 (1985).

28. Webb, "The trade in gum arabic", pp. 167-68.

29. ANM 1D48: "Monographie de Medine", 1888-89.

30. Cissoko, "Contribution à l'histoire politique", p. 633.

31. Cissoko, "Contribution à l'histoire politique", p. 612.

32. ANS 15G111: Medine, Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, March 1879; ANS 1D62: Medine, 2 December 1881, Ct. Medine to Ct. Sup.

33. ANS 13G171: Bakel, 28 February 1871, Ct.Bakel to the Governor.
34. Unfortunately, the French statistics on the gum trade stop with the late 1870s. See the relevant reports in ANS Q23.
35. The French traveller Anne Raffenel, who visited Karta just prior to Umar Tal's holy war, notes that very little commerce passed through Karta, and attributed it to excessive tolls. A. Raffenel, Nouveau voyage dans le pays des Nègres, Volume 1 (Paris, 1856), pp. 386-7.
36. Paul Marty, Etudes sur l'Islam et les tribus du Soudan, Volume 4 (Paris, 1921), pp. 215-216.
37. Interview with Yilé Sibey, Nioro, 6 February 1986.
38. M.H. Vincent, a European traveller heard of Umar's exchange of slaves for Tishiti salt. Vincent, "Voyage d'exploration dans l'Adrar", Tour du Monde 3 (1861), p. 58. The Arabic chronicle of Walata also mentions the exchange of slaves for salt: Marty, "Chroniques de Oualata et de Néma", p. 367. During the late nineteenth century, a French official noted that a caravan with close to 2,500 bars of salt was in the Western Sudan seeking to find a market with at least 300 slaves available for exchange. ANM 1Q24: Nioro, 25 December 1895, Ct. Nioro to the Lt. Governor at Kayes.
39. Interview with Yilé Sibey, Nioro, 6 February 1986.
40. Most of the French travellers who passed through Karta during the late nineteenth century noted the traffic on the "southern" route from Nioro, and assumed that the terminus was Bure, the center of gold production. Once the French established a post close to the Nioro-Wassulu route at Kita in 1882, they could more accurately describe the economic activity along the route. See, for example, ANM 1Q17: Kita, 18 February and 17 April 1882, Ct. Kita to the Ct. Sup.
41. Robinson discusses the gum embargo in The Holy War of Umar Tal, pp. 165ff.
42. Paul Soleillet provides the best description of the local currency in Karta based on his observation in 1878. See Paul Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, p. 168.
43. After Soleillet passed from Karta to Segou, he began to notice that the cowrie shell was the currency in use. See, for the currency of Karta and Segou, Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, pp. 168,
44. See, for example, the testimony of Aly Oumar, a Futanke from Segou whom the French Governor at Saint Louis interviewed in 1874. ANF.SOM SEN.I 58a: St. Louis, 21 July 1874, Governor to the Minister of Colonies.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Umarian Karta and the Grain Trade at Medine

The army's elite - the talibé from Futa and Bundu -  
... had become bourgeois. Settled in provincial  
capitals, Futanke soldiers were especially numerous  
around Nioro in Karta. They had received land and  
slaves, and married local women. They no longer went  
on campaigns, and many among them - the old men - no  
longer could pursue their brutal exploits of old.  
- Yves Saint-Martin<sup>1</sup>

Saint-Martin makes this statement regarding the embourgeoisment of the Futanke old guard of Nioro in his study of Franco-Umarian relations. He offers it as a general assessment of the Futanke community in Nioro, but does not present any evidence to support his claims. French travellers do not refer to the embourgeoisment of the Futanke of Nioro, nor does the correspondence from the French posts at Medine and Bakel provide much data on the economic and social history of Nioro. Additionally, oral interviews with informants in western Mali today do not support Saint-Martin's statement: most informants emphasize the glories of the holy war and the fight against the French, and assert without qualification that the Futanke of Karta were either soldiers or military commanders in the army. Must we accept Saint-Martin's judgement, therefore, as unsupported speculation?

During the late nineteenth century, Commandant Supérieur Combes also argued that the Futanke of Karta had become settled in their ways.<sup>2</sup> He based his conclusions on what he observed at Medine where he served in the early 1880s as commandant of the French post. Hundreds of Futanke arrived at Medine with caravans filled with grain from Konyakary and its neighboring villages in Jomboxo. The Futanke sold the grain to African gum traders or traitants, who in turn sold it to the French and to desert-side merchants who travelled to exchange gum at Medine. Combes submitted a description of the commercial traffic at Medine in 1884, and a skeptical Governor of Senegal commissioned a study to determine whether Combes had exaggerated the wealth of Karta. The Governor's study showed that Combes had not overstated his case.<sup>3</sup>

Within less than two decades after Umar Tal's holy war, Medine had emerged as one of the largest gum and grain markets in the entire Senegal River valley. It rose to prominence due to the efforts of southern Saharan commercial groups, Senegal valley merchants and Futanke plantation owners from Jomboxo, the Kartan province closest to Medine. Ironically, surplus grain produced in Jomboxo and exchanged at Medine fed the troops which the French used in the initial campaigns of their military advance on the Umarians. After the French conquest, most of the Futanke plantation owners left Karta and returned to Futa Toro. The fortunes of most of Medine's merchants also suffered, as French firms and other merchants eventually made Kayes the new commercial center of the upper valley. The French conquest not only destroyed the production complex: it removed social groups who would have remembered the grain trade in oral traditions and reminiscences.<sup>4</sup> Fortunately, archives from the post at Medine provide ample evidence for the reconstruction of the

Futanke grain trade at Medine. While this chapter rests primarily on written evidence produced by French officials at Medine, I also use oral data and the European travel literature whenever relevant.

### The emergence of a grain market at Medine

Surplus grain had been exchanged in the upper Senegal valley long before the establishment of a grain market at Medine. Whenever harvests produced abundant surpluses, farmers exchanged grain with the camel and cattle herders of the region for milk, hides and cattle. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, these exchanges expanded greatly as Soninke groups living along the northern sahel integrated their economic activities more fully with Moorish commercial families who ran the economy of the southern Sahara.<sup>5</sup> European and African merchants also bought surplus grain as an outgrowth of their involvement in the slave and gum trades in the upper Senegal valley. In the early eighteenth century, grain purchases in the region rose dramatically as slave traders bought foodstuffs to feed the slaves waiting transport to the coast.<sup>6</sup> With the rise of the gum trade in the late eighteenth century, the growing urban population at Saint Louis depended on Senegal valley harvests. Bakel, the major upper valley market of the early nineteenth century, regularly sent large quantities of grain to Saint Louis. The establishment of a market at Medine added to the number of commercial outlets for upper valley grain and competed with entrenched interests at Bakel and the southern Sahara.

Jomboxo's position as the major supplier of grain to Medine reflected the favorable conditions for production in the region as well as its proximity to Medine. Annual rains created a flood plain along the Xoolimbinne and Kirgu

valleys where dry season cultivation produced a second harvest. Mungo Park, who passed through Jomboxo in the late eighteenth century, noted that the extent and productivity of the cultivated region around Konyakary "surpassed everything that I had yet seen in Africa."<sup>7</sup> The economics of transport also explain Jomboxo's dominance of the Medine trade: grain received such a low price relative to its weight and volume that transportation costs had to be kept low in order to ensure a reasonable profit from its exchange. The communities of Jomboxo were between one to two days travel time by donkey from Medine.<sup>8</sup>

Medine's grain trade began as an outgrowth of improved relations between the French and the Umarians in Karta. In 1863, Cerno Musa, an Umarian leader from Konyakary, proposed the opening of Franco-Umarian commercial relations at the post of Medine.<sup>9</sup> The acquisition of foodstuffs was high on the French agenda, and Cerno Musa responded by sending a grain caravan to Medine to demonstrate his ability to supply what the French requested.<sup>10</sup> Grain exchanges continued at Medine throughout the mid-1860s, with Umarian agents exchanging grain for guinée cloth, European luxury goods and weapons.<sup>11</sup> The French bought as much grain as the Umarians transported to Medine. One French official boasted that he could provision all the posts of the Senegal valley with Umarian grain.<sup>12</sup> The Franco-Umarian grain exchanges at Medine led the way toward the relaxed relations which characterized the next fifteen years of the relationship.<sup>13</sup>

In the late 1860s, traitants began to involve themselves in the grain trade at Medine. They initially made grain purchases merely to obtain foodstuffs for themselves, but Moorish demand for grain encouraged some traitants to expand their involvement in the commodity.<sup>14</sup> Soon traitants who could offer their clients grain as well as guinée cloth had an advantage over their rivals. While

individual zawaya caravans may only have wanted small quantities to meet the needs of their return trip into the southern Sahara, the cumulative impact of their demand greatly exceeded the supply of grain at Medine in the early 1870s. As a result, enterprising traitants sought dependable quantities of grain and integrated the grain and gum trades.

Unfortunately, the extant data does not provide much information on the grain trade in the 1870s, when the traitants expanded their grain purchases and diverted large quantities of Jomboxo grain into Medine.<sup>15</sup> Those who pioneered the grain trade were gum merchants tied to the Umarian elite.<sup>16</sup> The traitants seem not to have acted as brokers; they bought wholesale and assumed all risks and profits for themselves.<sup>17</sup> By the 1870s, the grain market operated throughout the year.<sup>18</sup> The leading grain merchant, Momar Jak, purchased the former Xassonke fort so that he could store the large quantities of grain and gum which he was purchasing.<sup>19</sup>

French demand for upper valley grain increased with the expansion of their military presence into the West African interior. After renewing the push into the interior with the establishment of several new posts in the early 1880s, the French conducted annual campaigns until the Western Sudan fell under their control in the 1890s.<sup>20</sup> The French planned initially to supply their African troops with grain obtained through taxation and purchase at the posts in the interior, but their inability to tap these local sources nearly forced them to halt the initiative.<sup>21</sup> The solution was to buy grain in the region around Kayes, their new administrative center, and then transport the supplies overland to the army. Grain shortfalls frequently threatened the French position in the interior, and officials at Kayes turned increasingly to the market at Medine,

which was less than 15 kilometers away.<sup>22</sup> Grain prices at Medine predictably rose each time the French needed to supply the interior.<sup>23</sup>

How much grain passed through Medine's market during the era of traitant control? French archival materials provide several indicators of the volume. Quantitative measures include traitant estimates of annual grain purchases (see Table B). Unfortunately, the data are far from complete. Gaps in the reporting are quite apparent. Also, the figures often represent only a portion of the total: the estimates for 1877-78, 1881-82, 1882-83 and 1884-85 were made prior to the end of the trading season.<sup>24</sup> The reliability of any figure, too, is open to question, given that the merchants would be reluctant to reveal the full extent of their economic activity to the French. Nevertheless, the data provide a general indication of changes in the volume of the grain trade.

During the 1870s, the volume increased throughout the period. The actual rate of change is difficult to calculate with very much certainty. The total for 1871-72, for example, reflects the impact of Amadu Sheku's embargo on trade with Medine that year and is not representative of purchases during the early 1870s.<sup>25</sup> The figure for 1877-78 almost certainly is too low, since it does not include purchases after April, 1878; May and June were usually the most active months of the trading year, and grain sales continued even during the planting season. Accepting the estimate for 1873-74 as a representative annual total for the early 1870s,<sup>26</sup> and assuming that 400 metric tons is a low estimate for the late 1870s, I calculate a fourfold increase in grain purchases at Medine during the decade.

The data from the early 1880s allow for a fairly confident assertion that grain purchases maintained an average of 500 metric tons annually. The lowest reported estimate, 335,282 kilograms, is the total as of the end of April, 1882.



TABLE B:  
VOLUME OF TRAITANT GRAIN PURCHASES AT MEDINE, 1860-90<sup>27</sup>

Purchasing year <sup>28</sup>	Kilograms of grain <sup>29</sup>
1860-1871	n.f.
1871-72	65,000
1872-73	n.f.
1873-74	127,000
1874-1877	n.f.
1877-78	400,000 *
1878-1881	n.f.
1881-82	355,282 *
1882-83	500,000 *
1883-84	n.f.
1884-85	500,000 *
1884-1890	n.f.

n.f. = no figures reported

\* total does not reflect purchases for the entire marketing year

TABLE C: GRAIN CARAVANS ARRIVING AT MEDINE, 1885<sup>30</sup>

Caravans arriving from:

<u>Month</u>	<u>Jomboxo</u>	<u>Nioro</u>	<u>Elsewhere</u>
Jan.-Mar.	n.f.	n.f.	n.f.
April	18	3	0
May	21	1	5
June	6	0	12
July	8	0	0
August	6	0	0
September	12	0	0
October	18	4	0
November	6	0	0
December	0	0	0

n.f. = no figures reported

TABLE D: GRAIN CARAVANS ARRIVING AT MEDINE, 1887-88<sup>31</sup>

Caravans arriving from:

<u>Month</u>	<u>Jomboxo</u>	<u>Nioro</u>	<u>Elsewhere</u>
October	3	4	0
November	n.f.	n.f.	n.f.
December	10	4	1
January	26	0	2
February	20	0	2
March	n.f.	n.f.	n.f.
April	n.f.	n.f.	n.f.
May	43	0	5
June	26	0	3
July	n.f.	n.f.	n.f.
August	n.f.	n.f.	n.f.
September	25	0	0

n.f. = no figures reported

Since an Umarian embargo on trade with Medine had been in effect earlier in the marketing year, an additional 200 metric tons could easily have arrived in the five remaining months of the 1881-82 trading year.<sup>32</sup> Two of the following three years resulted in annual grain imports in excess of 500,000 kilograms. The grain trade in 1883-84 probably attained that level, since an early report indicates that grain purchases were greater than the previous year.<sup>33</sup> Clearly, then, Medine had become a very active grain market. It had surpassed Bakel in total volume of grain purchases by at least 100 metric tons annually.<sup>34</sup>

Jomboxo remained the major source of grain for the market at Medine even as traitant purchases increased fourfold and reached 500 metric tons annually. The French described the caravan traffic at Medine in 1872 as follows: "the millet [is] brought almost exclusively by the Futanke."<sup>35</sup> Additionally, French descriptions of Medine's population begin to refer to a large seasonal influx of Futanke in the 1870s as the numbers of grain caravans increased.<sup>36</sup> Monthly reports on the number of caravans arriving in Medine from 1885 to 1888 indicate additionally that most of the Futanke came from Jomboxo (see Tables C and D).<sup>37</sup> The market at Medine functioned as an entrepot for Jomboxo grain.

#### Grain: the Umarian connection

French documents never mention who produced the grain brought to Medine, only commenting on the role of Futanke as the primary caravaneers of the grain trade. The fact that the Futanke monopolized the caravan traffic between Jomboxo and Medine is not surprising, given the tight control exercised over the movement of caravans in all the Umarian territories of the Western

Sudan.<sup>38</sup> Restricted participation in the commercial life reflected the Umarian ideology which divided society into two classes: the followers of Umar Tal (the "true Muslims") and the subordinate groups of the state.<sup>39</sup> In the context of the grain trade at Medine, limited access to the market ensured that only those with privileged social positions were allowed to reap exchange values from the grain surpluses of the region. Umarian officials and notables were the two main beneficiaries of restricted access to Medine. Through time, however, these two social groups came into conflict over the grain trade at Medine.

From the state perspective, the grain trade was merely one among many economic activities which required state supervision and regulation. Umarian officials charged zawaya caravaneers for the privilege of crossing Karta on their trip to Medine, and in turn collected a fee from the traitants at Medine for ensuring the arrival of the gum caravans.<sup>40</sup> The initial grain exchanges were clearly in the domain of inter-state relations: Cerno Musa sent a grain caravan filled from the state treasury to open the way for more relaxed Franco-Umarian relations.<sup>41</sup> Subsequent leaders at Konyakary continued Cerno Musa's practice of exchanging state grain surpluses at Medine.<sup>42</sup> The willingness of traitants to exchange weapons for grain only served to increase official interest in the grain trade.<sup>43</sup>

The Umarian state obtained the grain for exchange at Medine from direct taxation of Jomboxo's agricultural output. Umar Tal initially instituted a tax on the harvests of Jomboxo at a time when widespread grain confiscation by the conquering army threatened to erode local support for Umarian rule.<sup>44</sup> The tax became known as the jakka, in conscious reference to the zakat (the tax levied on Muslims in the Islamic heartland). Authority for its assessment and collection fell on the military leaders of Konyakary, including Cerno Jibi, Cerno

Musa, Samba Mody and Bassiru Tal. Most of the grain collected as jakka was stored at Konyakary, where the leaders used it to provision the standing army residing at the capital and to celebrate the major Muslim holidays. When the surpluses were high, state officials freely traded a portion at Medine. State exchanges stopped, however, when military campaigns or official visitors placed demands on the use of surplus grain in the treasury.<sup>45</sup> Thus, while the state treasury was a reliable source of grain, Umarian leaders at Konyakary were not the most dependable suppliers to the traitants.

Umarian leaders frequently assigned important lieutenants the task of collecting the tax in outlying areas, and these agents also participated in the grain trade at Medine.<sup>46</sup> Agents traditionally retained a portion of the tax for their own support, sometimes keeping up to one-half of the jakka for themselves.<sup>47</sup> The emergence of the grain market at Medine encouraged agents to take their full share of the taxes, since grain now had both exchange and consumptive value. As a result, tax collectors in Jomboxo usually met or exceeded the recommended tenth of the harvest, while in other Kartan provinces, agents rarely collected a tenth of the harvest.<sup>48</sup> The ability of Jomboxo's agents to exchange grain at Medine was circumscribed, however, by the fact that the military leader at Konyakary could revoke the right to collect taxes if he thought that the agent was abusing the privilege.

In addition to Umarian officials, Futanke notables also participated in the grain trade at Medine. Suleyman Eliman, a Futanke who fought in the holy war and settled at Konyakary, described his involvement in the grain trade to Paul Soleillet, whom he accompanied on his trip to Segou in the late 1870s.<sup>49</sup> Suleyman told Soleillet how, during a diplomatic mission to Bakel, he exchanged

several donkey loads of grain for some guinée cloth.<sup>50</sup> Once back in Konyakary, Suleyman traded the guinée cloth for Ijil salt bars from the Moors who resided in Jomboxo. Suleyman completed his transactions by exchanging the salt bars for gold at Buré, a gold-producing region southeast of Karta. These exchanges show that surplus grain could be converted into gold at Buré as well as European firearms or luxury goods in the upper Senegal valley.

Although Suleyman's testimony is the only extant reference to private involvement in the grain trade, his description of the transactions suggests that Futanke participation in it was extensive.<sup>51</sup> His travels, for example, reflect a desire to maximize a return on each exchange: grain fetched a higher price at the upper valley markets than in Konyakary, the value of salt bars increased as one moved farther from the desert-side, and gold prices were lowest near the source of production. From Suleyman's actions, one can reasonably conclude that he was not an occasional participant in commercial dealings, but an experienced trader. Moreover, he probably recounted the series of exchanges to inform Soleillet of the commercial strategies of his social strata. Soleillet was imbued with the idea that French commercial expansion would greatly benefit the inhabitants of the Western Sudan, and Suleyman wanted him to see that restricted access to markets worked in favor of the Umarian elite.<sup>52</sup>

The Futanke population of Jomboxo in the late 1870s included notables, such as Suleyman Eliman, who had been important soldiers during the conquest of Jomboxo and received numerous slaves as booty from the campaigns.<sup>53</sup> Their slaves lived on the outskirts of Konyakary in agricultural settlements along the Kirgu and Xoolimbinne valleys.<sup>54</sup> Many of these initial settlers had been state agents who collected taxes in the 1860s and subsequently retired from state service. Their initial involvement in the grain trade gave them

connections with the traitants and knowledge of the economic potential of increasing grain production. As prominent members of the Umarian community, they also had the social standing to ensure continued access to the market at Medine. Their movement into grain production reflected generational change within the Umarian community: the grain trade provided an aging elite with the means to consolidate their social and economic position in Umarian society.

Konyakary's slave market flourished during the 1880s, suggesting additionally that Futanke settlers were investing in slave labor to expand production in Jomboxo. Slave prices were so high in Jomboxo in the 1880s that migrants who arrived at that time often sold their slaves as a means to finance the migration of additional family members.<sup>55</sup> Among the groups purchasing slaves in Jomboxo were Futanke plantation owners whose involvement in grain production was sufficiently profitable to merit investment in additional labor inputs. These settlers were the kind of suppliers upon whom the traitants could depend to provide large amounts of surplus grain annually.<sup>56</sup>

The emergence of a slave-owning group of Futanke settlers with interests in the grain trade at Medine had political implications for Umarian rule in Jomboxo. As the settlers turned to production as the primary basis of livelihood, they acted in ways which drew them into conflict with the state. Some used their influence to throw off the obligation to pay jakka.<sup>57</sup> Others refused to join Bassiru's military campaigns as grain production was expanding in the 1870s. They expressed their resistance in terms of their more pressing involvement in agricultural production.<sup>58</sup> These settlers did not share Bassiru's enthusiasm for military conquests because their material life had come to depend upon the production and exchange of surplus grain. Bassiru's campaigns diverted labor and managerial talents from production, and often caused a halt



in the caravan traffic from Jomboxo to Medine.<sup>59</sup> The resistance of the settlers proved so successful that Bassiru began sending recruiters to Futa Toro in order to find enough soldiers to field an army.<sup>60</sup>

Invitations to migrate to Umarian Karta were well received among the Fulbe communities of the lower valley, who began to migrate eastward in large numbers beginning in the late 1870s. Many of these Fulbe were young men who left their families back in the Senegal valley with promises to send for their relatives when they had accumulated sufficient wealth to establish a household. These migrants saw the army as the best vehicle for such accumulation, and joined it without hesitation. Not surprisingly, the French noted that the armies under the command of Bassiru and Muntaga consisted largely of young men.<sup>61</sup> Many of these young men were recent Fulbe recruits from the Senegal valley.

Bassiru settled his recruits at Segala, the former Massassi garrison at the convergence of the Kirgu and Xoolimbinne Rivers. Soleillet passed through Segala in the late 1870s and observed that it actually was two settlements.<sup>62</sup> One village, which was surrounded by well-attended fields, was the residence of Bundunke settlers who occupied the village immediately after the conquest.<sup>63</sup> The other village was a garrison for the Fulbe migrants of the late 1870s; it continued to receive Fulbe migrants well into the 1880s.<sup>64</sup> The two settlements of Segala reflected the larger conflicts emerging within the Umarian community in Jomboxo: the initial group of settlers controlled the productive land whereas subsequent migrants lived in garrisons and looked to military service for their material support.

Each group had differing perspectives on the role of the Umarian state. The initial settlers, as the first Umarian disciples whose military conquests had brought Karta under Umarian control, claimed that the holy war was over and

felt that Bassiru's campaigns were unnecessary.<sup>65</sup> They probably added that the state should support their efforts at exploiting the agricultural potential of the Xoolimbinne valley.<sup>66</sup> Neither Bassiru nor the recent arrivals dared challenge these views directly because state ideology glorified Umar's life and the period of the holy war. At the same time, however, the young recruits probably responded with the suggestion that the obligation of jihad fell upon all Muslims regardless of their past accomplishments.<sup>67</sup> They saw warfare as the primary occupation of the Umarian state. This disagreement over the role of the state came to be expressed openly during the mid-1880s.<sup>68</sup>

Futanke settlers continued to exchange surplus grain at Medine up until the eve of the French conquest. Although no data presently exists to document the extent of the commerce in the late 1880s, the reports of French officials indicate that the grain trade remained active until 1889, when a poor harvest brought it to a halt.<sup>69</sup> Amadu Sheku tried to stop it in 1887, but he seems not to have had the support to enforce his edict.<sup>70</sup> Thus, even though the French had prohibited the sale of weapons and powder to the Umarian army, Kartan grain still flowed into Medine.

As the French advanced on the Umarians, the Futanke plantation owners were caught in an ambiguous position. Their economic interests did not coincide with those of the Umarian army, but they were not in a position to ally with the French. Some probably hoped that some accommodation with the French could be obtained, but others resisted the idea of French control. Many Futanke were executed upon capture, and most settlers were forced to leave Jomboxo. Their involvement in the grain trade contributed to the efflorescence of Medine and enhanced their material position at the time, but the arrival of the French ended their era.

## Conclusion

The rise of Medine as a commercial center involved the coincidence of economic interests in the upper Senegal valley. The zawaya groups of the southern Sahara willingly directed their caravans of gum to the new Senegal valley market because the commodity had little exchange value in the Western Sudan. The traitants saw Medine as a safe haven against the expansion of French interests in the gum trade, and brought their expertise, connections to Saint Louis and enthusiasm up the Senegal. Umarians officials, too, worked to ensure that Medine's establishment enhanced their interests. They obtained European weapons in exchange for surplus grain, which both the zawaya and the traitants desired.

The involvement of Futanke notables ensured Medine's commercial success. They expanded production and provided the market with dependable supplies of grain. As the notables increased production, however, their interests began to diverge from those of Umarian officials. The notables found that they much preferred the role of agrarian landlords over that of the warlord. Had state officials not recruited successfully in Futa Toro, the initial colonists may have been able to wrestle control of state policy from the hands of Bassiru. As it occurred, Senegal valley recruits replenished the Umarian armies and strengthened the position of the military. The unsuccessful attempt on the part of the notables to remove Bassiru as leader of Konyakary was merely an overt expression of the contradictions which lurked within the Umarian community. The following chapters focus on the two revolts in Umarian Karta and locate the conflicts within the historical context which these initial chapters have provided.

### Notes

1. Y. Saint-Martin, L'Empire toucouleur et la France: un demi-siècle de relations diplomatiques (1846-1893) (Dakar, 1967), pp. 183-184.
2. See Commandant Supérieur Combes' reports in ANF.SOM SEN.IV 81c.
3. ANF.SOM SEN.IV 81c: Kayes, 1 November, 1884, Ct. Sup. to the Governor. Combes sent a lengthy letter arguing for continued French expansion into the Western Sudan. To strengthen his argument regarding the necessity of French action, he attached several charts which described the commercial activity at Medine and several other French forts in the interior (Bafoulabe, Kita and Bamako). Medine's figures so impressed the Governor that he ordered a more intensive investigation of the commercial life of Medine. Summaries of the quantitative and qualitative data gathered during this investigation are invaluable for the reconstruction of the history of Medine. These summaries appear in ANS 2B75 (the Governor's correspondence with the Minister of the Colonies in France). Some of the original reports can be found in ANM 1Q70. Also see, for an informative account of the commercial life of Medine, Dr. Colin, "Le Soudan occidental", Revue maritime et coloniale 78 (1883).
4. I tried to find descendants of the traitants and the Futanke plantation owners in western Mali, but found few who could remember much about the commerce in grain trade during the Umarian era. Informants remembered the gum trade and the arrival of the French.
5. The Kartan provinces of Gidimaxa, Jafunu, Gidiyumme, Kanyareme, Kingi and Bakunu participated in the expansion of exchanges across the ecological boundary.
6. Abdoulaye Bathily, "La traite atlantique des esclaves et ses effets économiques et sociaux en Afrique: la cas du Galam," Journal of African History 27 (1986).
7. Mungo Park, Travels in the Interior of Africa (New York, 1907), p. 73. Major Gray made a similar remark about the middle Xoolimbinne valley during his trip through the region in the early nineteenth century. Gray and Staff Surgeon Dochart, Travels in Western Africa (London, 1925), p. 299. French officials also remarked on the agricultural abundance of the region when they marched through Jomboxo during the conquest of Jomboxo in 1890. ANS 1D117: n.p., n.d., "Lignes d'étapes de Konyakary à Dionkolané."
8. Donkeys were primary beasts of burden used to transport the grain to market at Medine. They were slow and carried less than camels or pack oxen, but they maneuvered well in the difficult terrain. Occasionally pack oxen and human porters were used.

9. Cerno Musa and Governor Faidherbe were the major figures behind the initial Franco-Umarian treaty of 1860. Faidherbe pursued commercial negotiations with the Umarians upon his return to Senegambia in 1863.

10. The French at Medine constantly complained about the lack of agricultural output on the territory under their control. Grain shortfalls in 1863 forced the French commandant to appeal for assistance from the Umarians at Konyakary. ANS 13G210: Medine, 7 March 1864, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel. Cerno Musa responded almost immediately with a caravan loaded with grain. ANS 15G108: Medine, 23 April 1864, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel. Cerno Musa had sent a caravan to Medine half a year earlier: ANS 13G168: Medine, 7 October 1863, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel.

11. ANS 13G210: Medine, 16 October 1865, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel; ANS 15G108: Medine, 27 March 1866, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel.

12. ANS 13G210: Medine, 27 July 1864, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel.

13. See, for Franco-Umarian relations, Saint-Martin, L'empire toucouleur et la France.

14. ANS 15G109: Medine, 1 August 1872, Ct. Medine to the Governor.

15. I could not find any descendants of the traitants of Medine who remembered much about the grain trade at any time of its operation.

16. Momar Jak, the wealthiest traitant at Medine and a leading figure in both the gum and grain trades, hosted Umarian envoys who visited Medine. He also was the traitant responsible for the delivery of 1500 firearms to Amadu Sheku in 1871. Amet Samba Pullo, another grain trader, may have used shared Fulbe ethnicity with the Umarians as a means to forge contacts in Jomboxo. See Momar Jak's Arabic correspondence with the Umarian elite in ANS 15G68: #84; ANS 15G76: #51-53; 15G78: #65,96,99,100. See, for a description of Momar Jak's grain trading activities, ANS 3B98: St. Louis, 3 August 1883, Governor to Ct. Sup. See, for Amet Samba Pullo, ANM 1E207: Medine, 18 January 1886, Ct. Medine to Ct. Kayes.

17. In the absence of complete pricing information, I base this judgement on numerous French reports that the traitants bought grain at "favorable" prices.

18. The normal pattern was for the traitants to leave Medine during the rainy season and return for the opening of the new gum season in late December. See Sékéne-Mody Cissoko, "Contribution à l'histoire politique des royaumes du Khasso", Université de Paris, doctorat d'état, 1979, p. 633. Cissoko does not make the connection between the traitant move to establish residences at Medine and the expansion of the grain trade.

19. Momar Jak bought the royal Xassonke fort in 1880. Cissoko, "Contribution à l'histoire politique", p. 656.

20. See, for a description of the French conquest, A.S. Kanya-Forstner, The Conquest of the Western Sudan (Cambridge, 1969).

21. The question of supply haunted all the Commandant Supérieurs of the 1880s. Bamako ultimately became a major grain market, but this development awaited the consolidation of French control in the region during the early 1890s. See, for a brief discussion of the problem of supply, Richard Roberts, "The emergence of a grain market in Bamako, 1883-1908," Canadian Journal of African Studies 14 (1980). See, on the question of closing forts and halting expansion in the interior, ANS 1D62: Kayes, 4 December 1881, Ct. Sup. to the Governor; ANF.SOM SEN.XX 5: Kayes, 4 May 1884, Ct. Kayes to the Governor, and Kanya-Forstner, The Conquest of the Western Sudan, p. 96.

22. The only other major grain market in the upper valley was Bakel, which was almost 150 kilometers downriver from Kayes. Bakel's grain supplied the urban population of Saint Louis, and the French probably were reluctant to divert it. Momar Jak, who regularly supplied the post at Medine with grain, received a glowing recommendation from the commandant at Medine. Others may have sold grain to the French, but the evidence is lacking. Jak ultimately became an ally of the French, supplying Commandant Supérieur Archinard with information about the Umarians. See, for Jak's recommendation as a reliable source, ANS 1D62: Kita, 14 February 1881, Ct. Sup. to Governor; and ANS 3B98: Saint Louis, 3 August 1883, Governor to Ct. Sup.

23. See, for an example of a price increase, ANM 1E207: Medine, 18 January 1886, Ct. Medine to Ct. Kayes.

24. The French often changed commandants before the onset of the rainy season so the departing official made inquiries about the grain trade in April or May.

25. ANS 15G109: Medine, 6 January, 28 May and 1 August 1872, Ct. Medine to the Governor.

26. One could argue that 127 metric tons for 1873-74 is a low estimate since it is only double the amount purchased during the embargo year of 1871-72. More probable, however, is the case for the ineffectiveness of Amadu's embargo, which could only cut the volume of grain exports in half.

27. The French officials never distinguished between millet (petit mil) and sorghum (gros mil). The quantitative estimates appear in: ANF.SOM SEN.I 56b: St. Louis, 14 September, 1872, Governor to the Minister; ANS 15G109: Medine, Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, July, 1874 and April, 1878; ANS 15G111: Medine, Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, April, 1882; ANM 1E54: Medine, Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, May, 1883; ANS 2B75: St. Louis, 12 September and 12 November, 1885, Governor to the Minister. Very useful descriptions of the grain trade during this era also can be found in the correspondence of the commandant of Medine with his superiors in ANM 1Q70.

28. The "purchasing year" began in October with the harvest of grains and ran until the end of the subsequent rainy season. Most of the grain trade occurred between January and June.

29. The traitants estimated the grain trade in terms of barriques, the largest unit of measurement used in the Senegal valley. During the 1880's, when the French took an active interest in the grain trade, they determined that the barrique held approximately 200 kilograms of millet. I have used the 200:1 ratio in my calculations for this table. Cissoko states that the barrique held only 100 kilograms of millet, but he provides no evidence in support of this ratio. See, for his discussion of the barrique, Cissoko, "Contribution à l'histoire politique", pp. 631-32. See, for the French estimates, ANM 1Q70: Medine, 1 April 1886, "Rapport commercial"; ANM 1E207: Medine, 13 May 1886, Ct. Medine to the Ct. des Cercles; ANS 2B75: St. Louis, 12 August 1885, Governor to the Minister.

30. The data comes from the monthly reports of caravan traffic at Medine held in ANM 1Q70.

31. The data comes from the monthly reports on caravan traffic at Medine held in ANM 1Q70.

32. Bassiru Tal imposed an embargo on trade with Medine between November, 1881 and January, 1882. See ANS 1D62: Kayes, 23 November 1881, Ct. Sup. to the Governor; Medine, 2 December 1881, Ct. Medine to Ct. Sup.; ANS 15G113: Medine, Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, January 1882.

33. ANM 1Q70: Medine, 26 July, 1884, "Rapport commercial." This report only discusses the grain trade for the first three months of 1884, and does not provide a quantitative estimate of the volume.

34. The volume of Bakel's grain trade in 1883-84 was 400 metric tons annually. See ANS 13G184: Bakel, 1 October 1884, "Rapport trimestriel." The traitants of Medine supplied the French post at Bakel with grain several times in the 1880s. See, for example, ANS 13G187: Bakel, Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, May 1887.

35. ANS 15G109: Medine, 6 January, 1872, Ct. Medine to the Governor. See also the references to the grain trade in the Régistre journal du poste de Medine from the late 1870s which suggest that it remained firmly in "Tukulor" hands at that time. In 1884, the commandant at Medine noted that "the millet [is] brought in abundance by Tukulors," and his successor added that "the millet . . . is brought principally from Jomboxo." ANS 15G111: Régistre journal du poste de Medine, June, 1877, and February, March, April, and November, 1879; ANM 1Q70: Medine, 26 July 1884, "Rapport commercial"; ANM 1Q70: Medine, 18 October, 1885, "Rapport sur l'accroissement du commerce."

36. 15G113: "Recensement de la population de Medine-1882".

37. The French collected the data in their wider attempt to calculate the economic wealth of the Western Sudan. Commandant Supérieur Combes' estimate of Umarian commercial involvement at Medine precipitated the specific interest in their upper valley post. The commandants at Medine organized the data in monthly reports of economic activity and sent the information to the Governor. He in turn summarized the data and relayed it to the Minister of Colonies in France. See, for the monthly reports, ANM 1Q70. The correspondence from the Governor is in ANS 2B75.

38. The French travellers Eugène Mage and Paul Soleillet commented on the role of Fulbe in either guarding or running the caravan traffic of the Western Sudan.

39. Paul Marty notes that Soninke groups in early twentieth century Karta still reflected the Umarian social order: the immigrant Soninke who arrived after the holy war were "learned" Muslims and a second tier of "unschooled" Soninke groups who claimed long residence in Karta. P. Marty, Etudes sur l'Islam et les tribus de Soudan, Volume 4 (Paris, 1921), pp. 237-38.

40. See, for the extended negotiations leading to the collection of fees or "coutume" in the language of the nineteenth century, the correspondence in the Medine archives from the mid-1860s: ANS 13G211, 15G108 and 15G109. Gerard Kisyeti provides an adequate summary of the outcome of the negotiations in his thesis, "Recherches sur le commerce dans l'empire toucouleur", Université de Dakar, mémoire de maîtrise, 1980. The French agreed to the collection of a fee, but required that the exchange be called a "gift" and not a customs tax, and that the traitants paid the fee directly to the Umarian agent. In practice, the French commandant often played an intermediary role.

41. ANS 15G108: Medine, 27 March 1866, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel.

42. Umarian Governors from Nioro, Farabugu and Jalla similarly sent grain caravans to Bakel. The Konyakary-Medine connection had by far the most traffic of the official caravan routes.

43. ANM 1E207: Medine, 27 and 28 February 1885, Ct. Medine to Ct. Kayes.

44. Cerno Yahya Tal's Arabic chronicle of the conquest of Jomboxo includes a discussion of Umarian raiding of Xassonke fields and Umar's severe reaction to the practice. My comments about the passages prompted Yahya to explain that Umar imposed Muslim taxes (the zakat) to stop his "unschooled" soldiers from raiding the Xassonke. Cerno Yahya's source for the raiding is Demba Sadio Diallo, who probably obtained the information from one of several interviews among the oral historians of the Xassonke. Much of the following discussion of Umarian taxes in Jomboxo comes from Cerno Yahya's Arabic chronicle and several interviews with him, and S.-M. Cissoko's overview of Umarian taxation of the Xassonke communities of Jomboxo in "Contribution a l'histoire politique".

45. See, for examples of the cessation of the official grain trade, ANS 15G109: Medine, 6 January 1872 and ANM 1E54: Medine, June 1887, "Rapport politique".

46. A few Xassonke elites obtained the authorization to collect jakka, but most agents were Fulbe military leaders.

47. ANM 1D51: "Notice historique sur la région du Sahel," by de Lartigues. This report was published under same title in Bulletin Colonial d'Afrique Française/Revue Coloniale (1898); ANS 1G310: "Renseignements historiques, géographiques et économiques sur le Cercle de Kayes," by Administrateur Roux, Kayes, 30 March 1904.



48. Compare, for example, the comments in ANM 1D51: "Notice historique" and ANS 1G310: "Renseignements historiques," the former drawn from information from the Nioro region and the latter drawn from informants from the Konyakary region.

49. Suleyman was a leading notable of Konyakary. Some of his correspondence in Arabic with French officials, the traitant community at Medine, and Amadu Sheku is contained in the ANS correspondence indigène dossiers: 15G77 #98, 15G66 #17, and 15G78 #97, respectively. In the late 1880s, Suleyman served as Amadu Sheku's agent for the collection of gum duties from the traitants of Medine. Suleyman died in 1889.

50. Paul Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou (1878-79). rédigé d'après les notes et journaux de Soleillet par Gabriel Gravier (Paris, 1887), pp. 222-23.

51. As I noted earlier, I did not find many Futanke informants in western Mali who could remember the grain trade. I attribute the absence of memory in large part because the participants returned to Futa Toro after the French conquest.

52. In the pages immediately preceding Suleyman's testimony, Soleillet raved about the agricultural production of the Bambara and Mandinka of Karta. He speculated that these groups would become wealthy if only the French could establish markets in the interior. While this comment may have been added for the French audience, it conceivable that Soleillet expressed these ideas directly to Suleyman.

53. Interview with El Hadj Maeyel Diako, Konyakary, 8 February 1986.

54. Futanke notables held extremely negative stereotypes of their slaves; one notable compared his slave unfavorably to his horse in a conversation with Paul Soleillet. These attitudes reflect the temperament of plantation owners whose involvement in the supervision of agricultural slaves was intimate. See, for the negative stereotypes of slaves, Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, pp. 162ff. El Hadj Maeyel Diako of Konyakary admitted that beatings of slaves were common in late nineteenth century Jomboxo. Interview of 8 February 1986.

55. ANS 13G187: Bakel, 23 February 1887, Ct. Bakel to Ct. Kayes. The price for slaves was twice as high in Jomboxo as in Futa Toro.

56. The number of Futanke grain caravans arriving at Medine in the mid-1880s (Tables C and D) reflects widespread participation in the grain trade at that time. In the absence of data, one may also speculate that the increase in grain purchases in the 1870s (Table B) expressed the increasing involvement of notables beginning at that time and continuing into the 1880s.

57. Although Umar Tal imposed the jakka on all Muslims in Jomboxo, indigenous and immigrant alike, the Umarian state stopped collecting taxes from selected Futanke communities in the late nineteenth century. This administrative change quite probably reflects the success of some notables in freeing themselves from taxation in order to pursue the grain trade. This reading of events places the change during the mid-1870s, with the arrival of a

new governor, Bassiru Tal, and the increased demand for grain at Medine. See, for the change in taxation, ANS 1G310: "Renseignements historiques".

58. Throughout the 1870s, French commandants at Medine report the failure of Bassiru Tal to recruit an army among the Futanke of Jomboxo because no one will fight in preference to planting, weeding or harvesting. Futanke notables occasionally are noted as the leaders of the resistance. ANS 15G109: Medine, 1 May 1874, Régistre journal; 15G110: Medine, 7 September 1876, Ct. Medine to the Governor; 15G111: Medine, 30 June 1877, Régistre journal; Medine, Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, June, 1877, and March and April, 1879.

59. Such an instance was the prolonged conflict between Bassiru and Moriba Safere of Sero. The Commandant of Bakel reports the complaints of one Futanke notable from Konyakary who suffered from the halt in caravan traffic. ANS 13G173: Bakel, 21 February 1876, Ct. Bakel to the Governor.

60. Commandant Soyer from Bakel filed an informative report on Umarian Karta in 1878, sections of which the Governor of Senegal sent along in his monthly report to the Minister of the Colonies in France. Soyer notes that Bassiru and Muntaga were sending recruiters into Futa Toro at the time. ANF.SOM SEN.I 61c: Saint Louis, 5 June 1878, Governor to the Minister.

61. ANS 1D73: Kayes, 31 October 1883, Ct.Sup. to the Governor; 15G126: Kita, 29 April 1884, Ct. Kita to Ct. Sup.

62. Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, pp. 158-161.

63. Monsieur Perraud, who travelled through Jomboxo in 1865, noted that Segala was a Bundunke settlement. "Rapport de M. Perraud sur un voyage à Nioro, Le Moniteur de Sénégal et Dépendances no. 488 (1 August 1865). Soleillet made the observation regarding the crops.

64. During the French conquest of Jomboxo, the French military gathered data on the Umarian settlements of Jomboxo. They noted that "Segala Peulh" or the Fulbe settlement had received migrants in the late 1880s. ANS 1D105: "Rapport militaire, 1889-90", p. 63.

65. Cerno Amadu Abdul, a notable from Konyakary, told the French commandant at Medine that he disapproved of Bassiru's campaigns, and added that Bassiru did not have the approval of the "Commander of the Faithful". ANS 15G110: Medine, 7 September 1876, Ct. Medine to the Governor.

Oral traditions of Umar Tal's holy war from western Mali uniformly end with the statement that the holy war ended with Umar's "disappearance" in 1864. One informant, El Hadj Maeyel Diako, conceded that Umar's sons continued the holy war despite the legal cessation of jiḥād. Given the influential role which the initial settlers would have played in the creation of these oral traditions, I argue that the traditions enshrine their arguments regarding the differences between Umar's "holy war" and the military campaigns of his sons.

66. The son of a Konyakary notable tried to convince a French official in the early 1890s that he should allow the Umarians to return to their fields in Jomboxo. In the course of the discussion, the son boasted that his father had expanded agricultural production quite considerably over the late nineteenth century. See ANM 1D74: "Rapport du Cpt. Mazillier sur le Jomboko, le Séro et les Maures d'Askeur".

67. Both Abdoul Aziz Diallo and I found that descendants of lower valley and Toronke herders who arrived in the Nioro area during the 1870s and 80s indicate that the new arrivals resented the Muslim pretensions of the Futanke notables "who prayed in mosques but did not fight with the Laamdo Juulbe (Commander of the Faithful) Amadu Sheku". While I could not find descendants of lower valley Fulbe herders to interview in the Konyakary area, I suspect that they would have shared that perspective on the Futanke notables of Jomboxo. See, for the most eloquent statement of Kingi's "young men", Abdoul Aziz Diallo's interview with Mamadou Alpha Diallo, Gavinanné, 25 September 1977.

68. The notables of Jomboxo took the initiative in 1884 and asked Amadu Sheku, who had just arrived in Nioro, to settle the dispute by replacing Bassiru with a new leader. I discuss these events in Chapter Nine.

69. ANM 1Q70: Medine, 31 July 1889, Ct. Medine to Ct. Sup.; ANS 15G76/3: Kayes, 1 November 1889, transcript of an interview with a spy who visited Karta in late October, 1889.

70. ANM 1E54: Medine, June, 1887, "Rapport politique".

## CHAPTER SIX

### The Revolt of Habib and Moktar: the Politics of the Evidence

Amadu Sheku, at the head of a small army, crossed the Niger at Nyamina and arrived in the vicinity of Nioro 15 days later. One evening at seven, Mustafa was in the compound with Moktar and a voice whispered to him from the door: "Mustafa, your master sends you greetings and awaits you. He is already at Tugunne!" Mustafa got up immediately and, without informing the prince [Moktar], left quickly by horse for Nioro . . . . The next day Moktar arrived at Nioro. He was desperate because he knew that the arrival of Amadu signaled the end of his revolt . . . . He went to Nomo to meet the army of the Commander [of the Faithful] and spent that evening with his brother.  
-recounted to Soleillet in 1878 at Segu.<sup>1</sup>

[Amadu Sheku] sent a message to Muntaga to inform him of . . . the impending arrival of his army at Nioro. The courier did not find Muntaga, who had left to meet with Moktar. . . . [Upon hearing of Amadu's impending arrival, Muntaga] abandoned the rebel cause after making an initial step toward supporting it. . . . Moktar decided to retreat. Slowly and reluctantly he followed the route to Niogomera, where Habib was going to arrive. Muntaga arrived at Nioro almost at the same time as Amadu's avant-garde. To demonstrate his new commitment to the latter, he quickly sent a cavalry force to pursue Moktar.  
-recounted to Piétri in 1880 at Nango.<sup>2</sup>

These two accounts provide contrasting narratives of the revolt led by Habib and Moktar. Paul Soleillet's version depicts Mustafa Keita, the leader of Nioro, as an unwilling participant: Mustafa met the demands of Moktar when he arrived with his army at Nioro, but secretly sent a letter informing Amadu Sheku of Moktar's actions. Amadu quickly marched to Karta and confronted

Moktar, who retreated from Nioro after spending a few days with Amadu. In Camille Piétri's account, the leader of Nioro at the time of the revolt is Amadu's half-brother Muntaga, and not Mustafa Keita. Muntaga, too, initially plotted against Amadu but then betrayed the rebel cause upon Amadu's arrival in Nioro. Piétri also notes that Moktar withdrew from the Nioro area before Amadu Sheku could meet with him.

Paul Soleillet and Camille Piétri transmitted these accounts less than one decade after the revolt occurred, and may have consulted some of the same informants. Since they are the only major historical sources for the revolt, historians must address the questions of historical perspective and the transmission of oral data in the late nineteenth century Western Sudan. The major discussions of the revolt, by B.O. Oloruntimehin and Yves Saint-Martin, however, fail to grapple with these issues.<sup>3</sup> Not surprisingly, these works contain numerous errors. Saint-Martin prefers Soleillet's account, and uses it to narrate a drama which concludes with Amadu Sheku's return to Segou in 1876. Oloruntimehin accepts both accounts as narratives of two separate encounters. He argues that Amadu Sheku captured Moktar and appointed Muntaga leader of Nioro in 1871, released Moktar and returned to Segou, and then returned to Nioro to put down another round of revolts. Amadu Sheku in fact made only one trip to Nioro during the early 1870s, and he was back in Segou by 1874.<sup>4</sup>

Other errors appear in the works of Saint-Martin and Oloruntimehin. The French reports which were written contemporaneously with the revolt indicate that Amadu captured Habib and Moktar in early 1871, but these two historians narrate a conflict lasting several years longer.<sup>5</sup> Their error stems from acceptance of the chronologies offered by Soleillet and Piétri, who added dates to their accounts to satisfy their editors. Saint-Martin uses the French

materials from the Senegal valley rather extensively, and Oloruntimehin makes specific reference to the documents which report the capture of Habib and Moktar in 1871, but both fail to notice the discrepancies in the data.<sup>6</sup> The result is that their narratives offer inaccurate chronologies of the revolt.

The present chapter analyzes the source materials for the revolt led by Habib and Moktar. Through an appreciation of the transmission of oral data and the motives of African informants and French editors, some of the discrepancies among the accounts can be resolved. While data analysis does not rectify all the problems, it provides a basis for making evaluations of the accounts based on the perspectives and motives of the original informants and the interests of the listeners.

### The evidence

Not one oral account of the revolt of Habib and Moktar, generated within the Umarian community and refined over the course of several generations, has been collected in the Western Sudan.<sup>7</sup> Most informants fail to recall anything about Habib and Moktar, and those that do simply remember that they challenged Amadu Sheku and lost.<sup>8</sup> A combination of historical circumstances pushed the revolt out of the public memory of the Umarian community. The imprisonment of the two brothers precipitated expressions of outcry against Amadu Sheku, thus discouraging public celebration of Amadu's victory over his brothers. Also, a dissident tradition never emerged in western Mali. The dispersal of Habib and Moktar's followers in the aftermath of their capture may partially explain the absence of such a tradition.<sup>9</sup> Additionally, the subsequent rebellion of Muntaga tapped the simmering discontent of the Futanke of Karta,

and became the historical event through which discord in the current Umarian community is expressed.<sup>10</sup> An inquiry into the initial revolt, therefore, must turn to contemporaneous written materials and French collections of oral reminiscences from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and use them to re-examine the competing versions in the Soleillet and Piétri accounts.

Contemporaneous written materials include French reports and political correspondence from the upper Senegal valley posts at Medine and Bakel. French officials primarily relied on the testimony of non-Umarian political elites who lived near the posts and desert-side traders who passed through Umarian settlements on their way to the gum markets of the Senegal valley. Both groups of informants rarely passed along information about internal political conflict among the Umarians.<sup>11</sup> In 1870, at the height of the revolt, the French commandants at Bakel and Medine received envoys from Amadu Sheku, Habib and Moktar. The envoys obtained weapons from the market to support their military activities, but were unable to lure the French into choosing sides in the dispute.<sup>12</sup> Despite these contacts, the French remained confused about the revolt and its political ramifications.

According to the initial French reports, Moktar remained neutral in a conflict between Habib and Amadu. This understanding flows logically from the earlier French perception that Moktar's arrival in Konyakary during mid-1869 indicated his appointment as the new leader at Konyakary.<sup>13</sup> Only in May, 1870, when Habib arrived in Jomboxo, did the French first realize that a political challenge to Amadu's authority had emerged in Karta.<sup>14</sup> Thereafter, French archival materials provide information regarding the maneuvers of the Tal brothers and conclusive evidence for dating the capture of Habib and Moktar by January or February of 1871. On the whole, however, they do not

provide sufficient data for the creation of an independent chronology of the revolt. Nor do they offer insight into the origins of the conflict.

Arabic documents are even less helpful than the French archival materials for the historical reconstruction of the revolt. A chronicle of the revolt does not exist in Arabic nor in Pulaar in Arabic script; the existence of several Arabic chronicles of Amadu's other major political victory during his residence in Kingi, the defeat of the Bambara at Gemukura in 1872, suggest that Amadu decided to emphasize his conquest of the Bambara in preference to his earlier victory.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, Amadu's court did not generate many documents concerning the revolt. A few commercial papers related to the purchase of weapons exist, as do scattered estimates of troop strength and a partial list of taxable villages.<sup>16</sup> Not one piece of correspondence between Amadu and his brothers has yet been found in the Arabic materials from Nioro and Segou.

French travellers and colonial officials collected Umarian reminiscences of the revolt of Habib and Moktar, and their published accounts are the primary materials upon which a historical reconstruction of the political drama must be based. The most detailed information appears in the late nineteenth century accounts of Soleillet and Piétri. Two early twentieth century collections, based on the testimony of influential Umarians, supplement the nineteenth century accounts.<sup>17</sup> Several distinct and often contradictory perspectives emerge from these materials. The failure of Saint-Martin and Oloruntimehin to grapple with the competing perspectives within the published accounts led to their factual and interpretive errors. These shortcomings can be avoided through careful consideration of the specific historical circumstances under which each text was created.



Paul Soleillet was the first European to gather oral reminiscences of the revolt. He travelled to Segu in 1878-79, passing through Konyakary and Nioro during an era when Franco-Umarian commercial collaboration was giving way to competition between the two regional powers. Soleillet left his notes and journals with Gabriel Gravier, a French geographer, who published the account several years after the trip occurred. Gravier compiled the text, freely adding his own observations and frequently referring the reader to other traveller's accounts. Unfortunately, Gravier does not describe the process whereby he transformed Soleillet's notes into the published account. Since the history of the political challenge appears as a narrative in the text, one wonders about its original form: did an oral account exist in Segu at the time of Soleillet's visit, or did Gravier compile the narrative from Soleillet's notes?

The Soleillet/Gravier account includes material which strongly suggests that he collected an oral account of the revolt which members of Amadu's inner circle narrated for him. References to the itinerary of Amadu's travels, the size and composition of his army at various points in the struggle, and the interactions between Amadu and his dissident brothers reflect the testimony of informants with access to Amadu's court. Additionally, the text follows immediately with a narrative of Amadu's victory over the Bambara at Gemukura and an account of his installation as Commander of the Faithful during his return to Segu. This movement in the narrative, flowing from the revolts to Amadu's accomplishments, reflects a concern for Amadu's role as leader of the Umarian community. Since neither Soleillet nor Gravier were sympathetic towards Amadu, they are unlikely sources for such a perspective. Saydu Jeliya, an advisor to Amadu at the time of Soleillet's visit and the author of an Arabic

chronicle of Amadu's victory at Gemukura, may have been the informant who recounted a history of Amadu's reign for Soleillet.<sup>18</sup>

It is clear, however, that Soleillet questioned the completeness of the official narrative and sought information and perspectives from outside the Umarian inner circle. Soleillet collected testimony from the interpreter Alfa Sega, who worked on the staff at Medine and had toured Jomboxo at the time of the revolt. More importantly, Soleillet sought dissident perspectives from within the Umarian community. He frequently mentions two former leaders of Karta, Mustafa Keita of Nioro and Samba Mody of Konyakary, who lived in Segou at the time.<sup>19</sup> He may have gathered their reminiscences of the revolt, given his overt sympathy for them as deposed administrators in Karta. Informants from Konyakary also may have provided Soleillet with oral testimony which diverged from the official Segovian perspective. In his description of his trip from Konyakary to Segou, Soleillet noted how tensions erupted within his travelling party when a resident from Konyakary spoke negatively about the reign of Amadu Sheku.<sup>20</sup> Scattered details in the Soleillet/Gravier account of the revolt suggests that he may have gathered information from this informant, or others from Konyakary, in private sessions.<sup>21</sup>

Textual evidence indicates, additionally, that either Gravier or Soleillet drew upon written source materials as they compiled the narrative. The dates which appear throughout the text indicate that Soleillet or Gravier tried to locate the events in a chronology established from dated source materials. Among the written sources were archival reports from Medine. Most of the dates are inaccurate, suggesting that the written data did not correspond well with oral testimony, or that Gravier misread the notes. In either case, the attempt to reconcile oral and written data points to a process whereby someone

outside the Umarian camp worked with materials from various sources and made the final decisions regarding what would and would not appear in the published account of the revolt.

The editorial decisions of Gravier, therefore, mark Soleillet's text as a composite account of the political challenge. While Soleillet's efforts to collect data from a variety of informants potentially increases the value of his work to the historian, the intrusive role of the editor and the absence of clear references to sources of information creates problems for its use as a basic source. The text mentions, for example, that Moktar's move into western Karta was a reaction to the prior initiative of Muntaga, another son of Umar, who reportedly led a contingent of soldiers into southern Karta. Yet, Soleillet's narrative never again refers to Muntaga's activities, although Camille Piétri's account suggests that Muntaga was a principal actor in the capture of Moktar. How does one interpret Soleillet's silence regarding Muntaga's role? Did Soleillet not collect any information on the topic, or did Gravier decide not to include subsequent references to Muntaga's role? Or did Muntaga actually play an insignificant role in the political drama?

A careful analysis of Piétri's account might propose a resolution of the issue. Captain Camille Piétri published his account of the revolt based on oral testimony gathered less than two years after Paul Soleillet's travels. He collected his material while serving in Lieutenant Joseph Gallieni's diplomatic mission to Segou in 1880-81. The Gallieni mission occurred just as France renewed its military advance into the Western Sudan; Amadu took the opportunity to express his reaction to the French military initiatives by detaining Gallieni's mission for 10 months at Nango, a village near Segou.<sup>22</sup> Piétri described the entire experience, and included a chapter devoted to the

history of the revolt. He wrote the text himself, which appeared in print two years before Soleillet's account. Piétri, therefore, probably did not have the chance to compare his materials with those collected by Soleillet.<sup>23</sup> His work also does not show signs of the wide canvassing of opinion and the synthetic treatment of oral and written material which mark Soleillet's text. The extended residence at Nango nonetheless provided Piétri with the opportunity to collect oral material and reflect on Umarian history.

Piétri's captivity at Nango and his military service in the Western Sudan, where the French were poised to overthrow Amadu Sheku, influenced his views. He judged Amadu as one who "was never distinguished by his bravery nor by any splendid achievements. He was, and still remains, . . . faint-hearted."<sup>24</sup> Piétri also detested the Muslim rhetoric which Amadu used to consolidate his support among his Futanke followers, reflecting a more general animosity of the French military towards the Tukulor talibé and their zealous leader. Piétri recounted the history of the revolts to show how divided and weak the Umarian state had become after Umar's death.<sup>25</sup> His emphasis on the divisions within the Tal family served the interests of those in the military who wanted the French advance to continue unfettered by the diplomatic concerns of the French Ministry of the Colonies.<sup>26</sup>

Since Amadu controlled the flow of information which the Gallieni mission received at Nango, one wonders why Amadu would have allowed his enemies to hear an account as politically damaging as the history of the revolt. That Amadu allowed and in fact encouraged his envoys to recount the history of the revolt to the French mission is evident in the detail of Piétri's account, which is as comprehensive as Soleillet's composite account. Piétri seems to have been an unwitting accomplice in the transmission of a version of the revolt which

Amadu instructed his envoys to reveal at Nango. Although Piétri's own political opinions color his writing, careful textual analysis shows that Amadu's envoys influenced Piétri and led him to draw conclusions about the revolt which served Amadu's political purposes.

Piétri reflects an official Segovian perspective through his emphasis on the political concessions granted by Amadu before the outbreak of the revolt. Piétri's account is the only narrative to assert that Amadu Sheku appointed Moktar to a leadership position at Konyakary. He adds that Amadu also put Muntaga in place as the leader in Nioro shortly afterward. Soleillet's account in contrast emphasizes the initiative of Moktar in seizing power and rallying the Futanke to his side, testimony which may reflect the perspective of Mustafa Keita, Samba Mody or a Futanke informant from Konyakary. Piétri's focus on Amadu's appointments reflects an official perspective by putting Amadu in a favorable light as a brother who had granted his younger siblings political power before the revolt. Indeed, Piétri's account contains no references to the pervasive criticisms of Amadu's lack of generosity, comments which abound in Soleillet's narrative. Despite his own opinions of Amadu, Piétri's account portrays Amadu in terms which, from an internal perspective, were flattering.

Piétri continues with the official Segovian line by arguing that Moktar and Habib forced Amadu's hand by refusing to send him the requisite share of the taxes amassed at Konyakary and Dingiray, respectively. Piétri notes that, just prior to Amadu's departure for Nioro, the Commander of the Faithful told his Segovian supporters that his only goal was to keep intact what Umar had created with the blood of Muslims. Although Piétri distances himself from Amadu's perspective, he fails to invoke dissenting opinions regarding Amadu's intentions. Piétri is unable to step outside the received account because he did

not collect data from informants other than Amadu's envoys. As a result, Piétri concludes his narrative by repeating what he has heard at Nango, which is a celebration of Amadu's efforts to defeat the rebels. Piétri's reference to Habib's attack on Amadu's army while they were performing the mid-day prayer is merely one of many examples of how the Segovian view of Amadu's righteous victory over his two brothers crept into Piétri's account.

Amadu had an additional purpose in providing the French with his history of the revolt: he wanted his enemies to draw negative conclusions about the value of forging an alliance with Muntaga, the Umarian leader at Nioro in the early 1880s. Muntaga already had begun to assert his independence from Amadu Sheku by 1879, and the French military initiative gave him further room for manoeuvre. Amadu accurately perceived that the French hoped to exploit the conflict to their own advantage: Gustave Borgnis-DesBordes, Commandant Supérieur in the Western Sudan during the early 1880s, in fact attempted to draw Muntaga into an alliance with the French.<sup>27</sup> Amadu's decision to hold the Gallieni mission at Nango allowed him to send the French a message regarding the wisdom of intervening in Umarian affairs. Not surprisingly, Piétri's account portrays Muntaga as an unreliable ally to those who conspired with him in an effort to defeat Amadu.

Muntaga's role in the revolt is a dominant sub-plot in Piétri's account. Piétri notes that Muntaga, before his appointment as leader in Nioro, joined Moktar's rebel camp, only to betray the dissident brothers once Amadu arrived in Nioro. The frequent references to Muntaga's betrayal of Moktar in Piétri's narrative suggest that his informants stressed Muntaga's actions. These unflattering references have the dual effect of absolving Amadu of blame for the capture of Moktar and of depicting Muntaga as an unreliable ally. The

emphasis on Muntaga's role also shows how rapidly Muntaga's ambition dissipated with the arrival of Amadu's superior military forces. Both images of Muntaga, as an unreliable political ally and a cowering subordinate, are examples of Amadu's attempt to use the past to serve contemporary political interests vis-à-vis the French.

Piétri's account, therefore, is based on an initial oral transmission at Nango which Piétri subsequently published upon his return to France. Amadu Sheku's envoys provided the Gallieni mission with a narrative history of the revolt which Amadu hoped would dissuade the French from intervening in Umarian political squabbles. Piétri retold Amadu's story to influence debate on the value of the French conquest of the Western Sudan. Except for a few errors, such as confusing the names of Amadu's and Habib's mothers, most of what appears seems to be a fairly accurate account of what Amadu's envoys passed to Piétri at Nango. While the account must be evaluated carefully and placed within the context of heightened political tensions in the Western Sudan during the early 1880s, it stands as a complete and coherent narrative account of the revolt as perceived by Amadu Sheku in the early 1880s. It is perhaps more valuable as an historical source than the Soleillet/Gravier account because Amadu's bias and Piétri's interests are clear and the distortions are obvious and predictable.

That Piétri collected a narrative influenced by the political events of the 1880s becomes even more evident when compared with the information gathered by A. de Loppinot, a French colonial official of the early twentieth century.<sup>28</sup> De Loppinot served in Bandiagara, where he supervised Agibu Tal, another son of Umar. Agibu acted as Amadu's replacement in Segou when Amadu resided in Nioro in the early 1870s, and then replaced Habib as leader at Dingiray in the

late 1870s. A decade later, as the French expansion gained momentum, Agibu was the only Tal to enter into an alliance with the French; he joined the conquest of the Western Sudan and eventually obtained the former Umarian territories of Masina as his personal fiefdom, which he controlled from Bandiagara. In 1908 Agibu recounted some of his reminiscences of the past for de Loppinot, who edited and published the account some ten years later.

Agibu's memory of the revolt is similar to Soleillet's account in its basic narrative structure. Agibu follows Soleillet's core chronology beginning with Moktar's activities in Nioro and continuing through to the capture of Moktar and Habib. This similarity in narrative structure suggests that a standard chronology of the revolt existed at some point in the nineteenth century. The basic narrative probably was developed in Amadu's court, since it takes as its focus the actions of Amadu in defeating the political challenge. While Agibu uses a Segovian core to order his reminiscences, he distances himself from it by adding details of Futanke disenchantment with Amadu. In particular, he notes that the Futanke of Kingi wanted Amadu to put Agibu in power at Nioro. As Soleillet before him, Agibu stepped outside the received narrative and freely added alternate traditions and perspectives on the sequence of events.

Since Agibu does not mention a role for Muntaga, one must reflect on the question of whether Amadu's envoys at Nango fabricated Muntaga's role in the revolt, or at least overstated his importance for the benefit of dissuading the French from intervening in Umarian political conflicts. The Soleillet/Gravier account makes one reference to an early initiative on Muntaga's part, but then remains silent, suggesting that Muntaga played at least some role in the revolts. Contemporaneous French sources also are silent, but one letter refers to a



"third brother" who was in Nioro at the time when Moktar was in Konyakary and Amadu was in Nioro.<sup>29</sup> Was the third brother Muntaga?

Perhaps oral data from early twentieth century Nioro, the only other extant collection of Umarian reminiscences, will help resolve the question. Colonel Adam collected oral reminiscences and traditions in the Nioro area during the course of his service in the colonial administration there.<sup>30</sup> He published an annotated translation of a local Arabic chronicle in which he interjected his own observations as well as the oral testimony of his informants. The Arabic chronicle and much of the oral testimony came from the Kaba Jakite family of Nioro, many of whom worked for the French as interpreters and chiefs. This family had moved to Karta from Bundu at the time of the holy war. Umar Kaba Jakite, who founded the Nioranke branch of the family, was an influential Soninke cleric who, as I have outlined in Chapter Two, joined Umar's cause and became one of his close advisors during the Kartan campaign.<sup>31</sup> Umar Kaba Jakite and his sons served as the imams of the mosque in Nioro, and were leading figures in local politics. That the family worked for the French administration suggests that they had been able to disassociate themselves from the Futanke Umarian community which the French so despised. Their perspectives on the past are not, therefore, representative of a Futanke view, but certainly reflect one local perspective on the events.

The Kaba Jakite chronicle includes a section on the reign of Amadu Sheku. The chronicle narrates Amadu's campaigns against armies of the Bambara of Segu, who regrouped after the conquest and fielded a serious challenge to Amadu's administration. The chronicle mentions Amadu's residence in Nioro, but does not refer to the revolt of Habib and Moktar, emphasizing instead the defeat of the Bambara at Gemukura and the appointment of his six brothers as

leaders of garrisons in Karta.<sup>32</sup> The chronicle, therefore, presents a Segovian perspective on Amadu's reign, avoiding the topic of the challenge to his authority in favor of a celebration of his battlefield exploits. Buyagi Kaba Jakite, one of Umar's sons, was a loyal supporter of Amadu Sheku, and eventually moved to Segu in the late nineteenth century.<sup>33</sup> His access to the court makes him a possible author of this section of the chronicle.

Adam's text, however, includes local perspectives on Amadu's residence in Nioro that he collected from oral testimony. Adam discusses at some length Amadu's resolution of a conflict between the Futanke of Kingi and two Umarian leaders, Mustafa Keita and his advisor, Buyagi Kaba Jakite. In Adam's account, the Futanke of Kingi accuse Mustafa of depleting the state treasury and distributing it to his associates, but Amadu Sheku determines that the accusation was false. A member of the Kaba Jakite family certainly was the source of information for this discussion. Adam also adds a few details concerning the revolts of Habib and Moktar. The information is scanty, and does not mention anything about support for Habib and Moktar in Kingi. The lack of specific information regarding the revolt may either indicate a poor memory of the events or a decision not to tell Adam much about the political problems of Amadu.

The silence regarding this issue continues in Kingi up until today. My inquiries in Nioro and its environs uncovered even less than Adam collected at the turn of the century. Most informants could not remember that Amadu Sheku had lived in Nioro prior to his second residence in the late 1880s. Only a few could remember the names of Habib and Moktar, and fewer still knew that they led a challenge to Amadu. All questions about Muntaga elicited a universal assertion: Shaykh Umar, and not Amadu, appointed Muntaga and five

other brothers as military leaders in Karta at a ceremony in Masina, set over ten years earlier in 1862.<sup>34</sup> Events which would contradict the alleged appointment of Muntaga by Umar, such as the revolt of Habib and Moktar, details of Mustafa's career as leader at Nioro and Amadu's first residence in Karta, have been pushed out of the oral memory and replaced by the acceptance of Muntaga's appointment by his father, Shaykh Umar.

Muntaga's lengthy tenure as leader at Nioro gave him the opportunity to rewrite the Umarian past. His advisors may have created the tradition that Muntaga was appointed by Umar in an effort to reinforce his claims for autonomy from Segu. They found a willing audience for this version of the past among the Futanke who had grown antagonistic towards Amadu Sheku for his capture and imprisonment of Habib and Moktar. Given that Shaykh Umar had appointed Amadu Sheku as his successor in 1860, the assertion that Umar subsequently diminished Amadu's position by appointing his younger brothers to the garrisons in Karta was a slap at Amadu which probably captured the imagination of an angry group of Futanke.<sup>35</sup> As the tradition gained acceptance, the Futanke inserted it at the end of the saga of the holy war.<sup>36</sup>

As Muntaga rewrote the past, he also had to eliminate reminiscences which would contradict the received tradition. Public recounting of the revolt would contradict the tradition of Muntaga's appointment by Umar, since the political challenge was based on the fact that Amadu Sheku had not shared power with the other brothers. Additionally, if Muntaga had betrayed Moktar, then his reputation would suffer from continual repetition of the fact. Indirect evidence of Muntaga's suppression of the history of the revolt is contained in the Soleillet/Gravier account: Soleillet, who passed through Nioro on his return from Segu, does not seem to have collected any data about the revolt from

Nioranke informants. The current amnesia among informants in western Mali also suggests that Muntaga discouraged public recounting of the revolts. The creation of a new tradition regarding Muntaga's appointment and the suppression of public discussion of the revolts suggest that Muntaga felt considerable embarrassment at the means by which he obtained power in Nioro. One would guess that Muntaga betrayed Moktar, helped in his capture and received the appointment from Amadu Sheku as a reward for his service at Amadu's time of need.

The published materials illustrate how the outcome of the revolt helped to influence the transmission of information regarding the political drama. The Piétri account provides a clear statement from the victor, Amadu Sheku, as he reacted to the French advance of the early 1880s and bristled at Muntaga's growing assertions of autonomy from Segou. Muntaga, a political beneficiary of Amadu's victory, created a tradition regarding his accession to power which obscured his role in the revolt. Amadu and Muntaga, as leaders in Segou and Nioro, respectively, were able to discourage public recollection of the events which challenged their official versions. While neither Amadu Sheku nor Muntaga were completely successful in preventing alternate perspectives from gaining currency, their efforts limit the quantity and quality of historical data presently available for reconstruction of the revolt.

The published materials do include some dissenting perspectives on the revolt. The twentieth century collections provide testimony from subordinate actors in the drama, the Kaba Jakite family of Nioro and Agibu Tal, whose recollections help resolve some of the contradictions in the nineteenth century data. The Soleillet/Gravier account also includes various perspectives on the revolt, but the composite nature of the text limits its utility unless a much

more extensive analysis of the narrative yields additional insights into the sources and social bases of the dissident perspectives. Nevertheless, this analysis has provided the basis for an informed inquiry into the political drama based on the extant source materials.

### Notes

1. Paul Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, 1878-79, rédigé d'après les notes et journaux de voyage de Soleillet par Gabriel Gravier (Paris, 1887), p. 368.
2. Camille Piétri, Les Français au Niger (Paris, 1885), pp. 117-118.
3. B.O. Oloruntimehin, The Segu Tukolor Empire (London, 1972) and Yves Saint-Martin, L'Empire toucouleur (Paris, 1970).
4. Conclusive evidence for Amadu Sheku's return are the Arabic materials produced by Amadu Sheku's entourage as they made their way from Nioro to Segu. See the documents in BN.MO.FA. 5713, fos. 38, 97-98, 143, 146, 153. Another document (BN.MO.FA. 5713, fos. 15-16) puts Amadu Sheku in Segu to celebrate the Ramadan of 1874.
5. ANS 15G109: Medine, 25 January 1871 and 12 March 1871, Ct. Medine to the Governor of Senegal.
6. Oloruntimehin states correctly that by "the end of January 1871 Ahmadu had defeated his rivals" (p. 184), but then argues that Amadu had only captured Moktar and not Habib. Oloruntimehin subsequently cites the Medine letter of 12 March 1871 (in ANS 15G109), which refers to the capture of Habib and Moktar as the reason for growing Futanke dissent, but uses it merely to argue that Amadu was losing support among his followers in Kingi (p. 185n1). Oloruntimehin also refers to letter of 21 November 1871 (in the ANS 15G109) from Medine which refers to Amadu's capture of Habib; indeed, he even translates the relevant passage in his note: "L'emprisonnement de deux de ses frères depuis huit mois . . ." (p. 185n3). Additionally, an examination of the archival documents which Oloruntimehin uses to narrate Habib's actions after January 1871 reveals that not one corroborates Olorunitmehin's argument: the letter from 6 January 1872 mentions a challenge from Seydu Tal and not Habib; the 26 March 1872 letter refers to Amadu's campaign against the Bambara of Gemukura and not "rebellions" against Amadu Sheku. Oloruntimehin clearly has misread and misquoted many of the relevant archival materials from Medine.
7. The sole known exception to this statement is the interview granted David Robinson by Bougouboly Makki Tall on 19 August 1976 at Bandiagara, Mali. In a subsequently interview with Robinson, he tried to retract his statements. Even his memory of the revolt is not very extensive, and contrasts with the depth of detail in his account of other political events during the reign of Amadu Sheku.
8. See, for example, Abdoul Aziz Diallo's interview with Bassirou Alpha Diallo in September, 1977 at Gavinané, Mali.
9. ANS 13G171: Bakel, 28 February, 14 March, 31 March and 30 May 1871, Ct. Bakel to the Governor of Senegal.

10. Abdoul Aziz Diallo published an account of Muntaga's rebellion based on his collection of oral data regarding the affair. Diallo, "Le siège de Nyoro et la mort de Muntaga Tall", Etudes maliennes (1979).

11. The initial phases of the revolt, too, occurred at a time when an outbreak of cholera in the Senegal valley commanded the attention of the French.

12. Amadu's envoys purchased weapons at Bakel, while Moktar's and Habib's envoys secured their firearms at Medine. The French Governor Valière seems to have adopted a posture of strict neutrality with regard to the revolts. No specific document directly attests to such a policy decision, but Valière did issue a policy statement regarding French neutrality vis-à-vis Amadu's struggle with the Bambara at the same time. See ANF.SOM SEN.1 56a #99

13. 13G214: Medine, 21 January 1870, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel.

14. ANS 15G109: Medine, 11 June 1870, Ct. Medine to the Governor.

15. BN.MO.FA. 5640, fos. 36b-38a; 5713, fos. 37a-38a.

16. BN.MO.FA. 5713, fos 4, 122a, 126a, 53a-53b, 196-197.

17. M. G. Adam, Légendes historiques du pays de Nioro (Sahel) (Paris, 1904); A. de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", Bulletin du Comité d'Etudes Historiques et Scientifiques de l'Afrique Occidentale Française (1919).

18. Saydu Jeliya was the author of the two Arabic chronicles cited above.

19. Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou (hereafter, Soleillet/Gravier), pp. 365, 366.

20. While this scene simply may have reflected a desire not to air dirty political linen in front of a guest, it also may suggest that the Umarian community had resolved not to discuss the revolts publicly as early as the late 1870s. Today's lack of detailed oral knowledge about the revolts adds strength to the view that the Umarians did not consider the revolts a topic for open discussion. Soleillet/Gravier, p. 206.

21. Soleillet/Gravier, p. 367, for example, notes how Moktar distributed booty to his Konyakary supporters.

22. Saint-Martin describes the Gallieni mission in L'Empire toucouleur et la France (Paris, 1967), pp. 225ff.

23. He may have seen the materials which Soleillet submitted to the French Governor at Saint Louis. These materials are preserved in ANS 1G46.

24. Piétri, Les Français, p. 101.

25. Piétri, Les Français, p. 101.

26. A.S. Kanya-Forstner, The Conquest of the Western Sudan (Cambridge, 1969).

27. ANS 1D68: Bamako, 11 February and 14 February 1883, Ct. Sup. to the Governor; and ANF.SOM SEN.IV 77a: "Rapport sur la campagne, 1882-83", (the relevant discussion appears in the section marked "instructions").
28. de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou".
29. ANS 13G214: Medine, 21 January 1870, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel.
30. Adam, Légendes historiques.
31. The family initially settled at Munia, a village in southern Jafunu, but Mustafa Keita called upon the services of the Kaba Jakite frequently, and the family moved close to Nioro in the early 1860s. The Kaba Jakite acted as hosts to Soninke chiefs, notables and traders who visited the Umarian governors at Nioro. They were able to collect oral traditions and reminiscences from many Kartan oral historians and elders. Their Arabic chronicle contains important versions of the history of many kingdoms of the Western Sudan, including that of Wagadu. See Chapter Two for a discussion of Umar Kaba Jakite's role in the conquest of Karta.
32. Adam, Légendes historiques, pp. 106ff.
33. Paul Marty, Etudes sur l'Islam et les tribus du Soudan, Volume 4 (Paris, 1921), pp. 212-14; Adam, Légendes historiques, pp. 110-112.
34. All my Futanke informants recounted the tradition regarding Muntaga's appointment by Umar. Soninke informants from western Mali also recount this tradition. See the Oudiary Makan Dantioko's interview with Djammé Tounkara et Sadio Sakhone at Balle, Mali in June 1980.
35. The tradition also transformed Amadu's political concessions to his younger brothers into a belated recognition by Amadu that all the brothers, including Habib and Moktar, had a right to hold power.
36. Most of my informants recounted the tradition of Muntaga's appointment at the end of their narrative of Umar Tal's holy war. See, for example, my interview with Bakary Diagouraga on 25 January, 1986.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### The Revolt Led by Habib and Moktar

The revolt led by Habib and Moktar, two brothers of Amadu Sheku, severely damaged the Umarian body politic. Shaykh Umar had installed Amadu Sheku as the Commander of the Faithful in an attempt to put the succession question to rest in 1860. The fraternal competition that pitted Umar's sons against one another as they grew up at Dingiray, however, expanded into an open revolt in the late 1860s. Habib, very close in age to his half-brother Amadu, used his status as leader at Dingiray to make that fortress the first foyer. From there, he and his brothers moved to bring Karta under the rebel banner, encouraged by Karta's autonomy from Amadu Sheku. Habib and Moktar, Habib's younger brother, rallied the Futanke of Jomboxo to the rebel camp. Amadu brought a large Segovian army to Karta, captured his two brothers, and transferred them in chains to Segu, where they died a few years later in captivity. Amadu's reign was tainted by his imprisonment of his two brothers, and the image of Amadu as an uncharitable older brother lingered in the minds of most Umarians in the late nineteenth century.

The major discussions of the revolt, by B. O. Oloruntimehin and Yves Saint-Martin,<sup>1</sup> fail to locate the revolts within the context of the Umarian colonies of Jomboxo and Kingi. They animate their narratives by emphasizing the interests and aims of Amadu, Habib and Moktar, despite the fact that none of these sons of Shaykh Umar had a strong and secure base of power in Karta. Habib and Moktar were able to rally support for themselves because of Futanke grievances against the leadership of non-Futanke in the administration of Jomboxo and Kingi. These grievances did not diminish with the battlefield losses of Habib and Moktar, and Amadu addressed the Futanke demands in 1874 when he replaced Umar's former slave administrators in Karta with his younger brothers. The revolt expressed local Futanke demands for new leadership in Karta as well as the desire of Habib and Moktar to embarrass Amadu and obtain control over Umarian Karta.

My analysis of the revolt led by Habib and Moktar begins by describing Futanke political activity during the period of Mustafa's consolidation of power in the 1860s. I then examine Amadu Sheku's relations with Karta, and follow with an overview of the succession dispute among Shaykh Umar's sons. The chapter concludes with a tentative historical reconstruction of the political drama in which the emergence of political demands among the Futanke settlers in Jomboxo and Kingi takes an appropriate place in the analysis of events.

#### Futanke political activity in the 1860s

Although Futanke political action prior to the revolt is overshadowed in the oral historical record by a focus on the succession dispute, sources from the Senegal valley document some fascinating political developments in Umarian

Karta in the era preceding the revolt. The written data are neither abundant nor complete, but they illuminate local political processes and help to explain local support for the dissident Tal brothers. Kartan autonomy and Futanke rule within that independent state were the two main goals of the Futanke political agenda of the 1860s.

Two French envoys visited Umarian Karta and recorded their observations of political activity at Konyakary and Nioro in 1865 during the initial years of Franco-Umarian commercial cooperation in the Western Sudan.<sup>2</sup> One envoy noted an administrative duality which existed at these two Umarian centers: in Nioro, Mustafa served as the military commander while two brothers of Shaykh Umar acted as religious leaders, whereas in Konyakary, the civil and military leaders were Samba Mody and Cerno Musa, respectively.<sup>3</sup> The French envoy reversed the two roles in Konyakary, since internal accounts and all subsequent French reports from Medine suggest that Samba Mody was Umar Tal's appointee as the military leader of Konyakary.<sup>4</sup> Cerno Jibi, the brother of Cerno Musa, had been the garrison leader until his death in 1859, but Umar chose to replace him with Samba Mody, an appointment made contemporaneously with that of Mustafa at Nioro. Shaykh Umar clearly decided to leave control over the Kartan provinces with large immigrant populations in the hands of former slaves instead of members of the Futanke community.

No subsequent written document nor oral tradition refers to such an administrative duality, so it is reasonable to conclude that the "religious leaders" were men who occupied informal leadership positions at the garrisons. That the brothers of Umar and an important Futanke leader such as Cerno Musa would fill these positions of moral leadership is consistent with the kind of support that they would have had within the immigrant community. Indeed,

the emergence of religious leaders seems to have been a response to the fact that Umar had not designated a member of the Futanke community to serve as commander of the garrisons. In Nioro, for example, the Futanke demanded that Mustafa reveal the contents of official correspondence to Umar's brothers.<sup>5</sup> Their lobbying in support of the brothers' rights suggests an effort to force Mustafa into recognizing the Tal leaders as representatives of the immigrant community in Kingi. Thus, well before the revolt of Habib and Moktar, the Futanke of Kingi actively were promoting Tal family members as potential leaders in an effort to influence state policy in Karta.

The conflict between the Futanke of Kingi and Mustafa Keita remained unresolved throughout the 1860s. The immigrants subsequently protested Mustafa's choice of Buyagi Kaba Jakite to replace his father as Nioro's imam. They questioned Mustafa's relationship to the Kaba Jakite family, suggesting that they received lavish gifts from the state treasury.<sup>6</sup> Beyond the specific question of Kaba Jakite influence, the Futanke resented the fact that no one from their community had assumed political office and that the Umarian state seemed to advance the interests of Soninke and Moorish communities over the interests of the Futanke. That the imam of Nioro was a member of the Kaba Jakite family only contributed to their perceptions that Mustafa's multi-ethnic policies were disadvantageous to their community.

The Senegambian immigrants in Jomboxo equally resented the leadership of Samba Mody as garrison commander. The French commandants at Medine reported Futanke discontent with Samba Mody, expressed in part against his slave origins.<sup>7</sup> The prominent role which Cerno Musa played in Franco-Umarian negotiations helped satisfy Futanke concern over Samba Mody's role, but the departure of Cerno Musa for Segou in 1867 left a political vacuum in

which the Futanke grew increasingly discontent. Indeed, their enthusiastic support for Moktar when he assumed command at Konyakary in 1869 suggests that the Futanke of Jomboxo felt, as did their fellow Futanke in Kingi, that a Tal would better represent their interests than a former slave. Although the Futanke may not have anticipated Amadu Sheku's response to the initiative of Moktar, their support for the dissident brother expressed the culmination of their political grievances against the policies of Umar's appointees - Samba Mody and Mustafa.

#### Amadu Sheku's relations with Umarian Karta

Another reason that the Futanke of Jomboxo rallied around Moktar in 1869 was their changing attitude toward Amadu Sheku. Most Futanke probably had accepted Umar's appointment of Amadu as the Commander of the Faithful in 1860, although the majority had not been present at the installation ceremony nor had they sworn allegiance to him. This appointment did not influence their lives, since Segu was hundreds of miles away and Amadu Sheku's demands for taxes were infrequent.<sup>8</sup> Futanke concerns focused on recruiting additional ferganke to settle in Karta, thereby adding to their numbers and increasing their influence over Mustafa and Samba Mody. In as much as Amadu Sheku recognized Umar's appointees and engaged them in correspondence, he was tainted by his implicit support for their policies. However, as the oldest son and appointed successor to Umar, Amadu still commanded the respect of the Futanke. This goodwill toward Amadu Sheku quickly dissipated as he began to make demands on the human resources of Karta in the mid-1860s.

Amadu's difficulties in Segou forced him to call for troop reinforcements from Karta in 1866. When Shaykh Umar and tens of thousands of Umarian soldiers embarked on the conquest of Masina in 1862, they left Amadu with an army of approximately four thousand Futanke and even fewer ton-jon to defend Segou.<sup>9</sup> Shortly thereafter Kege Mari Jarra, the last surviving son of Monzon, the former ruler of Segou, launched an offensive against Amadu's forces. Umarian chroniclers report that, after several rebel victories, Kege Mari had recruited close to 12,000 soldiers into his army.<sup>10</sup> In contrast, most of the Umarian army in Masina had been killed by 1864, and Amadu had to defend his position without any support from that direction. The lengthy account of Eugène Mage's visit to Segou during the mid-1860s describes Amadu Sheku's difficulties in rallying the forces to meet the challenge, and leaves the impression that his position was quite precarious in the years after Umar's death.<sup>11</sup>

Amadu Sheku took the opportunity of Mage's return to Saint Louis in early 1866 to send scores of recruiters back with him to the Senegal valley in hopes of increasing the flow of ferganke and siphoning off a major portion of the Futanke settlers from Karta.<sup>12</sup> Amadu also sent an envoy with orders to remain in Karta and ensure that the ferganke did not stop there but continued on to Segou.<sup>13</sup> For six months, the envoy, Mamadu Habib, a cousin of Amadu Sheku, resided at Munia, a garrison on the migration route through the Xoolimbinne valley. During his residence, he assembled the Futanke leaders of Karta to ask them to join in a mass fergo to Segou.<sup>14</sup> He must have reminded the Futanke of their obligation to support the activities of the Commander of the Faithful, and asked them to join in Amadu's effort to defend the Segovian conquests and create a new Muslim society on the banks of the Niger. Most

Futanke leaders refused, and Mamadu Habib moved his base to the garrison at Kolomina in early 1867 in an effort to appeal directly to the Futanke settlers in Kingi.<sup>15</sup> This effort largely failed to produce many recruits from Kingi despite three months of invocation, so Amadu's envoy returned to Segu in mid-1867 with a small contingent of ferganke who had only recently arrived in Karta.<sup>16</sup>

Amadu's recruitment effort offended the Futanke settlers of Karta. Not only did the envoy try to lure them into leaving Karta, but he asserted his authority over the fergo which the Umarian state in Karta had used for its own benefit. Amadu's implicit support for Umar's appointees could be forgiven, but his usurpation of control over the fergo could not, since it was a direct assertion of imperial rule which disrupted their local political agenda. Many Futanke had not sworn their allegiance to Amadu. Perhaps more importantly, most settlers had chosen to live in Karta in preference to joining Umar's campaign in 1859 or residence in Segu. They did not share Amadu Sheku's concerns for Segu, and feared that their loss of control over the fergo would weaken their influence in Karta. As Mamadu Habib's entourage passed from Karta to Segu, a Bambara group attacked it and took over two hundred Futanke prisoners.<sup>17</sup> This event only served to reinforce the local Futanke perspective that Amadu's authority as the Commander of the Faithful did not necessarily serve Kartan interests; the imperial mission was proving to be too costly.

Umar's appointees did not support Amadu Sheku's imperial plans for Karta. Mamadu Habib, for example, seems not to have been invited to reside at either Nioro nor Konyakary during his nine month visit to Karta. While the envoy's decision to use Munia as a recruitment center may have been a strategic choice given its location on a major migration route, his subsequent residence at Kolomina instead of Nioro suggests that Mamadu was not offered hospitality at

Mustafa's palace. In contrast, Mustafa had hosted an envoy of Habib Tal at Nioro just over a year earlier.<sup>18</sup> By the mid-1860s, therefore, Mustafa was beginning to cast a wider net within the Umarian sea of successor states.<sup>19</sup> While Mustafa's political interests did not always coincide with those of the Futanke, they did share the same agenda with regard to Amadu's imperial assertions over Karta. Local autonomy was an issue which united Mustafa and the Futanke of Kingi.

While Amadu Sheku undoubtedly was angry about Mamadu Habib's report of Mustafa's wavering commitment and the depth of Futanke resistance to Amadu's demands for soldiers, he had more pressing concerns in the form of a military challenge mounted by Kege Mari. He integrated ferganke into his army and mounted his own offensive against the rebels in early 1868.<sup>20</sup> Kege Mari and the main rebel force retreated into their well-fortified camp at Kejje, a village southeast of Segou. Amadu and his forces surrounded Kejje and held them there for three months.<sup>21</sup> When the rebels finally tried to break the siege, Amadu's forces met the challenge and defeated the rebel forces quite decisively in a lengthy battle.<sup>22</sup> Although Kege Mari escaped the battle, he died in flight shortly thereafter. Amadu's victory at Kejje quieted the Bambara challenge from the southeast for the moment, and put the Umarian presence in Segou on the firmest ground it had occupied since the initial victories eight years earlier in 1860.

Amadu Sheku could not savor his victory. The cholera epidemic which had moved up the Senegal valley in 1868 eventually reached Segou in 1869 and killed many members of the Futanke community.<sup>23</sup> These deaths, and the recognition that the Umarian victory at Kejje had been secured in part due to the arrival of ferganke troops, turned Amadu's attention once again to Karta, its Futanke



community and its access to the Senegal valley. The arrival of new recruits had become essential to Amadu's hopes for maintaining power in the middle Niger valley. He asked one of his court historians, Uthman Kusa, to write an open letter to the Futanke community imploring them to migrate to Segou and reside at the capital of the Commander of the Faithful.<sup>24</sup> Amadu Sheku also had Uthman compose an Arabic account of the battle at Kejje which placed his victory within the tradition of Umar's holy war.<sup>25</sup>

Conscious of his weakness and stung by the earlier refusal of the Futanke of Karta to join his campaigns, Amadu now mounted an ideological offensive which he hoped would win them over to his side. This effort was overtaken by the succession challenge led by Moktar, who began recruiting in Karta in 1869. Before turning to a narrative of Amadu's response to Moktar and Habib's challenge, the wider context in which the succession conflict emerged needs examination.

#### The succession dispute among Shaykh Umar's sons

The question of who was to succeed Umar Tal gripped the Umurian community in the years immediately following his death in 1864. Umar's followers joined the holy war at various times and from many Senegambian societies, and loyalty to Umar had been the only unifying bond. The circumstances of the conquest left them dispersed from Tamba in the west to Masina in the east, and these distances as well as local challenges to Umurian rule helped to reinforce the tendency among Umar's followers to consolidate control autonomously from other areas of Umurian domination. The Umurians who survived their Shaykh's death and the revolts in Masina, for example,

numbered in the hundreds, regrouped under the leadership of Umar's nephew, Tijani, and drew heavily upon local support in consolidating an Umarian successor state based at Bandiagara. In as much as Amadu did not attempt to assert his authority in Masina, they did not join the conflict over the extent of Amadu Sheku's authority that raged in the other areas of Umarian settlement during the late 1860s.

At Dingiray, the Umarian garrison in Tamba in the upper Senegal valley, however, the succession question was a major concern; it had, in fact, first been raised during Umar's lifetime. Umar selected Dingiray as a permanent settlement for his growing community in 1849, and used it as a base to launch his holy war against Tamba in 1852. As Umar led his forces up the Senegal valley and then eastward into Karta in the mid-1850s, his wives and their sons remained at Dingiray and began to manoeuvre over the question of who was to succeed Umar in the event of his death. Several factions emerged among the Tal in Dingiray, and the intensity of the conflict forced Umar to call the two major competitors, Amadu Sheku and Makki, to join his armies on the route from Nioro to Segou in 1860. Umar installed his oldest son, Amadu, as the Commander of the Faithful, and left his next oldest son, Makki, with no title but an ambiguous commendation as a leading figure in the religious sphere.<sup>26</sup>

Umar's installation of Amadu in 1860 only momentarily resolved a simmering conflict among his sons at Dingiray. Amadu's mother, Aisha Jallo, had rallied support for her son's claims based on his position as the oldest son of Umar.<sup>27</sup> Amadu's base of support, however, was quite limited outside the circle of supporters his mother had created for him. In contrast, Makki had personal charm and leadership qualities which endeared him to many Umarians at Dingiray, and also had a reputation for religious learning. In addition,

Makki's mother, Mariatu, had given birth to him only a few months after Amadu, obscuring the question of birth-order. Makki's supporters could also point to Mariatu's status as the daughter of a noble in Bornu, and suggest that Aisha was a lowly daughter of a female slave, in their arguments on behalf of his candidacy.<sup>28</sup> The support for Makki in Dingiray was quite strong, and Umar himself was the only possible arbiter of the conflict between these two factions. Had Makki not died with Umar in 1864, he might well have led a challenge to Amadu's position.

Makki's death did not prevent other brothers from challenging Amadu Sheku. Habib, who emerged as the leader at Dingiray in the mid-1860s, hoped to create a large Umarian successor state in the remaining areas of Umarian domination in the upper Senegal valley - Tamba and Karta.<sup>29</sup> He apparently produced an Arabic letter, putatively written by Umar himself, which gave him control over these Umarian territories.<sup>30</sup> Habib backed that letter with a strong army of supporters from Futa Jallon, who made up the largest group of Umanians at Dingiray.<sup>31</sup> He also had credentials which played well before a larger Umarian audience: he was the third oldest son of Umar, and his mother, Mariam Dem, was the daughter of Muhammad Bello, the son of Uthman dan Fodio. Other ambitious brothers at Dingiray rallied behind Habib and his promises to find places for them in his upper Senegal valley empire. These brothers included Seydu and Daha, Makki's younger brothers, Daye and Muniru, sons of a Bornu Fulbe woman, and Bassiru, the youngest of Umar's sons, who was born to a Bambara women captured during the conquest of Karta. Habib's most intimate supporter, however, was his own younger brother Moktar.

Muntaga also aspired to political leadership, drawing support from among those at Dingiray who respected his reputation as a Muslim of deep conviction

and learning.<sup>32</sup> He was five years younger than Habib, but may have tapped support from the faction which had backed Makki and was looking for a brother with similar religious credentials. Muntaga's mother was not from nobility, so Muntaga lacked the social credentials of Habib, Moktar and Makki. Muntaga's ability to attract support illuminates the complexity of the situation at Dingiray: the community which had produced the first two candidates for the succession to Umar, Amadu Sheku and Makki, remained the primary residence for the Tal family and continued as the nurturing community for ambitious sons of Shaykh Umar. While Habib used Dingiray as a base to challenge Amadu Sheku, he had to share power or face similar challenges to his own position. Indeed, Habib dared not turn his back completely on a potential challenge from Muntaga.

Karta seemed to present Habib and his brothers with an Umurian territory in which they could assume control quite easily. Nioro was equidistant from Segu and Dingiray, and the Umurian colonies in Jomboxo were even closer. Additionally, Amadu's potential administrative reach into Karta was quite limited, and his control would hinge on the degree to which Umar's appointees remained loyal to Umar's successor. Most importantly, the Futanke community in Karta had become discontent with Amadu Sheku's demands upon them. In 1866-67, they refused Mamadu Habib's attempt to recruit them for a campaign against the Segovian Bambara, even though he remained in Karta for over half a year trying to secure an army. The envoy's failure to recruit troops must have encouraged the Tal brothers at Dingiray, since it revealed Amadu's inability to inspire confidence in his leadership among the Umurians in Karta. Additionally, Futanke in both Jomboxo and Kingi had begun to question the authority of the administrators who ruled Karta. While they may not have formulated any specific plans regarding their replacement, they certainly were

looking for leaders who shared their identity and would serve the interests of the Futanke community vis-à-vis other local interests as well as those of Amadu Sheku. Some Futanke may have encouraged the brothers at Dingiray to assume power in Karta.

Amadu Sheku was quite unwilling, however, to accept any diminution of his authority over Karta.<sup>33</sup> The proximity of Karta to new recruits and to weapons at the French posts in the Senegal valley was a sufficient reason for Amadu to act against challenges to his authority in the west. Additionally, Amadu had just defeated the Segovian resistance, and was in a position to leave Segou and meet military challenges in Karta precisely at the time Habib and Moktar chose to act. Indeed, Amadu's sense of accomplishment over defeating the Bambara as well as the need to purchase weapons and recruit soldiers to replace those lost in that effort pushed Amadu to take a more forceful approach toward his half-brothers at Dingiray. On the eve of the revolts, therefore, Amadu was able and willing to meet the political challenges to his authority arising in the west.

### The revolt

Habib most certainly was the instigator of the revolt. He had the age, the position and the political support at Dingiray to consider a challenge to the authority of Amadu Sheku. His use of an Arabic letter from Shaykh Umar, giving him authority in the west, provides additional evidence of his desire to extend his control from Dingiray to Nioro. Well before making an overt move into Karta, Habib sent envoys to Konyakary and Nioro to test receptivity to his plans; Samba Mody responded enthusiastically, while Mustafa reacted with some reserve.<sup>34</sup> In the late 1860s, Habib decided to send Moktar to Jomboxo to

consolidate a base at Konyakary as a first step towards gaining control over all of Karta.<sup>35</sup> Moktar and several other brothers arrived in Konyakary after the rains ended in late 1869 to mobilize the Futanke of Jomboxo for a march on Nioro.<sup>36</sup>

The Tal brothers received an overwhelming welcome from the Futanke at Konyakary.<sup>37</sup> Moktar quickly consolidated support among the Futanke of Jomboxo, promising to lead them on a new round of campaigns against the Bambara of southern Karta. It is unclear whether many Futanke fully understood that recruitment into Moktar's armies would result in a political challenge to Amadu's authority. The Commander of the Faithful lived far away in Segou, and Moktar's promises of a campaign against the Bambara were much more immediate. Additionally, Moktar's recruitment efforts benefitted from the arrival of Futanke migrants who were leaving a cholera epidemic in the Senegal valley and hoped to start a new life in the Senegambian colonies of Karta.<sup>38</sup> As a son of Umar Tal with plans to attack the Bambara, Moktar could not help but rekindle the spirit of the holy war and the memory of material rewards which loyal followers received from participation in it.

Both French archival sources and Piétri assert that Moktar had been appointed to serve in Jomboxo by Amadu Sheku.<sup>39</sup> According to Piétri's account, Amadu held Moktar captive at Segou and appointed him leader at Konyakary in order to secure the release of Aisha, Amadu's mother, whom Habib held at Dingiray. This exchange reportedly culminated seven years of negotiations between Habib and Amadu. Amadu may have released Moktar in exchange for Aisha, but the tradition concerning Amadu's appointment of Moktar at Konyakary is probably a Segovian attempt to absolve Amadu for detaining his younger brother at Segou.<sup>40</sup> The French confusion regarding

Moktar's position as the leader of Jomboxo reflects the depth of support that the rebel received among the Futanke of Jomboxo.

Piétri's traditions regarding Amadu's release of Moktar, however, invite speculation that Cerno Musa played a supportive role in the revolt. Cerno Musa was the leading Futanke notable at Konyakary, and he accompanied Amadu's envoy to Segu in 1867. At the time, Amadu's inability to recruit an army in Jomboxo weighed on his mind, and Cerno Musa's advice on what Amadu could do to win over the Futanke of Jomboxo would have had great impact. Cerno Musa may well have expressed the desire to have the fraternal conflict resolved. If this reading of events is accurate, then Cerno Musa may well have accompanied Moktar to Dingiray in 1868, heard of Habib's plans regarding Karta, and then returned to Konyakary and encouraged Samba Mody to support Moktar when he arrived in late 1869. While the evidence for Cerno Musa's role in these events is slim, his involvement certainly would help explain the widespread acceptance accorded Moktar by the Futanke community.<sup>41</sup>

Not all Jomboxo's Futanke, however, joined Moktar's armies. During his preparations for the campaigns against the Bambara, Moktar prevented Amadu's agents from claiming the Commander of the Faithful's share of the harvest.<sup>42</sup> Some Futanke in Jomboxo wanted no part in a political challenge, and refused to contribute soldiers to Moktar's army. These loyalists eventually had to flee to avoid reprisals from the rebel armies.<sup>43</sup> This example aside, most of Jomboxo's Futanke were in the rebel camp. By the end of the rains in 1869, Moktar and his brothers had successfully assembled a sizable force at the Umarian garrison at Konyakary.

Moktar led these troops in a campaign against the Bambara in southern Karta, producing material rewards for his followers and renewing the spirit of

the holy war.<sup>44</sup> Riding this wave of success, he then directed his column northward toward Nioro, where Mustafa and the Futanke of Kingi had yet to commit themselves openly to the rebel cause. Mustafa met Moktar's entourage at Madina, a village a few miles south of Nioro, and declared his allegiance. He also offered to escort Moktar and the other Tal brothers to Kolomina, an Umarian garrison in southern Kingi, where a considerable amount of weapons and munitions were stored.<sup>45</sup> Moktar agreed, and as Mustafa led the rebels to Kolomina, news of the rapid approach of Amadu Sheku's forces reached their column.

Amadu Sheku's arrival had an immediate impact on the revolt. Under the cover of darkness, Mustafa left Moktar and returned to Nioro. He tried to cover his tracks by sending a punitive raid against Moktar, but the rebels easily defeated it.<sup>46</sup> Moktar did lose quite a few supporters, who abandoned him and rushed back to Jomboxo. The rebel forces were severely diminished.<sup>47</sup> Most importantly, the arrival of Amadu prevented Moktar from gaining the support of the Futanke community in Kingi. No Futanke leader had openly declared himself on the rebel question prior to Amadu's arrival, and none joined the rebels afterward.<sup>48</sup> Without a base of support in Kingi, Moktar and his troops retreated to the west. They passed into the Xoolimbinne valley and stopped in Gidiyumme, where they camped at Niogomera during the rainy season of 1870.<sup>49</sup> Niogomera provided the rebels with a secure base in the Gidiyumme hills where they could observe Amadu's movements and tap the grain reserves of the fertile Xoolimbinne valley.

Amadu Sheku had marched from Segu to Nioro in two weeks instead of the usual month of travel.<sup>50</sup> He arrived at Nioro with at least eight thousand troops and several canon.<sup>51</sup> Amadu's troop strength indicates that he had



gained the full support of the Umarian community at Segu; he reportedly had redistributed much of Segu's treasury to the leading Futanke generals, and promised them several profitable raids against Bambara communities during the course of their western campaign.<sup>52</sup> Amadu's troops, as Moktar's before him, were not, however, committed to a campaign against the rebels. Their ambiguity toward fighting fellow Umarians explains Amadu's decision not to follow Moktar's forces into Gidiyumme and engage the rebels immediately. Instead, Amadu spent the first months of his residence at Nioro in discussions with the Futanke of Kingi, whose support or neutrality Amadu needed to ensure his victory.<sup>53</sup>

Amadu's arrival in Kingi prompted a response from Habib at Dingiray. The revolt was failing and Moktar faced possible capture by Amadu's forces. Two contingents set out for Karta from Dingiray. One was commanded by Habib, who convinced many Tal brothers to join a large contingent of Futa Jallonke troops in a march to Konyakary, where he hoped to recruit additional Futanke supporters.<sup>54</sup> Muntaga did not join Habib's army, but marched with his own group of supporters to Murgula on the eastern front, an Umarian garrison south of Karta. It is unclear whether Habib divided his Dingiray forces to threaten Amadu on two fronts, or whether Muntaga marched to Murgula on his own initiative, leaving Habib uncertain as to his intentions.<sup>55</sup> The two Dingiray contingents arrived at Konyakary and Murgula just as the rains of 1870 began to fall.

During the rainy season, all the brothers tried to consolidate their positions. At Niogomera, Moktar and his brothers enticed some Soninke troops to join their army. Habib tried to rally the Futanke of Jomboxo to his side, but without much success.<sup>56</sup> Muntaga led the campaign at and around Murgula

to entice Futanke to join his contingent, and seems to have increased his forces considerably.<sup>57</sup> Amadu Sheku recruited additional soldiers from among Futanke migrants who continued to arrive in large numbers, but he feared what might happen if he had to divide his forces and fight simultaneously on three fronts.<sup>58</sup> In an attempt to negotiate a settlement to the political crisis, Amadu sent envoys to Habib at Konyakary in July, 1870. Since Amadu had only recently released Moktar from captivity in Segu, his ability to gain the trust of Habib was seriously compromised. Habib dispersed Amadu's envoys, and demanded that Amadu concede control of Karta to the rebels in exchange for their recognition of Amadu as the Commander of the Faithful.<sup>59</sup> These demands made Amadu Sheku all the more determined to assert his supreme authority over the Umarian community as Umar's successor.

Although direct evidence is lacking, it seems likely that Amadu also sent an envoy to Muntaga while his troops were advancing on Nioro from Murgula. Amadu may have reminded his brother of the pretensions of Habib and Moktar and the lowly social status of Muntaga's mother, and then warned that Habib and Moktar would leave Muntaga out of any power-sharing in Karta. Amadu also may have offered Muntaga the command of Nioro in exchange for his betrayal of the rebel cause. These or similar arguments eventually convinced Muntaga to switch his allegiance. The negotiations would have occurred at some distance from western Karta, so Habib and Moktar would not have known of Muntaga's change of loyalties.

As the rains stopped in October, Habib moved his forces from Konyakary toward Missira, a village on the Konyakary-Niogomera route.<sup>60</sup> At Missira, Habib, Moktar and the other brothers met for a strategy session. They probably discussed Muntaga's march on Nioro from Murgula, and decided that

Moktar could convince Muntaga to attack Amadu's position. They also decided that, while Moktar met with Muntaga, Habib and the other brothers would take most of the forces, move up the Xoolimbinne valley, and approach Nioro from the west. The rebels would then have Amadu pinned down and could force him to accept their demands. Unfortunately for Habib and the other brothers, their forces were attacked by Soninke troops as they tried to cross Kanyareme.<sup>61</sup> Amadu's loyalist Soninke not only turned the rebels back, but wounded two of Habib's half-brothers.<sup>62</sup>

The rebels still had a fighting chance if Moktar could convince Muntaga to stay with the other brothers. The details surrounding Moktar's activities are unclear, but Muntaga seems to have feined receptivity to Moktar's initiative and arranged a meeting at Gajaba-Jalla, a village to the south of Nioro, sometime during December.<sup>63</sup> Moktar did not have a large contingent with him, and Muntaga's troops easily surrounded the rebel brother. Moktar's forces battled heroically, but most were killed and the confrontation ended with Moktar's capture. Without having to engage either brother directly himself, Amadu inflicted two major reversals on the rebel cause during the last few months of 1870.

Habib regrouped his forces for a final attempt at defeating Amadu Sheku. How Habib marched into Kingi is unknown, but an encounter occurred at Biru, a village to the southwest of Nioro.<sup>64</sup> Habib's forces apparently caught Amadu's army by surprise, as they were performing the afternoon prayer.<sup>65</sup> Habib's initial battlefield advantage could not outweigh Amadu's strength in numbers; Habib's troops eventually retreated and he was forced to surrender himself to one of Amadu's generals.<sup>66</sup> Habib's and Moktar's supporters dispersed in the aftermath of their capture. Some returned to Futa Toro, frustrated with the

turn of events and unwilling to submit to Amadu's authority.<sup>67</sup> Some of their Futa Jallonke supporters returned to Dingiray, and encouraged yet another brother, Seydu, a brother of Makki, to raise an army to fight Amadu.<sup>68</sup> Seydu decided not to lead a challenge, and thus the revolt ended effectively with the capture of Habib and Moktar.

### Conclusion

The source materials for the revolt led my Habib and Moktar are neither abundant nor without limitations. Soleillet/Graver emphasizes the initiative of Moktar, Amadu's response, and Habib's reaction to the escalating political drama. The Piétri account focuses on the conflict between Habib and Amadu, and adds Muntaga's betrayal of Moktar as a dominant sub-plot to the story. The errors in the historical reconstructions based on these accounts, by Saint-Martin and Oloruntimehin, reflect the difficulties they had in resolving the contradictions. My source analysis reveals some of the social bases for the differing perspectives; even with extensive analysis and reflection, however, many of the contradictions in the source materials defy resolution.

Based on the insights generated by my source analysis, I offer the narrative which appears in this chapter as the best available reconstruction of the revolt. My sequence of events differs in significant ways from the nineteenth century accounts and the historical reconstructions of Saint-Martin and Oloruntimehin, and takes into account the political contexts in which the revolt occurred. My narrative emphasizes the way in which a plot, formulated at Dingiray by Habib and the other Tal brothers, gained support among the Futanke of Jomboxo but ultimately failed because the rebels were not able to

win the Futanke of Kingi into the rebel camp. Moktar's ability to recruit a large army of Jomboxo Futanke may have been possible only because of the supportive role played by Cerno Musa, the leading Futanke notable of Konyakary. When Moktar arrived in Kingi, he did not win over a similar notable from the Futanke community there, and relied on the support of Mustafa. Moktar's recruitment of Mustafa may have worked against the rebels, given Futanke resentment against Mustafa. The revolt was probably doomed to failure after Amadu's arrival pushed Moktar into the Xoolimbinne valley and away from the Futanke in Kingi.

Amadu's ability to lure Muntaga away from the other brothers was the other major development which turned the tide against the rebels. If the dissident brothers had presented a united front against Amadu, they might have had sufficient moral and military strength to force concessions from Amadu. Instead, Muntaga's own ambitions led him to betray his rebel brothers. Amadu asked Muntaga to capture Moktar, which then prompted Habib's fateful attack on Amadu's superior forces. In a matter of a few months, Amadu defeated the rebel challenge to his authority in Karta. Amadu Sheku returned to Segu, Muntaga received his appointment as Amadu's Governor of Nioro, and these two brothers spent the following years trying to put the best possible gloss on the entire affair.

### Notes

1. B.O. Oloruntimehin, The Segu Tukolor Empire (London, 1972) and Yves Saint-Martin, L'Empire toucouleur (Paris, 1970).
2. Their mission was to gather information about the mission led by Eugène Mage, who was at Segu at the time. See M. Perraud, "Rapport sur un voyage à Nioro", Le Moniteur de Sénégal et Dépendances, nos. 488, 489 (1 and 8 August 1865) and M. André, "Excursion à Koniakari", Le Moniteur de Sénégal et Dépendances, nos. 465, 466 467 (21 and 28 February, and 7 March 1865). André submitted his report to the French commandant at Medine. ANS 15G108: Medine, 27 December 1865, André to Ct. Medine.
3. ANS 15G108: Medine, 27 December 1865, André to Ct. Medine.
4. The clearest internal statement is in Maurice Delafosse's translation of the Kaba Jakite chronicle from Nioro: [Umar] made his servant Assamadi (Samba Mody) Keita commander over the province of Jomboxo". "Traditions historiques et légendaires du Soudan occidental; traduites d'un manuscrit arabe inédit par Maurice Delafosse", Bulletin du Comité de l'Afrique Française. Renseignements Coloniaux, no. 10 (1913), p. 362.
5. ANS 13G169: Bakel, 4 September 1865, Ct. Bakel to the Governor. The commandant received his information from an African envoy, Sidi Amadu, whom he had sent to Nioro on official business.
6. Colonel M.G. Adam, Légendes historiques du pays de Nioro (sahel) (Paris, 1904), pp. 110-112.
7. ANS 13G212: Medine, 13 and 28 March 1867, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel.
8. I have not found much evidence of a major transfer of tax revenues from Karta to Segu during the 1860s. Amadu Sheku's claim for a share of the tax revenues associated with the gum trade may well date to the period of his first residence in Nioro in the early 1870s. Equally, evidence of Amadu's collection of a portion of the annual harvests begins in the 1870s.
9. David Robinson, The Holy War of Umar Tal (Oxford, 1985), pp. 272-273, 279-280.
10. BN.MO.FA. 5716 fos. 42-433; "Traditions historiques", p. 365; Adam, Légendes historiques, p. 109; A. de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", Bulletin du Comité d'Etudes Historiques et Scientifiques de l'Afrique Occidentale Française (1919), p. 35.
11. Eugène Mage, Voyage dans le Soudan occidental (1863-66) (Paris, 1868), passim.

12. ANS 13G170: Bakel, 8 November 1866 and 1 January 1867, Ct. Bakel to the Governor; Adam, Légendes historiques, pp. 108-109; de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", pp. 34-35.
13. ANS 13G211: Medine, 30 June and 24 November 1866, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel; 13G170: Bakel, 1 January 1867, Ct. Bakel to the Governor; and 13G212: Medine, 23 February 1867, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel. See also the French sources cited in the preceding note.
14. ANS 13G211: Medine, 24 November 1866, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel.
15. ANS 13G212: Medine, 23 February 1867, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel.
16. ANS 13G212: Medine, 11 May 1867, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel.
17. ANS 13G212: Medine, 13 March 1867, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel.
18. ANS 13G169: Bakel, 4 September 1865, Ct. Bakel to the Governor. The commandant received his information from an African envoy, Sidi Amadu, whom he had sent to Nioro on official business.
19. No additional evidence has yet been found to provide details of the Nioro-Dingiray association.
20. BN.MO.FA. 5716 fo. 44b; Adam, Légendes historiques, p. 108; de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", pp. 34-35.
21. Delafosse's translation of the Kaba Jakite chronicle erroneously puts the length of this siege at 13 months instead of 3 months. "Traditions historiques", p. 365. All the other oral traditions and Arabic accounts agree on three months.
22. BN.MO.FA. 5716 fos. 42-43; Adam, Légendes historiques, pp. 108-109; de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", pp. 34-36; "Traditions historiques", p. 365.
23. Adam, Légendes historiques, p. 109; de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", p. 37; "Traditions historiques", p. 365.
24. BN.MO.FA. 5716 fo. 44a.
25. BN.MO.FA. 5716 fos. 42-43, 44.
26. "Chronicle of Succession", BN.MO.FA. 5683, fo. 151. Makki eventually died with Umar in Masina in 1864. See, for Umar's appointment of Amadu Sheku as his successor, David Robinson, The Holy War of Umar Tal (Oxford, 1985), pp. 255-56.
27. Aisha also may have been Umar's first wife. Bakary Diagouraga, interview of 25 January 1986.

28. Agibu, one of Makki's younger brothers, recounted the tradition of Aisha's slave background to the French administrator de Loppinot. See de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", p. 38. Aisha's actual background and social status is ambiguous.

29. See Chapter Two for a discussion of the question of an upper Senegal valley state under Umarian control.

30. The Arabic original has not yet been found. See, for French references to the Arabic letter, ANS 15G109: Medine, 8 November 1870, Ct. Medine to the Governor.

31. Umar's initial followers had come from Futa Jallon, but the expansion of the holy war forced Umar to recruit more and more frequently in Futa Toro. As a result, the Futa Jallonke talibé grew disenchanted with the holy war. A major challenge occurred during the course of the campaign against Segu. See Robinson's discussion of Futa Jallonke/Futanke conflicts in The Holy War, pp. 252-53, 339.

32. Paul Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou. 1878-79. rédigé d'après les notes et journaux de voyage de Soleillet par Gabriel Gravier (Paris, 1887), (hereafter Soleillet/Gravier), pp. 364, 385. Camille Piétri, Les Français au Niger (Paris, 1885), p. 106. Amadu Ba of Nioro also argued that Muntaga was a fervent Muslim.

33. While Amadu had confirmed Habib as the leader of Dingiray during the mid-1860s, he certainly had not granted control over Karta to his younger brother.

34. Piétri, Les Français, p. 106; Soleillet/Gravier, pp. 366-68.

35. All the internal narratives agree that control over Kingi and its populous Futanke community was the ultimate goal of the rebels.

36. The Commandant at Medine states that Moktar arrived in November, 1869. ANS 13G214: Medine, 21 January 1870, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel.

37. Soleillet/Gravier, p. 365; Piétri, Les Français, p. 109.

38. ANS 13G171: Bakel, 15 January and 1 April 1869; 30 January and 31 March 1870, Ct. Bakel to the Governor.

39. ANS 13G214: Medine, 21 January 1870, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel. See also 15G109: Medine, 8 November 1870, Ct. Medine to the Governor. Piétri elaborates on the appointment in Les Français, pp. 104ff.

40. Piétri's account also states that Amadu appointed Muntaga at Nioro prior to the revolt, but Muntaga was not appointed until 1874. Interestingly, French archival materials almost certainly suggest that Habib never released Amadu's mother. Amadu reportedly sent Moriba Safere of Sero to bring his mother to Nioro from Dingiray. See ANS 13G215: Medine, 24 June 1871, Ct. Medine to Ct. Bakel. According to the French reports, Moriba's mission failed to reach Dingiray. ANS 15G109: Medine, 20 July 1871, Ct. Medine to the Governor.



41. Neither oral nor written data mentions how long Cerno Musa remained at Segu nor when he returned to Konyakary from Segu.
42. Piétri, Les Français, pp. 110-111. Moktar probably used all the state revenues to purchase military supplies at Medine.
43. Piétri, Les Français, p. 111-112.
44. Soleillet/Gravier, p. 365.
45. Soleillet/Gravier, pp. 366-368, and de Loppinot, "Souvenirs", p. 37. Piétri argues that it was Muntaga and not Mustafa who met Moktar at Madina. He also argues that Muntaga went on to betray Moktar twice: once when Amadu first arrived from Segu, and later when Muntaga entrapped and captured Moktar. Piétri probably confused the names of Muntaga and Mustafa when he wrote about the first betrayal. See Piétri, Les Français, pp. 117-118, 120-121.
46. Piétri is the source for the raid, but he argues that Muntaga sent it. Piétri, Les Français, pp. 117-118.
47. Moktar's force was reduced to 5-600 cavaliers, according to Piétri, Les Français, p. 118.
48. They preferred using the threat of joining to force concessions from Amadu. The best source for the negotiations is Adam, Légendes historiques, pp. 110-112. See also Soleillet/Gravier, pp. 368-370. None of the accounts directly acknowledge the force of the exchanges nor the political threats.
49. Piétri, Les Français, p. 119; Soleillet/Gravier, p. 369; ANS 15G109: Medine, 14 July 1870, Ct. Medine to the Governor.  
Moktar's activities after Amadu's arrival in Nioro are the source of major contradictions in the narrative accounts. Soleillet/Gravier and Agibu Tal narrate face-to-face interactions between Amadu and Moktar at Nioro, in which Moktar refuses to submit to his older brother. Since these stories depict the rigidity of Moktar and the eagerness of Amadu to settle the dispute without conflict, they reflect an attempt to rewrite the past so as to absolve Amadu for capturing and then imprisoning Moktar. Soleillet/Gravier, pp. 368-369 and de Loppinot, "Souvenirs", pp. 37-38. By emphasizing Amadu's appointment of Moktar and then Muntaga's betrayal, the Piétri version of events, equally representing a Segovian perspective, eliminates the need to create an encounter between Amadu and Moktar to absolve Amadu Sheku. Thus, his account narrates the more probable sequence of Moktar's retreat from Kingi upon the arrival of Amadu Sheku.
50. Piétri, Les Français, pp. 114-115; Soleillet/Gravier, p. 368.
51. The French put Amadu's troop strength at 16,000, but the narrative accounts put the estimate at 8-10,000. See ANS 15G109: Medine, 8 November 1870, Ct. Medine to the Governor of Senegal; Piétri, Les Français, pp. 114-115; Soleillet/Gravier, p. 368.
52. Piétri, Les Français, pp. 113-114.

53. Soleillet/Gravier, p. 368; de Loppinot, "Souvenirs", pp. 37-38.
54. The sources disagree as to the size of Habib's forces, varying from 1500 to 3000 strong. See Piétri, Les Français, p. 115; Soleillet/Gravier, p. 369; de Loppinot, "Souvenirs", p. 38.
55. Soleillet/Gravier (p. 364) mentions Muntaga's decision to go to Murgula, but puts the activity prior to Moktar's arrival in Jomboxo. Muntaga's move on Murgula is mentioned in ANS 15G109: Medine, 14 July 1870, Ct. Medine to the Governor.
56. ANS 15G109: Medine, 11 June and 14 July 1870, Ct. Medine to the Governor.
57. Soleillet/Gravier, p. 364; ANS 15G109: Medine, 14 July 1870, Ct. Medine to the Governor.
58. See, for the reports of continuing Futanke migration to Karta, ANS 13G171: Bakel, 13 May and 30 June 1870, Ct. Bakel to the Governor; and 15G109: Medine, 8 November 1870, Ct. Medine to the Governor.
59. ANS 15G109: Medine, 14 July 1870, Ct. Medine to the Governor.
60. Soleillet/Gravier, p. 370.
61. ANS 15G109: Medine, 29 November, 1870, Ct. Medine to the Governor of Senegal; Soleillet/Gravier, pp. 371-372; de Loppinot, "Souvenirs", p. 38; Adam, Légendes historiques, p. 112.
62. Soleillet met one of the two injured brothers, Daye, who was the leader of the Umarian garrison at Jalla in the late 1870s. Soleillet collected testimony from an informant regarding Daye's injury. Soleillet/Gravier, p. 205.
63. Soleillet/Gravier, pp. 372-373; de Loppinot, "Souvenirs", p. 39; Adam, Légendes historiques, p. 112.
64. Piétri, Les Français, pp. 121ff; de Loppinot, "Souvenirs", p. 39.
65. Piétri, Les Français, pp. 121-122.
66. de Loppinot, "Souvenirs", p. 39.
67. ANS 13G171: Bakel, 28 February, 14 and 31 March, and 30 May 1871, Ct. Bakel to the Governor; 15G109: Medine, 12 and 29 March 1871, Ct. Medine to the Governor.
68. ANS 15G109: Medine, 6 January 1872, Ct. Medine to the Governor.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### Umarian Karta in the Aftermath of the First Revolt

Amadu Sheku's march to Karta in response to the revolt of Habib and Moktar was merely the first step in his effort to create an imperial Umarian state in the Western Sudan. He hoped to lure the Futanke of Karta to Segu, both to reinforce his military strength in the middle Niger valley and to weaken a powerful community whose interests in local affairs would certainly put them at odds with Amadu's imperial agenda. Most Futanke rejected his invitation to move to Segu, and forced Amadu instead to appoint his younger brothers to serve as leaders of the major Umarian garrisons in Karta. After Amadu Sheku returned to Segu in 1874, these brothers and the Futanke of Karta consolidated their positions. Their interests in local economic and political affairs led them to subvert Amadu's attempt to create an imperial state in the Western Sudan. This chapter examines the political history in Umarian Karta during the 1870s, focusing on the actions and interests of Futanke political actors. Their efforts influenced events and shaped the decisions of Amadu Sheku and the other Tal brothers as they tried to rule in Karta.

The source materials for this period of Usonian history are relatively abundant. Amadu Sheku's court produced quite a few Arabic documents during his stay, and Amadu himself commissioned several chronicles of his military exploits against the Bambara. Amadu's correspondence with Futanke officials and notables in Karta also survives from the late 1870s and throughout the 1880s. Additional internal perspectives exist in the oral reminiscences of Agibu Tal, recorded at the turn of the century, and oral traditions currently transmitted in western Mali. The French also kept abreast of developments in Karta, and the correspondence from their posts at Bakel and Medine is filled with data regarding events in Karta. During the 1880s in particular, they sent several envoys to Nioro to gather information. Careful use of these sources provides important glimpses into the Usonian political context. The quality of the data allows for a detailed historical reconstruction of this era of Usonian Karta.

#### Amadu Sheku's attempts to consolidate power in Usonian Karta

After the capture and imprisonment of Habib and Moktar, Amadu Sheku attempted to consolidate his position as the leader of the Usonian community. He called upon the Futanke of Karta to join him in a campaign against the Massassi who had established a stronghold at Gemukura, a settlement south of Karta. He later asked the Futanke to move to Segou and join the holy war against the Bambara of the middle Niger valley. Many Futanke refused to join him in fighting the Bambara and most did not leave Karta with Amadu and his supporters. These requests not only provoked opposition, but resurrected the divisions which had surfaced during the revolt and seriously compromised

Amadu's attempts to consolidate imperial rule in the region. The present section examines Amadu's residence in Karta in the critical years immediately after the revolt of Habib and Moktar.

Prior to the outbreak of the revolt, Amadu Sheku had planned to travel to Nioro, lead a campaign against the Bambara of Gemukura and thereby rekindle enthusiasm for the holy war among the Futanke of Karta.<sup>1</sup> Habib and Moktar launched their revolt before Amadu left Segu, and forced him to alter his political agenda for the trip to Karta. Amadu's preparations for a military campaign against the Bambara allowed him to field a large army and march to Karta quickly, and his promises to attack the Bambara of Gemukura helped rally the Segovian forces for the march.<sup>2</sup> During the revolt, too, Amadu's vision of a holy war against the Bambara served to reinforce his position as the Commander of the Faithful.<sup>3</sup> In early 1871, with the brothers captured and imprisoned, Amadu began preparations in earnest for an attack on Gemukura. Securing weapons and Umarian unity were Amadu's two main concerns.

One of Amadu Sheku's first acts after the conclusion of the revolt was to re-establish his relations with the traitants at Medine. During the revolt, the traitants had distributed revenues from the gum trade to Habib and sold weapons to Moktar; in response, Amadu closed the gum trade with Medine and turned to the traitants at Bakel for supplies.<sup>4</sup> In January, 1871, Amadu opened the trade routes to Medine and sent Samba Tambo, a close advisor, to meet with the traitants.<sup>5</sup> Tambo and the traitants agreed that Amadu Sheku's agents and not the Umarian officials from Konyakary should receive customs revenues which the traitants paid to ensure the safe passage of gum caravans through Karta.<sup>6</sup> Tambo also reminded the traitants of Amadu's need for French weapons to conduct the campaign against Gemukura. The traitant Momar Jak responded

by delivering 1500 guns and a large amount of powder to Amadu's envoys at Medine in April.<sup>7</sup> Obtaining weapons and smoothing over relations with the traitants, however, proved far easier for Amadu Sheku than uniting the Futanke of Karta under his leadership.

Shortly after Amadu Sheku imprisoned Habib and Moktar, Cerno Bokar Tal, one of Shaykh Umar's brothers and a leading member of the Futanke community of Nioro, demanded that Amadu release the two brothers from captivity.<sup>8</sup> Amadu refused, and his intransigence provoked a reaction. In the months which followed, Futanke settlers streamed out of Kingi and returned to the Senegal valley. The migrants included colonists who had settled near Nioro during the 1850s as well as recent arrivals who had no roots in Karta.<sup>9</sup> Some of the migrants may have feared retribution from Amadu for their role in the revolt, but most probably migrated out of dissatisfaction with Amadu's imprisonment of his brothers.<sup>10</sup> The departure of the original colonists was a particularly powerful statement of discontent, since it meant facing an uncertain future in the Senegal valley. Their movement took the political initiative from Amadu and shook the Umarian community to its foundations.

The number of Futanke who left Karta in 1871 is impossible to calculate; oral informants do not remember the population movement and French officials at Bakel and Medine did not make numerical estimates of the out-flow.<sup>11</sup> While the absence of local oral memory might suggest that the figure was low, the lack of memory might equally reflect the general silence regarding the revolt itself: the movement's implicit criticism of Umar's sons did not serve the political agenda of the Tal who consolidated power in Karta during the 1870s. Additionally, the out-migration may have taken entire families of settlers, leaving no one behind to recount the loss of relatives. But, it is clear that the

number of Futanke migrants was sufficiently large to create a political crisis of major proportions for the Amadu Sheku. Amadu had to reverse the movement or risk giving up his attack on the Bambara of Gemukura.

Amadu Sheku did not force anyone to stay in Karta, and moved instead to replace the Futanke with new recruits from the Senegal valley. Unbeknownst to Amadu, the French commandants began to monitor and restrict the movement of Futanke within the valley in 1871.<sup>12</sup> The commandants stopped Amadu's recruiters on their way to the valley and prevented ferganke caravans from leaving the lower valley.<sup>13</sup> They also enlisted their African allies, such as Bokar Saada, to assist them in stopping the fergo.<sup>14</sup> French actions against the fergo not only limited Amadu's initial efforts to recruit in the valley, but also gave those who returned to the valley an opportunity to discourage migration to Karta. Although Amadu eventually succeeded in ensuring the free passage of his envoys in late 1871, the recruitment effort did not produce a mass movement from the Senegal valley and consequently forced Amadu Sheku to concentrate on uniting his forces in Karta.<sup>15</sup>

Amadu Sheku's persistence in calling for holy war against the Bambara succeeded in turning the tide against the out-migration. In May of 1871, Amadu's propaganda about an imminent Massassi attack created rumors of a Bambara contingent advancing on Nioro which were repeated by some merchants in Medine.<sup>16</sup> At the end of the month, Futanke emigration from Karta came to a halt, due to fear of Bambara attacks and the fact that the planting season was soon to arrive.<sup>17</sup> As the rains began to fall, Amadu must have hoped that his forces would mount a campaign soon after the harvest was in. Resistance to the renewal of the holy war among the Futanke of Karta, however,

prevented Amadu from leaving for Gemukura immediately after the harvest and he waited until well into the following year to launch his attack.

Futanke opposition to the renewal of holy war was as enduring as Amadu Sheku's calls to holy war. An Arabic chronicle of the Gemukura campaign notes that Amadu had to preach about the obligation to wage holy war for an extended period prior to the march on Gemukura.<sup>18</sup> The reference to Amadu's preaching clearly is an allusion to Futanke resistance to joining the campaign.<sup>19</sup> In addition, a French commandant at Medine reports that, in November 1871, Amadu Sheku threatened to execute some Futanke from Kingi who remained loyal to Habib and Moktar.<sup>20</sup> The continuing support for the dissident brothers certainly must have been expressed as opposition to the Gemukura campaign. Additionally, it is conceivable that Amadu, angered by the resistance movement, imprisoned its leaders and argued that their actions amounted to an act of treason on a par with support for the rebel brothers.<sup>21</sup> Despite the ambiguous circumstances of November, the evidence suggests that Futanke resistance to the campaign prevented Amadu from mounting an offensive in 1871.

In addition to opposing the renewal of the holy war, some Futanke were disturbed by Amadu Sheku's disregard for their interests. Despite Futanke complaints that the Kaba Jakite family had too much influence over Kartan affairs, Amadu retained Fode Buyagi Kaba Jakite as the imam of Nioro. After investigating Futanke allegations that Mustafa had given this clerical family lavish gifts, he also exonerated Mustafa of any misappropriation of funds.<sup>22</sup> Additionally, Amadu appointed officials to collect taxes in Nioro's market and planned to encourage the flow of salt to Segou by creating a state-supervised commercial route from Nioro to Segou. He supported the emergence of a multi-ethnic coalition of interest as long as it funnelled wealth to Segou and away



from the Futanke community of Karta. Futanke resistance to the Gemukura campaign probably reflected in part their grievances with Amadu's imperial policies.

Despite this resistance, Amadu Sheku eventually was able to lead a large Umarian force against the Massassi. His Segovian forces were strong; some estimates put its strength at over ten thousand soldiers.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, Amadu must have asked Muntaga, Daye and the other Tal brothers to join his army. While the data provides very little information regarding Amadu's relations with his brothers at this time, the fact that a dissident brother such as Daye<sup>24</sup> received Amadu's appointment as governor of Jalla shortly after the revolt strongly suggests that Daye had proved his loyalty by joining Amadu's march on Gemukura. Daye and the other brothers probably swallowed their resentment of Amadu and helped counter the resistance of the Futanke to fighting under Amadu's leadership. Indeed, Futanke resistance to the holy war may have been a factor which forced Amadu to allow his brothers to play a prominent role in the campaign.

Amadu's army left Kingi in February, 1872 and engaged the Bambara in early March.<sup>25</sup> They attacked and defeated the Bambara forces at Gemukura in one battle, and followed that victory with a second attack on a neighboring settlement the next day, dispersing the Massassi from the region. The Umarian chronicles of the battle do not provide many details of the fighting, suggesting that their victory was obtained without much struggle.<sup>26</sup> After spending a few days in the region, the Umarians headed back to Nioro. The campaign was not lengthy nor particularly dramatic, but it produced a victory over the Bambara which Amadu hoped to use in his attempt to bring the Futanke of Karta under his leadership.

Amadu Sheku made Nioro his residence throughout most of 1872. He sent his agents to the provinces of Karta to announce the defeat of the Bambara and collect tribute in the name of the Commander of the Faithful.<sup>27</sup> In the northern Soninke provinces, his agents demanded large quantities of guns and horses, leading to several months of discussions as the Soninke tried to reduce the level of tribute through negotiations.<sup>28</sup> In the Mandinka provinces of the upper Senegal valley, Amadu's agents collected cloth and agricultural products.<sup>29</sup> When inhabitants resisted payment, his agents reminded them that Amadu had renewed the holy war in the Western Sudan, and would not hesitate to attack them.<sup>30</sup>

As the tribute flowed into Nioro and Amadu made plans for his return to Segou, he asked the Futanke of Kingi to join him and move to the middle Niger valley.<sup>31</sup> The initial Futanke response was united in its opposition to the idea. Amadu persisted, offering material incentives to win over the Futanke. While a few leaders accepted his gifts, most Futanke remained opposed even after learning that Amadu Sheku planned to empty the treasury of Nioro of all its wealth.<sup>32</sup> As Amadu preached about the obligation to wage holy war and made various threats, the Futanke turned for inspiration and leadership to Cerno Mamadu Khayar, a learned Muslim cleric, and several elders who had fought in the conquest of Karta.<sup>33</sup> These leaders defended the decision to remain in Karta, and their arguments seem to have convinced some of Amadu's own Futanke soldiers to forsake Segou and stay in Karta.<sup>34</sup>

The defense offered by Cerno Mamadu and the Umarian old guard drew on the words and deeds of Shaykh Umar.<sup>35</sup> They argued that the decentralized Umarian presence was the design of Umar, who had established the garrisons and provided each with its own treasury. The system worked well, they noted,

because the Futanke settled throughout the Western Sudan, shared equally in the fruits of the conquest and defended the regions under their supervision. Amadu's plan to concentrate wealth and political authority in Segu not only disrupted the system, but was inspired by his greed. They suggested that he examine his heart to determine whether he had strayed from the dictates of Muslim law. Underlying these arguments was a strong desire to remain in Karta, where the Futanke had lived since the initial conquest, and where proximity to the Senegal valley allowed them to remain in contact with their relatives.

The opposition openly criticized Amadu's imprisonment of Habib and Moktar. They offered sympathy for the two brothers who only fought to obtain their proper share of Umar's inheritance from a greedy older brother. They asked rhetorically how he would explain the situation to his father when he returned. Their representation of the revolt emphasized their own grievances with Amadu; the criticisms seem to have communicated a threat of possible rebellion if Amadu pressed too forcefully. Whether or not the spokesmen were calling for Amadu to appoint Moktar and Habib to political office in Karta is not clear. Their desire to remain in Karta and retain some autonomy over their affairs was unmistakable.

The Futanke response to Amadu Sheku's request that they move to Segu dramatically illustrates the limits of Amadu's authority. Although Amadu had defeated the dissident brothers and led his army to victory over the Bambara at Gemukura, the majority of Futanke in Karta not only resisted his request to move but expressed a vision of Umorian society which contrasted with Amadu's imperial order. They unequivocally rejected his renewal of the holy war and implicitly challenged the authority of Amadu as Commander of the Faithful.

Amadu could not force the Futanke to leave Karta against their will: he had to accommodate some of their demands or face continuing dissent and the possibility of open rebellion. Far from being an imperial ruler, Amadu saw his political initiative fail and had to find a compromise solution which both satisfied Futanke demands and allowed him some control over the affairs of Karta.

In a bold move, Amadu Sheku decided to appoint six of his younger brothers as leaders of several major garrisons in Karta.<sup>36</sup> In return, Amadu demanded that each brother submit to him as the Commander of the Faithful and agree to visit Segu every year on one of the two major Muslim holidays.<sup>37</sup> With these appointments Amadu answered Futanke criticisms that he did not share power with his brothers and responded to their demands for political leaders who would serve Futanke interests in Karta. At the same time, his appointments expressed a divide-and-rule strategy: by placing several Tal brothers in garrisons throughout Karta, he hoped to diminish Nioro's status as the central place within Karta and emphasize the shared subordination of each garrison to the Commander of the Faithful at Segu. The appointment of Amadu's brothers was intended to satisfy Futanke demands while simultaneously consolidating Amadu's power as an imperial ruler.

The appointments reflected careful consideration on Amadu's behalf. No appointee was an obvious rival to Amadu: Habib and Moktar remained in captivity, and Muntaga, who received the most crucial appointment as leader at Nioro, had fought on Amadu's side during the revolt. Muntaga also could not claim that his mother's family background was more prestigious than that of Amadu's mother, as Habib and Moktar had done during the revolt. The other major post went to Bassiru, who also had shown loyalty to Amadu during the

revolt. The other brothers received appointments to smaller garrisons, where their ambition would have an opportunity to grow at the expense of Muntaga and Bassiru. Amadu's appointments were his attempt to reassert control over Karta in the face of Futanke resistance. Given the depth of Futanke opposition to Amadu's leadership, the appointments may seem inevitable, but his selection of so many brothers probably was not expected by the Futanke community of Karta.

Amadu Sheku also hoped that the appointment of his brothers would help him draw the Futanke of Karta into closer relations with Segu. By demanding that his brothers visit Segu annually as a condition of their appointment, Amadu expected his brothers to arrive in Segu with a sizable army of Futanke and provide him with annual infusions of military support for his campaigns against the Bambara of the middle Niger valley. Amadu thereby continued to assert control over the Futanke of Karta, but deferred direct responsibility for its organization to his brothers. He also hoped that the annual visits would ensure that the Nioro-Segu road remained open to commerce. Amadu's appointments of his brothers expressed his imperial agenda, despite the concessions to the Futanke community in Karta.

Amadu Sheku did not appoint his brothers in a ceremony in Karta, but asked them to return with him to Segu. Various considerations led him to his decision. Amadu planned his re-installation as Commander of the Faithful for a ceremony at Guigné, a town on the Nioro-Segu road, and he wanted his brothers to submit to him there prior to receiving their appointments to rule Karta.<sup>38</sup> Additionally, Amadu wanted to appoint his brothers in Segu instead of Nioro, so as to diminish the prominence of the Kartan capital. Finally, he wanted his brothers to spend their first Ramadan as officials in Segu, so as to

reinforce their obligation to visit Segu annually. Amadu and his brothers left Nioro in early 1873, with most of the treasury and the few Futanke families who had decided to move to Segu. They headed along the main route between Nioro and Segu. During the interim, Almamy and Samba Mody held the reins of power as Amadu's agents in Nioro and Konyakary, respectively.

Amadu Sheku had hoped to lay the basis for an imperial state in the Western Sudan during his residence in Karta, but his inability to entice the Futanke community to leave Karta compromised his efforts. Admittedly, Amadu established the core of an imperial state in Karta: customs officials at Medine and Nioro, a state supervised trade and communications route between Segu and Nioro and political appointees at the major garrisons who publicly acknowledged him as their Commander of the Faithful and promised to visit him in Segu annually. Nonetheless, the Futanke decision to remain in Karta was an affirmation of their intent to maintain their claim the wealth of Karta as a share of the Umarian conquests. The initial settlers had no interest in further conquests, and the new arrivals preferred campaigns closer to Karta. Therefore, Amadu's imperial plans for Karta hinged on the quality of his relationship with his brothers and their ability to convince the Futanke to subordinate their interests to Amadu's imperial goals.

#### Umarian Karta in the late 1870s

In the years following the appointment of his brothers, Amadu's control over Karta diminished. Many historians emphasize the personal ambition of Amadu's brothers as the primary cause for his inability to maintain an imperial state in the Western Sudan.<sup>39</sup> The erosion of relations with his brothers,

however, was merely a symptom of Amadu's inability to command the Futanke of Karta, who did not share Amadu's imperial vision and took actions to subvert his plans. The Tal appointees initially tried to honor their obligations to the Commander of the Faithful, but found themselves torn between local interests, Amadu's imperial demands and their own aspirations for wealth and power. It was this context of competing interests in Umarian Karta which encouraged some brothers to seize the initiative from Amadu. The present section analyzes the initial years of the Tal brothers tenure in Umarian Karta, focusing particularly on the political arena in Nioro.

While the focus on the Futanke is appropriate, given their influential position in Karta, the voices of other members of the multi-ethnic coalition shaped the context in which the Futanke operated. Indeed, the arrival of the Tal brothers initially caused a rupture in the coalition. The demands of so many new Tal brothers increased the pressure on Karta's populations to contribute economically to the maintenance of the Umarian state while simultaneously reducing the political voice of non-Futanke communities. Within months of the arrival of Amadu's brothers in May, 1874, the first complaints against the Tal brothers were uttered in the region.<sup>40</sup> The next two years found Umar's sons fighting against local groups who resisted their rule. The participants in overt opposition to Umarian rule were the Xassonke of Sero and the Soninke of Jafunu, groups which had assisted Shaykh Umar during the conquest of Karta.<sup>41</sup> Their dissatisfaction with Umar's sons challenged the basis of Umarian rule in Karta, and shaped the political agenda of the era.

The Soninke of Jafunu reluctantly paid tribute to Futanke agents from the inception of Umarian rule. Shaykh Umar's Futanke agents met with some opposition, and Mustafa relied on the Kaba Jakite family to help bring the

Jafununke into the Umarian coalition.<sup>42</sup> Their opposition to Nuru, Amadu's appointee as the Governor of Jafunu, expressed their desire for autonomy from overt Futanke control over their affairs.<sup>43</sup> They escorted Nuru out of Jafunu within months of his arrival, complaining that his demands were excessive.<sup>44</sup> Moriba Safere, the leader of Sero, assisted the Jafununke in expelling Nuru from the province, probably because he resented the selection of Bassiru as Governor of Jomboxo and may have hoped to trigger a political crisis.<sup>45</sup> Nuru turned for assistance to Bassiru, who sent a military force into Jafunu.<sup>46</sup> Muntaga argued for a peaceful settlement, and eventually negotiated a resolution to the conflict.<sup>47</sup> The conflict thrust Muntaga into a position where, as in the past, the leader of Nioro assumed the role of arbitrator for political conflicts in Karta.

The cracks in the multi-ethnic coalition were not resolved completely, and conflict in the northwest surfaced again during 1876-1877. The underlying factor was Moriba Safere's anger with Bassiru for accepting the submission of his rival Xassonke leader, Niamody of Logo.<sup>48</sup> Moriba felt that Bassiru's action signalled a change in his status as an Umarian ally, and he may have thought of leaving the Umarian coalition at the time of Niamody's submission sometime in 1874. Moriba's anger came to the surface in 1876 when Bassiru demanded that Moriba collect a fine from some Moors who camped on the right bank of the Xoolimbinne river near Sero. The Moors, known as the Assykiris, had raided a settlement in Jomboxo in 1876, and Bassiru demanded retribution.<sup>49</sup> Since Moriba Safere felt that Bassiru favored Niamody, he decided not to risk alienating his Moorish allies.

In response to Moriba's defiance, Bassiru recruited some Logonke and attacked Sero.<sup>50</sup> Bassiru lost the battle with Moriba, and the defeat forced



Muntaga to come to the defense of his younger brother. In response to the increased Futanke presence in Sero, Moriba's forces sought refuge in Jafunu, where the Jafununke enthusiastically joined the challenge to the Umarian leadership.<sup>51</sup> The growth of the rebellion raised the political stakes. Muntaga combined the Umarian forces and led an assault on the dissident forces in two encounters, at Tambacara and Gori, during the first months of 1877.<sup>52</sup> The Futanke forces emerged victorious from both battles, and inflicted heavy casualties on the Jafununke and Seronke army.<sup>53</sup> Muntaga again assumed a leadership position, and earned considerable respect through military victories in defense of his brothers in the Xoolimbinne valley.

The fighting in the Xoolimbinne valley also altered Futanke perceptions of their presence in the region. The Futanke settlers realized that their position was not as secure as it had been prior to the appointment of the brothers. Among some Futanke, the challenge of the Seronke and Jafununke reinforced their consciousness of their Fulbe identity and commitment to holy war.<sup>54</sup> They were resolved to exercise vigilance and keep Karta's non-Futanke and non-Muslim populations under strict control. This group included military leaders and recent migrants who came to Karta to fight in Futanke armies and obtain booty in wars. The Tal brothers assumed leadership roles for this faction: Amadu had emptied the treasuries of the garrisons before he left for Segu and his brothers conducted wars to accumulate wealth and followers in their efforts to establish a name for themselves.

Another group of Futanke cautioned against disrupting the multi-ethnic coalition and argued for fewer military campaigns. This group had grown tired of the brothers' demands for troops: as early as September 1876, a French commandant at Medine reported that "the Futanke [are] tired of war and call

for Bassiru's replacement [as Governor of Konyakary] by Samba Mody".<sup>55</sup> A similar group opposed to continued warfare would eventually emerge in Kingi as well. Those opposed to warfare included the growing group of Futanke slaveowners who were investing in production and participating in commercial exchanges, as discussed in Chapter Five. They felt that negotiation was the best solution for every activity, whether it be commercial or political. These two Futanke factions expressed their views in political discussions at Konyakary and Nioro in the years which followed.

One issue which united the two factions was the question of Karta's obligations to Amadu Sheku. The Tal brothers had agreed to make annual visits to Segu and provide military assistance against the Bambara, but the problems with Sero and Jafunu between 1874 and 1877 kept them from fulfilling that obligation, and French military activities in the Senegal valley kept them in the west in 1878.<sup>56</sup> Amadu pressed his brothers to make the trip, and reminded them that he was due one-fifth of the booty which they had secured in their military actions.<sup>57</sup> Bambara raids along the Nioro-Segu road also had slowed the flow of commerce to Segu, and he asked specifically in late 1878 for a large Futanke army to open the route.<sup>58</sup> The evidence suggests that the Tal brothers made an effort to comply with Amadu's request in 1879, but most Futanke insisted that they did not want to join such a campaign.<sup>59</sup>

Amadu's envoys communicated to his brothers both his dissatisfaction with their absence from Segu and their preoccupation with military campaigns. In early 1880, Bassiru responded to Amadu's pressure and led a small force of Futanke cavaliers toward Segu, only to return because of insecurity between Karta and Segu.<sup>60</sup> Although a faction of the Futanke of Kingi was willing to provide assistance to Amadu, Muntaga sided with those who resisted making the

trip. Muntaga, Nuru and Daye instead led a military campaign in the southern marches of Karta, attacking communities near the Umarian garrison at Murgula.<sup>61</sup> Amadu Sheku interpreted Muntaga's actions as a direct defiance of his request. Amadu's anger never abated, and the rupture of 1880 marked a decisive turn in Kartan-Segovian relations.<sup>62</sup>

An appreciation of the context in which Muntaga made his decision shows that he was caught within a complex web of competing local interests. While some Futanke wanted to fulfill Amadu's request, Cerno Mamadu Khayar convinced most Futanke not to join the trip.<sup>63</sup> Only a few years earlier, Cerno Mamadu had led the Futanke in their opposition to moving to Segu with Amadu. If Muntaga had challenged Cerno Mamadu, then he risked eroding Futanke support which he had nurtured during his initial years in Nioro. At the same time, the soldiers which Muntaga had assembled at Nioro included a large number of recent migrants who wanted to obtain booty through warfare. They rejected a trip to Segu because of its distance from Nioro and the dangers which they would face on the Nioro-Segu road, not because they opposed warfare *per se*.<sup>64</sup> The gathering of soldiers may have been so large that Muntaga feared that they would conduct raids on communities in Kingi. The southern campaign was his response to the soldiers' desire for booty, and expressed his enduring commitment to the soldiers upon whom he relied as the leader of Karta. As during the earlier conflicts in the Xoolimbinne valley, Muntaga seized the opportunity to emerge as the leader of Karta.

Muntaga clearly was an ambitious man, and his willingness to challenge Amadu's order expressed his personal desire for greater wealth and power as the leader of an autonomous Umarian state in Karta.<sup>65</sup> Muntaga certainly realized that his absence from Segu would cause a rupture in his relations with

Amadu Sheku. He also knew that his attempt to comply with Amadu's order would compromise his relations with the Futanke of Kingi. Muntaga chose to take his chances as the champion of Futanke demands for local autonomy. His desire for greater power converged with the interests of most Futanke in Kingi. His campaign into southern Karta was an affirmation that he was ready to assume the mantle as the leader of Umarian Karta.

Muntaga's decision to disregard Amadu's orders also reflected the growing rivalry among Umar's sons. During the late 1870s, several rumors regarding a growing discontent among the Tal brothers circulated at the French post at Medine. One rumor involved Amadu's frustrations with the political ambitions of his younger brothers.<sup>66</sup> Another rumor concerned the displeasure of Amadu's younger brothers with his plan to designate Madani, Amadu's oldest son, as the next Commander of the Faithful.<sup>67</sup> Underlying this increase in fraternal suspicions may have been reports of the death of Habib and Moktar. These two sons of Umar died in captivity in Segou, and their deaths reminded the others of Amadu's uncharitable treatment of his adversaries. Growing suspicions and distrust, it would seem, informed Muntaga's decision to break with Amadu.

Agibu Tal provides the only detailed internal account of the events which immediately followed Muntaga's decision not to go to Segou. He notes that Amadu Sheku ordered residents of a town in southern Karta to ambush and kill Muntaga as he passed through on the way back to Nioro.<sup>68</sup> Given the communications difficulties in the Western Sudan at the time, it is unlikely that Amadu actually ordered Muntaga's assassination. Whether or not he ever sent such a message, rumors of Amadu's evil intentions toward Muntaga circulated in Karta at the time.<sup>69</sup> The rumors suggest that Futanke doubts about Amadu's

intentions influenced events, and may have preceded their decision not to comply with Amadu's request for troops. Rumors of an assassination plot also added to the rivalry.

Agibu adds that Amadu Sheku later tried to remove Muntaga from power by writing to the slave soldiers of Nioro and asking them to depose Muntaga.<sup>70</sup> The envoy betrayed the plot, and revealed the contents of the letter to Muntaga. Cerno Mamadu Khayar, whom Agibu states was the leader of the slave soldiers, wrote to Amadu Sheku and reaffirmed his loyalty to the Commander of the Faithful. While Cerno Mamadu was not the leader of the slave soldiers, he did correspond with Amadu; fortunately, Amadu saved some of the letters in his palace library at Segu.<sup>71</sup> In a letter probably written in the context Agibu evokes, Cerno Mamadu affirms his loyalty to Amadu, and excuses himself for not going to Segu, offering his age as the primary reason for remaining in Nioro. That Cerno Mamadu would send such a letter to Amadu after leading the opposition to Amadu's request suggests that Cerno Mamadu was offering himself as a mediator between Muntaga and Amadu. If Amadu responded to Cerno Mamadu's letter, it has not yet surfaced; his subsequent actions suggest, however, that he was not interested in a mediated resolution to the conflict.

By 1880, Futanke opposition to Amadu Sheku's demands for military assistance forced a major political crisis, and fraternal rivalry once again assumed prominence in Kartan-Segovian relations. Local rebellions in the Xoolimbinne valley initially thrust the mantle of leadership on Muntaga, but Futanke resistance to Amadu's demands in the late 1870s forced Muntaga to chose between the Futanke and Amadu. Once he chose not to honor Amadu's request and the break occurred, the political crisis grew in seriousness, and

Futanke such as Cerno Mamadu Khayar sought ways to mediate the conflict that they had helped to create. The memory of the earlier fraternal rivalry was on everyone's mind, and shaped their fears and suspicions. Unfortunately, the early 1880s ushered in a new era in Franco-Umarian relations, and the French advance into the Western Sudan polarized factions in the Futanke community of Karta and the divisions between the Tal brothers.

### The French advance and Umarian Karta

Our march in the [Western] Sudan favors quite remarkably the position of Muntaga. That is why I am convinced that . . . [Muntaga] will renounce his ties to Amadu Sheku and ally with us. . . . [Muntaga has interests] in allowing us march . . . towards the Niger [and his rival Amadu Sheku].

-Commandant Supérieur Boliève<sup>72</sup>

Louis-Alexandre Brière de l'Isle, the Governor of Senegal during the late 1870s and early 1880s, sent Joseph Gallieni to Segou to negotiate an accord with Amadu Sheku. Gallieni returned with a treaty in hand, but argued that the internal weakness of the "Tukulor Empire" made it open to attack.<sup>73</sup> Shortly after Gallieni's return, Gustave Borgnis-Desbordes, Brière's appointee as the initial Commandant Supérieur du Haut-Fleuve, began the French military moves into the Western Sudan. By 1883, Desbordes had established a line of French posts in the Western Sudan, and tried to draw Muntaga, the leader of Umarian Karta, into an alliance with the French. Desbordes' successors, C.E. Boilève, A.V. Combes and H.N. Frey, also hoped to encourage the demise of the "Tukulor Empire" through alliance with Karta, but Muntaga refused to agree despite his knowledge of Amadu's plans to march on Karta. Boilève's assessment that the

French advance favored Muntaga's position vis-à-vis Amadu Sheku was accurate, but he failed to appreciate the internal politics of the "Tukulor Empire".

Most historians argue that the combination of French cunning and Amadu Sheku's political weakness made the French advance possible. They emphasize Amadu's inability to unite the Umarians under the banner of holy war without considering the internal dialogue within the Umarian community. Amadu was not an imperial ruler, so he could not command the loyalty of the Umarians in Karta, whose proximity to the French position made them crucial political actors in the unfolding drama. Muntaga's decisions also reflected the views of the Futanke community of the region. This section views the French advance of the early 1880s without the conceptual blinders associated with the myth of imperial decline, and locates Franco-Umarian relations within a context of Futanke political activity in Karta.

Brière de l'Isle used his appointment as the Governor of Senegal to revive French imperial ambitions in the Western Sudan. Brière adopted an aggressive stance toward the Umarians almost immediately upon his arrival at Saint Louis in 1876. He was pleased to hear of Moriba Safere's revolt against Bassiru in 1877, and contemplated supporting the Seronke leader.<sup>74</sup> Brière seized the next opportunity to intervene in Umarian affairs: after encouraging Juka Sambala, the Xassonke client at Medine, to challenge Niamody of Logo, a rival Xassonke leader under the patronage of Bassiru, Brière ordered a military expedition against Logo in 1878.<sup>75</sup> The Logonke forces suffered a major loss, and Niamody himself died during the attack. That same year, a large number of Fulbe from the Senegal valley decided to migrate to Karta and directed Brière's attention to the activities of Umarian recruiters. The fergo of 1878 convinced Brière that the growing strength of the "Tukulor Empire" was a threat to the French

position in the Senegal valley and he called for military action in defense of their interests.<sup>76</sup>

Brière sent two missions into the Western Sudan to gather information on the "Tukulor Empire". Paul Soleillet travelled through the Umorian territories in Karta on his way to Segou, where he resided for several months in 1879. His reports whetted Brière's appetite for expansion, and the Governor sent Joseph Gallieni to Segou in 1880 to negotiate a treaty with Amadu creating a French sphere of influence in the Western Sudan. On his way to the middle Niger, Gallieni explored a route which avoided Umorian territories: he passed south of the upper Senegal valley regions which paid tribute to Bassiru at Konyakary and Daye at Jalla, and north of the regions claimed by the independent Umorian garrison at Murgula in the middle Bakhoy valley.<sup>77</sup> Although the treaty which Gallieni negotiated never was ratified by either side, Brière's desire for French expansion into the Western Sudan did not diminish.

Brière's views on French expansion in the Western Sudan eventually won over the French Colonial Ministry. Jean Jauréguiberry, a former Governor of Senegal, obtained the colonial portfolio in 1879 and actively lobbied for French action in the Western Sudan. In 1880, Jauréguiberry gained French parliamentary approval for the "Niger Plan": the creation of a railroad line from the French position in the upper Senegal valley to the banks of the Niger. Jauréguiberry used passage of the measure to establish a Bureau du Haut-Fleuve as a separate department within the Ministry, thereby ensuring that his policies would be served even after his departure from government service. Although subsequent Ministers did not authorize specific military activities, they supervised the French conquest of the Western Sudan through the Bureau du Haut-Fleuve.



Jauréguiberry authorized the creation of an Upper River Command in 1880, and provided the Commandant Supérieur du Haut-Fleuve with a large battalion of African forces recruited in the Senegal valley (the famed tirailleurs sénégalais). The post attracted ambitious officers because the Commandant Supérieur was responsible for all aspects of French activity in the Western Sudan. Although the Commandant was subordinate to the Governor of Senegal, he retained considerable autonomy over Sudanese policy. Borgnis-Desbordes, the first appointee, and many of his successors used military successes in the Western Sudan to gain promotions within the army. While the desire for glory and career advancement contributed to the aggressiveness with which many Commandants pursued military activity in the Western Sudan, their actions were consistent with Brière's vision and the hidden agenda of the Niger Plan of 1880.

Commandant Supérieur Borgnis-Desbordes established a string of French posts in the Western Sudan. Desbordes followed Gallieni's strategy of avoiding territories claimed by the Umarians in Karta. During his first year in the field in 1881, he established a French post at Kita, where Gallieni had obtained local permission to build a fort during his trip in 1880.<sup>78</sup> Desbordes eventually pushed beyond Kita and established a post at Bamako on the middle Niger River. The French did not move beyond these posts until Commandant Supérieur Louis Archinard began the military conquests in earnest in 1890. Nevertheless, the French position significantly altered the political geography of the Western Sudan. The post at Bamako was less than two hundred kilometers from Amadu Sheku's fort at Segou, and gave the French access to the Niger River, which flowed through the heart of Umorian Segou. Throughout the late 1880s, the French put boats into the Niger to threaten Umorian Segou. Additionally, the commandants at Kita and Bamako encouraged Bambara leaders in Beledugu to

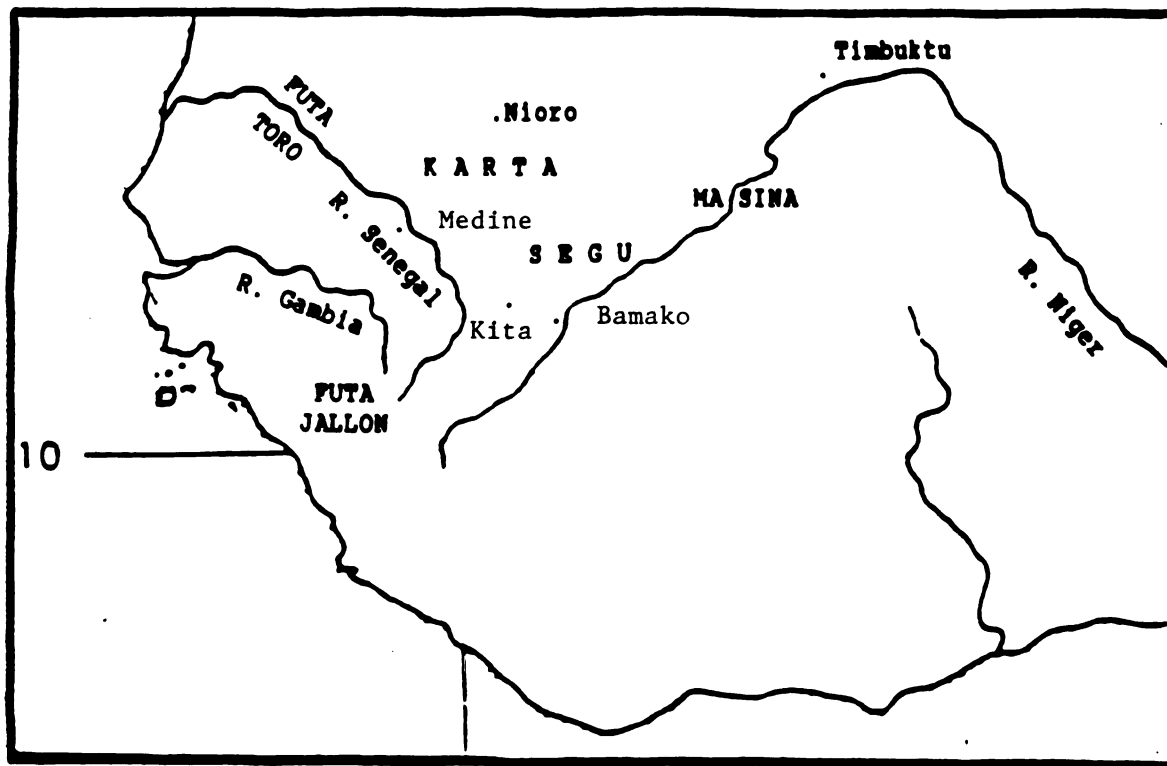


FIGURE D

The French Posts in the Western Sudan

attack the Nioro-Segu route, effectively severing communications and trade. These actions isolated Segu from the other areas of Umarian domination in the Western Sudan. Amadu Sheku clearly perceived the French advance as hostile to his position. Conversely, the French avoided challenging the Umarian state in Karta, so the French threat was less pressing to Muntaga and the Futanke of Karta. Nevertheless, the French initiative altered the status quo which had been established after Umar's holy war and forced the Futanke of Karta to reassess their position.

The initial Umarian response to the French advance was ambiguous. The French encountered no military resistance from the armies of either Karta or Segu. Bassiru did seize the initiative and halted commercial caravans from passing through Karta to Medine in late 1881.<sup>79</sup> His decision immediately prompted the French to impose an embargo on the sale of guns and powder to the Umarians.<sup>80</sup> The Franco-Umarian commercial conflict ended when the Umarians lifted their embargo in February, 1882.<sup>81</sup> Bassiru did not end the embargo willingly: Amadu Sheku ordered the Umarians at Konyakary to lift the embargo and called Bassiru to Segu.<sup>82</sup> Amadu Moktar, a Futanke notable from Konyakary, replaced Bassiru as the leader of Jomboxo. Amadu acted decisively to avoid escalating conflict with the French, and expressed the widespread Umarian ambiguity toward confronting the French militarily.

Amadu Sheku's action divided the Futanke community of Jomboxo. The Futanke faction which had already grown tired of Bassiru's wars and raids supported the move. They probably shared Amadu's fears that Bassiru's stance toward the French had been too aggressive. They felt that a long embargo would cut into revenues which they received from the grain trade at Medine, and saw a member of their faction receive the reigns of power. On the other

hand, the soldiers who supported Bassiru probably felt that Amadu Sheku had overreached his authority as Commander of the Faithful. Ironically, many of these soldiers probably had accompanied Bassiru when he tried to fulfill Amadu's request for military assistance in 1880.

Amadu Sheku also moved against Daye, the leader at Jalla in southern Karta. In November, 1881, as Bassiru implemented his embargo against the French, Amadu's supporters organized a palace coup in Jalla: Daye fled to Nioro and Demba Ibrahim replaced him as the leader of Jalla.<sup>83</sup> The reasons for Amadu's actions are not clear. For months prior to Daye's removal from power, Amadu's envoys moved between Segou and the Umarian garrisons at Murgula and Jalla.<sup>84</sup> Amadu probably feared that the Umarians at Murgula and Jalla planned to attack the French at Kita, and he ordered their leaders not to take action without direct orders from Segou.<sup>85</sup> Daye may have been removed, therefore, because he favored an aggressive policy toward the French or because he had refused to support Amadu Sheku in his requests for assistance in Segou.

The French advance continued with the conquest of Murgula in late 1882 and the creation of a French post at Bamako in early 1883. Abdullay, another servant from northern Nigeria who commanded at Murgula, and a small group of Futa Jalonke had established the garrison as an autonomous Umarian settlement with links to Dingiray, Nioro and Segou.<sup>86</sup> When the French initially arrived at Kita, Borgnis-Desbordes reassured Abdullay that they would not usurp power from the Umarians. Abdullay, because of his good faith in the French and because of Amadu's pressures, did not seek confrontation with the French. The French sent two companies of soldiers to Murgula in December, 1882, and forced Abdullay to leave the region. Abdullay and his supporters fled to Nioro with

accounts of the French and their deceptive ways. The French advance to the Niger River led directly to the removal of the Umarian presence at Murgula and indirectly to a change in leadership at Jalla.

Commandant Supérieur Borgnis-Desbordes hoped that these changes would not draw Muntaga into war with the French, and wrote a letter after the Murgula affair to inform him that the French had no intentions of encroaching on Karta.<sup>87</sup> Muntaga responded ambiguously to Borgnis-Desbordes' letter, stating that the Futanke of Nioro were divided on the question of Murgula: some called for war and others counseled for peace.<sup>88</sup> Borgnis-Desbordes took the ambiguity as a sign of Muntaga's interest in better relations with the French, and sent Dr. Bayol to Nioro in hopes of negotiating a treaty with Muntaga.<sup>89</sup> While on route to Nioro, Dr. Bayol felt that the hostility toward him was so great that it made travel dangerous, and he returned without completing the mission. Borgnis-Desbordes continued to hope for a working relationship with Muntaga, but Muntaga made it clear that he did not want formal ties to the French.<sup>90</sup>

Muntaga's reference to the "war" and "peace" camps in Nioro reflected real divisions among the Futanke during the early 1880s.<sup>91</sup> Once again, the leader of the faction arguing against warfare was Cerno Mamadu Khayar.<sup>92</sup> His position on the appropriate response to the French mirrored his own conviction that Muntaga and the "war" faction embarked on wars and raids all too frequently. He specifically argued that the wars were fought for the benefit of Muntaga and the military commanders at the expense of the young men who died in battle.<sup>93</sup> With regard to the French, Cerno Mamadu Khayar felt that their interest was in establishing a line of commerce to the middle Niger and posed no threat to Karta. He argued that the Futanke brought beneficial

commercial services to the region, and pointed to the Muslims of Tishit as an example of appropriate response to the opportunities offered by the French.<sup>94</sup> Cerno Mamadu represented a broad spectrum of Futanke society, including older and younger Futanke as well as Moorish commercial groups who had settled in Nioro.<sup>95</sup>

The "war" camp was a diverse group, and included many Futanke from Nioro and its surrounding villages as well as the communities Jawaambe and Fulbe Samburu who fought in Muntaga's army.<sup>96</sup> On the question of military actions against the French, the group included a few youthful leaders who sought an engagement with the French.<sup>97</sup> Most Futanke, however, felt that the French would defeat the Futanke in any encounter; they argued that they would fight to the death if and only if the French attacked Karta.<sup>98</sup> On Franco-Umarian relations, then, the "war" and "peace" factions disagreed on the question of French intentions but agreed that direct confrontation should be avoided if possible.

Muntaga, too, did not want an engagement with the French because his attention focused on Amadu Sheku. Amadu's replacement of Daye at Jalla and Bassiru at Konyakary marked another turn in the saga of fraternal conflict, and Muntaga reflected on the appropriate response. Muntaga did not fear an attack from the new leaders: Amadu Moktar represented the interests of the Futanke faction which did not seek military confrontations, and the garrison at Jalla was some distance from Nioro. Nevertheless, Amadu's ability to appoint new leaders at these garrisons was a challenge to Muntaga's claims to authority over Karta, and indicated that Muntaga could not count on all the Futanke of Karta for support against Amadu. Muntaga decided that he wanted to return Daye to power in Jalla and replace Amadu Moktar of Farabugu, Amadu Sheku's

appointee.<sup>99</sup> Amadu Moktar opposed Muntaga's frequent campaigns into the southern marches of Karta, and thereby earned Muntaga's wrath.

Muntaga's plans for escalating the fraternal conflict were not supported by the Futanke of Karta. The Futanke at Nioro refused to provide men to fight against Demba Ibrahim, and Amadu Moktar at Konyakary rejected Muntaga's request for a contingent from Jomboxo.<sup>100</sup> Muntaga nonetheless mobilized a small force to demonstrate his desire to attack Jalla. In July of 1883, the tensions in Karta were heightened by the arrival of a caravan from Bundu with 600 cavaliers led Malik Samba Sy.<sup>101</sup> Malik Samba was a member of the ruling lineage of Bundu and, given the political crisis in southern Karta, decided to claim the leadership of Jalla for himself. Malik Samba engaged the forces of Demba Ibrahim twice, and neither side could claim victory. Demba's letters to Amadu Sheku, however, conveyed his fears that Muntaga would join the conflict.<sup>102</sup> Muntaga in fact sent a contingent to assist Malik Samba, but Futanke protests over Muntaga's involvement in Jalla's affairs forced him to order it back to Nioro without attacking Demba Ibrahim.<sup>103</sup> Malik Samba's troops eventually settled at Farabugu.

The events in southern Karta further divided Amadu Sheku and Muntaga. Amadu decided that he no longer could dismiss the pleas for assistance from supporters such as Demba Ibrahim, and he began to prepare for a march on Nioro in late 1883. Conscious of Amadu's activities in Segu, Muntaga decided to rally the Futanke behind his leadership, and distributed a large amount of gold to entice as many Futanke leaders to join him as possible.<sup>104</sup> Cerno Mamadu refused Muntaga's gifts, and repeated his opposition to warfare.<sup>105</sup>

Some ten years after Amadu Sheku's request that the Futanke of Karta move to Segu, Cerno Mamadu again assumed a prominent role in the political

arena in Nioro. He had opposed Amadu's request in 1873, and influenced debate on the major political issues of the late 1870s and early 1880s: Kartan-Segovian relations, the French advance and Muntaga's wars in the south. On these questions, Cerno Mamadu was the leader of the "peace" faction which was emerging among the Futanke of Kingi. A similar faction also gained influence in Jomboxo, and was poised to benefit from Amadu's replacement of Bassiru in 1881. Not all Futanke in Karta, however, were members of the "peace" faction. As the fraternal conflict intensified, the "war" faction divided between supporters of Amadu and supporters of Muntaga. The next chapter explores this development.



### Notes

1. Throughout the 1860s, the Futanke consistently had refused Amadu Sheku's requests for military assistance in Segou. See Chapter Seven for details. Internal accounts agree that one of Amadu's primary reasons for marching to Karta was to fight the Bambara of Gemukura. French reports note Amadu's calls for a campaign against the Bambara as early as mid-1870. ANS 15G109: Medine, 14 July 1870, Ct. Medine to the Governor.
2. Amadu made the trip in 15 days. Paul Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, 1878-79, rédigé d'après les notes et journaux de voyage de Soleillet par Gabriel Gravier (Paris, 1887), p. 368.
3. His call for a major campaign against the Bambara also may have been an attempt to lure his dissident brothers to Nioro during the revolt.
4. See, for the rocky relations between Amadu Sheku and the traitants at Medine, ANS 13G171: Bakel, 30 January, 15 May and 14 June 1870, Ct. Bakel to the Governor. See, for Amadu Sheku's relations with the traitants at Bakel, BN.MO.FA. 5713, fos. 61-63.
5. Samba Tambo accompanied the first gum caravan of the year. ANS 15G109: Medine, 25 January and 12 March 1871, Ct. Medine to the Governor.
6. Cerno Musa and Samba Mody initially established the customs on the gum caravans which crossed through Umarian territory on the way to Medine. See Chapter Four for a discussion of the opening of the gum trade. Samba Tambo collected revenues for Amadu Sheku at Medine throughout the 1870s and early 1880s.
7. Momar Jak travelled to Nioro in July to receive payment for the weapons and work out the final details of the new relationship between Amadu Sheku and the traitants at Medine. ANS 15G109: Medine, 12 April and 20 July 1871, Ct. Medine to the Governor.
8. Cerno Bokar was one of two Futanke "religious leaders" in Nioro mentioned by the Frenchmen who visited Karta in 1865. See, for a discussion of Cerno Bokar's position as "religious leader" in the 1860s, Chapter Seven above. See, for Cerno Bokar's demands, ANS 13G171: Bakel, 28 February 1871, Ct. Bakel to the Governor.
9. French reports note that the migrants included Futanke "who had joined Umar Tal" and "recent" migrants. See, for example, ANS 13G171: Bakel, 28 February and 30 May 1871, Ct. Bakel to the Governor.
10. I base this conclusion on the fact that most Futanke in Kingi had not participated directly in the revolt.

11. Not one of my oral informants in western Mali remembered the out-migration of 1871. Neither Amadou Ba nor Abdoul Aziz Diallo have collected traditions regarding it. See, for French descriptions of the movement, ANS 13G171: Bakel, 28 February, 14 and 31 March, 30 May 1871, Ct. Bakel to the Governor; 15G109: Medine, 12 and 29 March 1871, Ct. Medine to the Governor.
  
12. They wanted to stop the movement of Futanke who supported Amadu Madiyu, a middle valley Muslim reformer who was causing the French problems in the lower valley.
  
13. Commandants actually imprisoned recruiters who insisted on trying to make the trip. See, for example, ANS 13G171: Bakel, 13 June and 20 October 1871, Ct. Bakel to the Governor.
  
14. ANS 15G109: Medine, 1 August 1871, Ct. Medine to the Governor.
  
15. See, for Amadu Sheku's letter demanding free passage for his envoys, ANS 15G109: 23 September 1871, Ct. Medine to the Governor.
  
16. ANS 15G109: Medine, 11 May 1871, Ct. Medine to the Governor.
  
17. ANS 13G171: Bakel, 30 May 1871, Ct. Bakel to the Governor.
  
18. BN.MO.FA. 5640 fos. 36-37.
  
19. The need to remind Umarians about their obligation to holy war suggests that many soldiers expressed a reluctance to join the campaign against the Bambara.
  
20. ANS 15G109: Medine, 21 November 1871, Ct. Medine to the Governor.
  
21. Another interpretation is that a group of Futanke demanded the release of Habib and Moktar, or planned to assist their escape from Amadu's prison. Since many of Habib and Moktar's most loyal supporters probably fled Karta in early 1871, I favor the interpretations offered in the text.
  
22. M.G. Adam, Légendes historiques du pays de Nioro (Sahel) (Paris, 1904), pp. 110-112; and my interviews with Amadou Ba and El Hadj Sadiku Kaba Jakite in Nioro.
  
23. Initial French reports put Amadu's Segovian force at 15,000 soldiers and 12,000 cavaliers. Amadu's own record of troop strength immediately before the battle of Gemukura puts his military force at 10,000 cavaliers and 12,000 soldiers. See ANS 13G214: Medine, 21 January 1870; and BN.MO.FA. 5713 fo. 143.
  
24. Daye had supported Habib and Moktar to the very end of the revolt, as did Muniru and Daha. In contrast, Bassiru and Muntaga submitted to Amadu well before the conclusion of the revolt.

25. Amadu received a shipment of weapons from the Senegal valley in early February 1872 (28 Dhu al-Qa'da 1288). The battle of Gemukura occurred on the 22nd and 23rd of Dhu al-Hijja 1288. BN.MO.FA. 5713 fo. 4 and 5713 fo. 143. The French first reported the victory in late March. ANS 15G109: Medine, 26 March 1872, Ct. Medine to the Governor; and ANS 13G171: Bakel, 30 March 1872, Ct. Bakel to the Governor.

26. BN.MO.FA. 5640 fos. 29-30, 35, 36-38; 5713 fos. 41, 124.

27. French reports of Amadu's agents in Gidimaxa first appeared in early April, 1872. ANS 13G171: Bakel, 6 April 1872, Ct. Bakel to the Governor.

28. The negotiations continued until late September, 1872. See ANS 13G171: Bakel, 23 September 1872, Ct. Bakel to the Governor.

29. See, for the letters of introduction and a list of demands sent with Fudi Khalila, one of Amadu's agents, BN.MO.FA. 5713 fos. 1, 11, 25. This agent remained in Karta, and assisted Samba Tambo in collecting the gum customs at Medine. See, for example, ANS 15G111: Medine, Copie du registre journal de poste, July 1877.

30. Sékéné-Mody Cissoko discusses the aura surrounding Amadu Sheku and the uncertainty of his intentions from a Xassonke perspective in L'Histoire politique du Khasso dans le Haut-Sénégal (Paris, 1986).

31. See, for the first French reference to Amadu's request that Futanke move to Segou, ANS 15G109: Medine, 1 September 1872, Ct. Medine to the Governor.

32. The name of only one Futanke leader who renounced his opposition to Amadu Sheku is noted in the internal accounts: Cerno Amadu Aly Jeliya Ture. His initial opposition to the request is noted in Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, p. 376. Agibu notes his change of position in his account transmitted by the colonial official A. de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", Bulletin de Comité d'Etudes Historiques et Scientifiques de l'Afrique Occidentale Française 2 (1919), p. 39.

33. Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, pp. 376-378.

34. Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, p. 378.

35. The only extant account of their arguments is reported by Soleillet in Voyage à Ségou, pp. 376-378.

36. Amadu appointed the following brothers: Muntaga at Nioro, Bassiru at Konyakary, Nuru in Jafunu, Daye at Jalla, Seydu at Kanyareme. Daha also was sent west, and resided at Nioro with Muntaga. Some accounts note Murtada's appointment: Soleillet puts him at Kanyareme, and Agibu notes that Murtada resided at Konyakary with Bassiru. Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, pp. 380, 384ff; Adam, Légendes historiques, pp. 112-113; de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", p. 42; ANS 15G109: Medine, 1 July 1874, Copie du registre journal de poste, June, 1874.

37. Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, pp. 380, 384-385; de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", p. 42; Emile Blanc, "Contribution à l'étude des populations et de l'histoire du Sahel soudanais", Bulletin du Comité d'Etudes Historiques et Scientifiques de l'Afrique Occidentale Française 7 (1924), p. 302.

38. Amadu Sheku probably chose Guigné because he wanted to re-construct the circumstances of his initial installation by Shaykh Umar, which had occurred during the march between Karta and Segou. He also wanted to designate Guigné as a major Umarian administrative center and commercial crossroads. Among the visitors to the ceremony was a delegation from Walata. Arabic documents associated with their visit appear in BN.MO.FA. 5713 fos. 46, 50.

39. Yves Saint-Martin, L'Empire toucouleur (Paris, 1970); B.O. Oloruntimehin, Segu Tukulor Empire (London, 1972).

40. According to French reports, the brothers arrived at Nioro in May and Bassiru and Murtada arrived at Konyakary in June. Samba Tambo accompanied the brothers to Konyakary, and made the announcement of their arrival to the commandant at Medine. ANS 15G109: Medine, 1 July 1874, Copie du registre journal de poste: June 1874. The first references to discontent among "the people of Jomboxo" (presumably the non-Futanke populations) appear in the French reports later that year. See, for example, 15G109: Medine, Copie du registre politique: (n.d. - late December, 1874?).

41. David Robinson, The Holy War of Umar Tal (Oxford, 1985), pp. 180-181.

42. Paul Marty, Etudes sur l'Islam et les tribus de soudan, Volume 4 (Paris, 1921), p. 242; my interviews with Amadou Ba and El Hadj Sadiku Kaba Jakite in Nioro.

43. Few historians comment on the causes of the rebellion. Sékéné-Mody Cissoko, who has worked extensively with the oral traditions of the Seronke and also interviewed some Jafununke informants, is at a loss to explain the actions of the Jafununke and the Seronke. Cissoko, "Contribution à l'histoire politique des royaumes du Khasso", Université de Paris, doctorat d'état, 1979, Part VI, Chapter 4.

44. Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, p. 385.

45. Charles Monteil, Les Khassonkés (Paris, 1915), p. 371.

46. Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, p. 356.

47. Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, pp. 385-386.

48. See, for the origins of the rebellion in Sero: Monteil, Les Khassonkés, pp. 370-371; and ANM 1D108: Konyakary, 10 October 1890, "Complement sur le Séro et les maures de Séro", a report by Ct. Valentin, the first French official to reside at Konyakary.

49. The Assykiris are known as the "Askeurs" in the French sources.

50. Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, p. 387-388.
51. Eric Pollet and Grace Winter, La société soninké (Brussels, 1971), p. 70; Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, p. 388.
52. Pollet and Winter, La société soninke, p. 70.
53. Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, p. 388; Pollet and Winter, La société soninké, p. 70.
54. Interview with El Hadj Maeyel Diako at Konyakary on 8 February, 1986.
55. ANS 15G110: Medine, 7 September 1876, Ct. Medine to the Governor.
56. The French actively intervened in upper Senegal valley political affairs beginning in 1877, and moved against Niamody, the Xassonke leader who joined the Umarian alliance in 1874. Oloruntimehin mentions a French report which states that Bassiru did not make the trip to Segou because he was too occupied with the problems in Logo to make the visit. Oloruntimehin, Segu Tukulor Empire, p. 199n2 (ANS 15G111: Medine, 30 October 1877, Ct. Medine to the Governor). See, for an analysis of the "Logo affair", Saint-Martin, L'Empire toucouleur et la France (Dakar, 1967), pp. 201-214; and Cissoko, "Contribution à l'histoire politique des royaumes du Khasso", Part 4, Chapter Four.
57. ANS 15G111: Medine, Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, October and December 1878; de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", p. 42.
58. ANS 15G111: Medine, Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, November 1878.
59. ANS 15G111: Medine, Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, November 1878 and April 1879. Karamakho Tal also argues that it was the Futanke of Karta who resisted Amadu Sheku's requests for military assistance. Interview on 6 March 1986 in Bamako, Mali. See also my argument in note 63 below.
60. ANS 1D57: Medine 23 May, 8 June and 23 June 1880, Ct. Medine to the Governor. Bambara armies had closed the route to safe passage.
61. ANS 1D57: Medine, 8 June 1880, Ct. Medine to the Governor; ANS 1G52: Bakel, 12 June 1880, Dr. Bayol to the Commandant Supérieur. Agibu states that Muntaga feigned making a trip to Segou, but then turned back at Dina. I offer an interpretation of that passage which emphasizes its metaphorical value in note 63 below. With such a reading of Agibu, I reconcile the external and internal perspectives. See, for Agibu's testimony, de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", p. 42.
62. Internal accounts assert that Muntaga's failure to visit Segou was the event which prompted Amadu to march on Nioro and confront his younger brother in 1885.

63. Amadu Sheku's supporters often wrote to Segu describing Cerno Mamadu Khayar's activities in Nioro. Although none of the letters are dated, I argue from internal evidence that two of the letters were written in 1880: they focus singularly on his resistance to fulfilling Amadu's requests for military assistance. Subsequent letters describe both Muntaga's and Cerno Mamadu's resistance to Amadu. If the two letters were written after the open break between Muntaga and Amadu Sheku, then Muntaga's disobedience would have figured in the complaints as well. See, for the letters from 1880, BN.MO.FA. 5680 fo. 157; 5737 fo. 50.

Agibu Tal recounts a tradition in which Muntaga leaves Nioro for Segu only to return after stopping at Dina (a town on the Nioro-Segu route). This tradition captures in a symbolic form the internal conflict in Nioro in 1880: Muntaga was pushed and pulled from all sides, and finally decided not to make the trip after initially deciding to march. If this reading of the tradition is accurate, then it reinforces the role of Cerno Mamadu Khayar in rallying the Futanke against the trip. Agibu later refers to Cerno Mamadu, revealing his knowledge of Cerno Mamadu's prominence in Nioro. de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", p. 42.

64. Well over a thousand Fulbe from the lower Senegal valley arrived in Nioro between 1878 and 1880. The migration in 1878 was so large that the Governor of Senegal ordered a study of the migration flow. The French concluded that most migrants were young men who migrated to fight in the holy wars of Umar's sons. See ANF.SOM SEN.I 61c: Saint Louis, 22 March and 5 June 1878, Governor to the Minister; ANS 1D73: Kayes, 31 October 1883, Ct. Sup. to the Governor; ANS 15G126: Kita, 29 April 1884, Ct. Kita to Ct. Sup.

65. Agibu Tal notes the brothers objections to Amadu's excessive demands for taxes and tribute. de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", p. 42.

66. ANS 15G110: Medine, 7 September 1876, Ct. Medine to the Governor.

67. ANF.SOM SEN.I 61c: Saint Louis, 22 August 1877, Governor to the Minister. Soleillet argues that Amadu Sheku designated Madani as his successor in 1874, during the residence of the other Tal brothers.

68. Agibu's account has Muntaga at Dina, a stop on the route to Segu, when Amadu hears of Muntaga's decision and orders the residents of Dina to kill Muntaga before he left the town. de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", p. 42. Since Muntaga probably never made a move toward Segu, and led a campaign into the southern marches of Karta instead, then the assassination attempt must have occurred elsewhere. French reports of Amadu's intent to assassinate Muntaga upon his arrival in Segu circulated in Medine in 1880. See, for the rumors, Oloruntimehin, *Segu Tukulor Empire*, p.260n1 (reference to ANS 15G112: Medine, 1 July 1880, Copie de registre journal de poste, June, 1880). See, for the internal account of Amadu's assassination attempt, de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", p. 42.

69. See reference to French reports cited by Oloruntimehin in note 68 above.

70. de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", pp. 42-43. Unfortunately, Amadu's letter has not yet surfaced in my investigation of the Arabic materials from Nioro.

71. Agibu refers specifically to the letter in his account. A letter from Cerno Mamadu Khayar to Amadu Sheku appears in BN.MO.FA. 5737 fo. 57.

Cerno Mamadu Khayar wrote another letter to Segu which describes his view of the growing conflict between Amadu Sheku and Muntaga. Neither this letter nor the previously described letter is dated, preventing definitive statements regarding the dates of composition. Cerno Mamadu addressed the second letter to a friend in Segu, and implied that Muntaga had forbidden direct correspondence with Amadu Sheku. This reference, as well as his open discussion of the conflict between the brothers, suggests that this letter was written some time after the first letter. BN.MO.FA. 5737 fo. 62.

Cerno Mamadu situates his obligation to Amadu Sheku within a hierarchy of commitments ascending from Muntaga through Amadu Sheku to Umar Tal, who in turn is Ahmad al-Tijani's representative. Cerno Mamadu traces the link to a religious movement and ultimately to the Prophet Muhammad.

72. ANF.SOM SEN.IV 79bis: Saint Louis, 8 August 1884, "Rapport du Campagne, 1883-84".

73. Kanya-Forstner, The Conquest of the Western Sudan, p. 80.

74. Kanya-Forstner, The Conquest of the Western Sudan, p. 58n5.

75. See, for the Logo affair, Kanya-Forstner, The Conquest of the Western Sudan; Saint-Martin, L'Empire toucouleur; Oloruntimehin, The Segu Tukolor Empire.

76. ANF.SOM SEN I.61c: Saint Louis, 5 June 1878, Governor to the Minister.

77. Murgula was constructed in 1858 after the conquest of the region. Alfa Uthman So, the first leader of Murgula, was a recruit from Futa Jallon, and many residents of Murgula hailed from Futa Jallon. Alfa Uthman later joined Umar's conquest of Segu and Masina, and Abdullay, a former slave of Umar Tal, assumed control of Murgula. See, for Alfa Uthman So's career as an Umarian general, Robinson, The Holy War of Umar Tal, pp. 251-255, 307-308.

78. See, for Borgnis-Desbordes' statement of his accomplishments, ANS 1D64: "Rapport sur la campagne, 1881-82". He established provision stores, several resthouses and began construction of a telegraph line.

79. ANS 1D62: Medine, 2 December 1881, Ct. Medine to Ct. Supérieur; and Kayes, 4 December 1881, Ct. Supérieur to the Governor.

80. ANS 1D62: Kayes, 23 November 1881, Ct. Supérieur to the Governor. The French advance into the interior stalled in 1881-82, and Borgnis-Desbordes placed much of the blame on Bassiru's embargo. ANS 1D62: Kayes, 4 December 1881, Ct. Supérieur to the Governor; and ANS 1D68:

81. 15G113: Medine, Copie de registre journal de poste, February 1882.

82. ANS 15G113: Medine, Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, March 1882.

83. ANS 1D62: Kita, 18 November and 6 December 1881, Ct. Kita to the Ct. Supérieur.

84. ANS 1D62: Kita, 17 September and 6 December 1881, Ct. Kita to the Ct. Supérieur.

85. The only reference to the content of Amadu Sheku's orders regarding the French advance comes from 1883. A Futanke envoy whom the French sent to live with relatives in Nioro reported that he was present for a public reading of a letter from Amadu Sheku to Muntaga. According to the Futanke envoy, Amadu Sheku's letter prohibited any attacks on the French without his specific instructions, and repeated his annual call for troops to fight the Bambara along the Nioro-Segu road. ANS 1D73: Kayes, 4 October 1883, "Renseignements donnés par le nommé Abdoul Lamine envoyé en mission à Nioro".

86. See, for a French description of Murgula in 1879, Joseph Gallieni, Voyage au Soudan français. Haut-Niger et pays de Ségou, 1879-1880 (Paris, 1885), p. 287.

87. ANS 1D69: "Rapport sur la campagne, 1882-83". Borgnis-Desbordes sent the letter on 23 February 1883. He was aware of the fraternal conflict. See ANS 1D62: Kita, 6 December 1881, Ct. Kita to the Ct. Supérieur.

88. I have not yet found Muntaga's original Arabic letter in the French materials. Nor does the initial French translation of the original appear in the Commandant Supérieur's register of correspondence (ANS 15G141: pièce 650 is the "Sommaire de correspondance"). Thus, I draw on Borgnis-Desbordes' own description of the content of the letter in his annual report on the military campaign in the Western Sudan. ANS 1D69: "Rapport sur la campagne, 1882-83". Muntaga's letter arrived by envoy at Kita on 4 April 1883.

89. See Chapter One, pp. 3-4 and notes 7 and 8 for details.

90. Muntaga's letter to the Ct. Supérieur arrived at Kita in April, 1884. ANS 15G141: pièce 110. See, for the initial French reaction to Muntaga's letter, ANS 15G126: Kita, 10 April, 1884, Ct. Kita to the Ct. Supérieur.

91. Muntaga was not the only contemporaneous actor or observer to note the division of Futanke political groups into "peace" and "war" factions: Amadu Sheku and Abdul Lamine, a Futanke from Kayes whom the French sent to Nioro in 1883 to stay with his relatives and gather information on Umarian political activity, also make the same observations. See, for Amadu's assessment, ANS 15G68 (Chemise spéciale): pièce h. Internal evidence in this undated letter suggests that Amadu wrote it at Nyamina in mid-1884. Amadu's description of the divisions are based on information from his supporters in Nioro. Abdul Lamine's assessment appears in a French report in ANS 1D73: Kayes, 4 October 1883, "Renseignements donnés par le nommé Abdoul Lamine envoyé en mission à Nioro".



92. Amadu, a Futanke smith from Kayes whom the French sent to gather information in Nioro in September 1883, states that it was Cerno Mamadu Khayar's influence that prevented Muntaga from attacking the French after the Murgula affair. ANS 1D73: Kayes, 13 October 1883, Ct. Superieur to the Governor. Most of the information regarding Cerno Mamadu's political positions which appears in the text comes from 1883; I assume that his opinions did not change radically from 1882 to 1883.

93. A Jawaando from Kingi whom the French stopped in Kayes as he passed to the Senegal valley provides this assessment of Cerno Mamadu's objections to Muntaga's campaigns. He adds that Cerno Mamadu long has been against the military activities of Muntaga, and that many notables and young men listen to his counsel. ANS 1D73: Kayes, 31 October 1883, Ct. Superieur to the Governor.

94. This statement was made in October, 1883, according to Abdoul Lamine's testimony. ANS 1D73: Kayes, 4 October 1883, "Renseignements donnés par le nommé Abdoul Lamine envoyé en mission à Nioro".

95. This assessment of the social groups supporting a "peace" perspective in Nioro is offered by Abdul Lamine, the Futanke spy from Kayes whom I discuss in note 89 above. ANS 1D73: Kayes, 4 October 1883, "Renseignements donnés par le nommé Abdoul Lamine envoyé en mission à Nioro".

96. ANS 1D73: Kayes, 4 October 1883, "Renseignements donnés par le nommé Abdoul Lamine envoyé en mission à Nioro".

97. The Commandant at Kita noted a group of "young Futanke" who came very close to the French position and seemed to want to provoke a confrontation. ANS 15G126: Kita, 29 April 1884, Ct. Kita to the Ct. Superieur.

98. ANS 1D73: Kayes, 4 October 1883, "Renseignements donnés par le nommé Abdoul Lamine envoyé en mission à Nioro".

99. ANS 1D68: Kayes, 3 July 1883: Ct. Superieur to the Governor. This French report also notes Muntaga's desire to replace Amadu Moktar with Daha in Konyakary.

100. ANS 1D73: Kayes, 4 October 1883, "Renseignements donnés par le nommé Abdoul Lamine envoyé en mission à Nioro".

101. Amadu Moktar of Konyakary wrote the French to ensure the safe passage of this caravan. His Arabic letter is filed in ANS 1D68: pièce 662. A rough French translation of the letter appears in the same dossier: Kayes, 2 July 1883, Ct. Superieur to the Governor.

102. Several informants provided the French with information on the Malik Samba-Demba Ibrahim conflict. ANS 1D73: Badumbe, 12 September 1883, Ct. Badumbe to the Acting Ct. Superieur; Kayes, 4 October 1883, "Renseignements donnés par le nommé Abdoul Lamine envoyé en mission à Nioro". Demba wrote several letters to Amadu. The letter describing Malik Samba's challenge and Demba's fears is ANS 15G78: pièce 92.

103. ANS 1D73: Kayes, 4 October 1883, "Renseignements donnés par le nommé Abdoul Lamine envoyé en mission à Nioro"; and Badumbe, 12 September 1883, Ct. Badumbe to the Acting Ct. Superieur.

104. Amadu's plans were not secret, as the following account repeated in Nioro during September 1883 attests: when Amadu asked the Futanke of Segu to march with him to Nioro, they responded enthusiastically, saying, "We will march to Gidimaxa if it pleases God". This account is from the testimony of Amadu, a Futanke smith whom the French sent to Nioro to gather information. ANS 1D73: Kayes, 13 October 1883, Ct. Superieur to the Governor.

105. The testimony of Amadu, the Futanke smith, who was in Nioro at the time of Cerno Mamadu's refusal to accept the gifts. ANS 1D73: Kayes, 13 October 1883, Ct. Superieur to the Governor.

## CHAPTER NINE

### The Siege of Nioro

Amadu Sheku told his supporters, "Do not blame me for what has occurred [here in Nioro]. I came here so that my brother could join me in attacking [the Bambara of] Beledugu and then in going on against the French. Instead, my brother Muntaga has been found to be an enemy who prevents me from pursuing these projects. He forces me to stay in Nioro where I must either vanquish him or join him. [Have patience, my loyal followers], one never knows exactly when a pregnant woman will deliver her child, but one knows that the day approaches soon."<sup>1</sup>

Muntaga loudly proclaimed: "it will take either a great Muslim leader or a great Christian general to make me leave this fort."<sup>2</sup>

For close to nine months during 1885, Amadu Sheku put Muntaga under siege in the fort at Nioro. Amadu wanted his younger brother to leave the fort and submit to his authority without a struggle. Muntaga suspected that his older brother was going to imprison him for not fulfilling requests for tribute and military service, and decided to test Amadu's resolve by remaining in the fort. As Amadu waited, he came into conflict with Cerno Mamadu Khayar, and eventually ordered his execution. Falel, the leader of the Fulbe Wolaarbe, also died in a confrontation with Amadu's troops. The siege ended when Muntaga and a few supporters closed themselves in a room of the fort and ignited a large amount of gunpowder, killing themselves before Amadu's soldiers could

take them captive. As with the conclusion to the revolt of Habib and Moktar, Amadu's victory eroded support for Amadu among the Futanke of Karta.

Oral historians in western Mali celebrate the siege of Nioro as a central event of the late nineteenth century. They narrate lengthy accounts of the siege in which the death of Muntaga is the heroic culmination of a dramatic fraternal struggle. In striking contrast, literate historians working with French-mediated materials largely neglect the political drama, viewing the siege as a minor event which further weakened the imperial Umarian state on the eve of the French conquest of the Western Sudan. The failure to appreciate the importance of the siege reflects the historiographical emphasis on Franco-Umarian relations and the lack of interest in internal political developments in Karta. The siege reveals the central tensions within the Umarian community, and provides an opportunity to analyze the diversity of perspectives, goals and interests associated with the Umarian consolidation of power in Karta.

Historians can make an important contribution to the historiographical tradition pioneered by local historians. Written materials in Arabic and French were produced contemporaneously with the revolt. The written and oral materials complement one another quite well, and provide a firm basis for a comprehensive reconstruction of the revolt. The abundance and quality of these materials contrasts, for example, with the sources for the earlier revolt of Habib and Moktar. The difference relates both to the altered nature of the French presence in the late nineteenth century and the historical experience of the Futanke community after the revolt. During the 1880s, the French were very interested in political challenges to Amadu Sheku and collected information from a range of informants about Muntaga's revolt. After the French conquest, the removal of the Tal family from political office created conditions whereby

the Futanke community could discuss the revolt without directly challenging the position of any Tal brother. Additionally, the process of examining the past produced an Arabic chronicle of the revolt, a development which did not occur for the earlier revolt. Many perspectives, therefore, are available in both oral and written materials. The goals of this chapter are to review the data and then reconstruct and analyze the revolt.

### Source materials

The source materials for the reconstruction of Muntaga's revolt include detailed reports generated by French officials in the Western Sudan. The commandants at Medine obtained information from envoys whom they sent to Nioro and Konyakary, from merchants who traded at Medine, and from their Xassonke clients who passed along data gathered by their informants. The commandants at Kita obtained most of their information from merchants who stopped at the post on their trips between Nioro and the markets of the southern savanna. At Kita, too, the commandant corresponded with Daha, another brother of Amadu Sheku who supported Muntaga's revolt, and several Soninke leaders who eventually joined Daha in his battle with Amadu's forces at Lambidu in 1886.<sup>3</sup> Also, Commandant Supérieurs Combes and Frey gathered and analyzed oral data about events in Karta during their tenures at the helm of the French campaign in the Western Sudan.<sup>4</sup>

The quality of information in the reports of the French commandants at Medine and Kita varies considerably, linked to such factors as the experience and interests of both the informant and the French official. Many informants passed along second-hand testimony which they adeptly shaped to conform to

their own interests or to reinforce the opinions of the French. Valuable first-hand accounts, however, were provided by Moorish gum merchants who had stopped at Nioro on their way to Medine. Several envoys who had relatives at Nioro and resided with them for several weeks also supplied informed accounts of events in Nioro, and passed along the opinions of their relatives and local notables. The French often noted the name of the informant in their reports, so the historian can assess the information on its own terms.

Commandant Supérieurs Combes and Frey provide valuable assessments of the political conflict. They consciously used data about the revolt to lobby for their policy views, but their bias is overt and predictable. Both Combes and Frey perceived Amadu Sheku as their main rival, and presented information which portrayed him an unfavorable light.<sup>5</sup> In Combes' favor was his sensitivity to the internal tensions within the Futanke community; he had served several years at Medine prior to his promotion and his reports were written in the field during the first months of 1885. Frey wrote his account a few years after the conclusion of the revolt, and offers a coherent narrative of the siege. He relied on contemporaneous oral information, but he does not reveal the sources of information nor his methods of data collection. Frey's account is the first external narrative of the revolt, and its detail and chronology must be set into a context in which the motivations and goals of the political actors inform the analysis.

Arabic materials are less extensive than the French materials, but add important internal perspectives and evidence which are not contained in other sources. Perhaps most importantly, the Arabic materials include letters written by Cerno Mamadu Khayar. In many oral and written accounts of the siege of Nioro, Cerno Mamadu emerges as a loyal supporter of Muntaga; critical analysis

of his correspondence and other source materials adds complexity to his character, and situates his actions within a larger historical context of resistance to the military policies of both Amadu Sheku and Muntaga.<sup>6</sup> Also included in the Arabic materials are some of the letters exchanged between Amadu and his supporters on the eve of the siege.<sup>7</sup>

The Arabic materials include a chronicle of Amadu Sheku's reign which contains a brief account of the siege of Nioro. The chronicle was completed by a member of the Kaba Jakite family of Nioro sometime prior to the end of the nineteenth century. Maurice Delafosse and Colonel M.G. Adam each published translations of the chronicle in the early colonial period. Neither Delafosse nor Adam included the original text in the publication, nor has an Arabic copy surfaced in the archives or in private libraries of western Mali. Delafosse's translation is more faithful to the original than Adam's account; the latter consistently inserted oral reminiscences and editorial comments into the Kaba Jakite narrative. Close textual analysis of the two translations reveals that Adam may have dropped passages of the chronicle in order to include detailed reminiscences of events not described in the Kaba Jakite text. As a result, and in the absence of the original, I will treat the Delafosse translation as a reliable version of the Kaba Jakite chronicle, and analyze Adam's work as a composite account of the revolt.

The Kaba Jakite chronicle recounts the siege quite briefly, and locates it between Amadu Sheku's military campaigns in Segou and his subsequent actions against the followers of Mamadu Lamine in Jafunu and Gidimaxa. In the brevity of the treatment as well as in the narrative itself, the chronicle adopts a sympathetic posture toward Amadu Sheku's handling of the conflict. The Kaba Jakite account never mentions Muntaga's grievances against Amadu, and focuses

instead on his refusals to meet with his older brother. In essence, the chronicle narrates a story of Muntaga's intransigence which culminates in his decision to kill himself instead of submitting to Amadu's authority. The section on the siege ends by noting that Amadu took great care in giving his dissident brother a proper burial.

Despite an overt sympathy for the Amadu Sheku's dilemma, the Kaba Jakite chronicle was not necessarily composed under Amadu's direct supervision at Nioro. Rather, it is more likely that the Kaba Jakite chronicler completed the sections on Muntaga's revolt after Amadu had left Nioro on his hijra. Evidence for such a view is that the Kaba Jakite text ends with an account of the French advance on Nioro, an episode which certainly was added after the conquest. While the earlier sections of the Kaba Jakite chronicle may have been written under the patronage of Amadu, it is reasonable to conclude that Amadu did not commission a narrative of the revolt. Thus, Kaba Jakite sympathy for Amadu points to a tradition of active support for him in the post-conquest period. Since such expressions of complete sympathy are uncommon in the oral historiography of the Nioro area, the Kaba Jakite text is important both as a source and as a reference to what groups had joined Amadu's coalition during and after the revolt.

Colonel Adam's text also adds oral reminiscences from the Nioro area in the late nineteenth century. Adam served in Nioro during the early colonial period, and probably gathered the oral data during the course of his duties. Unfortunately, Adam does not note the process of data collection, the names of his informants nor his procedure for selecting which oral reminiscences would be inserted in the core narrative of the chronicle. He clearly included the views of Muntaga's supporters; the account is filled with vignettes which



emphasize Muntaga's desire to compromise in the face of Amadu's insistence that Muntaga be removed from power. It also concludes with an emphasis on Muntaga's "heroic" death. Finally, Adam's account mentions the role assumed by the Futanke notable Cerno Mamadu Khayar, whom Amadu executed for treason. This story as well as many others which focus on Futanke resistance to Amadu Sheku suggest that Adam spoke with Futanke informants who overtly supported the revolt against Amadu Sheku.

While Adam may have consulted informants who supported Muntaga's revolt, one cannot conclude that his account represents a coherent oral tradition which was articulated in the region at the time. It is Adam who juxtaposes the oral testimony and the narrative in the Arabic chronicle for a literate audience in France; he seems to have emphasized the contrasting perspectives to accentuate the fraternal conflict.<sup>8</sup> The absence of information about Adam's methods of data collection cautions against making conclusions about the state of the oral historiography in Nioro at that time. Thus, while his account presents some of the views expressed in the internal dialogue, it remains his personal synthesis of selected reminiscences.

Emile Blanc, another French colonial official, subsequently collected oral reminiscences about the revolt in the Nioro area during the early twentieth century. Blanc gathered traditions about the precolonial era from various groups in Karta, and his work includes an account of Muntaga's revolt outside the framework of a complete history of the Umarian era, as the Kaba Jakite chronicle attempted to provide. While he occasionally mentions the names of some of his informants in the text, Blanc fails to provide an adequate basis for assessing the social bases of information. Given his broad canvassing of opinion, Blanc may include the views of Soninke communities in southern Karta

as well as the perspectives of the Futanke community in Kingi. As with Adam before him, Blanc edited and summarized his material. His account leaves some traces of the internal debate but remains primarily an external synthesis of the data.

Blanc's account nevertheless provides clues to the process of historical reconstruction and debate in the Nioro area. He notes, for example, that Samba Altine Ba of Koriga was an informant who argued against the views of those who doubted the sincerity of Amadu Sheku's motivations *vis-à-vis* Muntaga. While he does not state who provided the other perspective, one is forced to conclude that Samba Ba represented a minority opinion on the revolt, given that a sympathetic portrait of Muntaga informs most of Blanc's account of the revolt. Blanc's sense of the major emphases of the Futanke community and Adam's earlier inclusion of testimony from Muntaga's supporters suggest quite strongly that the Futanke community in the Nioro area had begun to create an historical narrative which made Muntaga and not Commander of the Faithful Amadu Sheku the historical figure who symbolized the Umarian community's former position of dominance in the region.

In the early twentieth century, A. de Loppinot, a French official who served in Masina, collected and translated the reminiscences of Agibu Tal, a son of Shaykh Umar who was the leader at Dingiray at the time of the siege and whom the French placed in command at Bandiagara. In contrast to the works of Adam and Blanc, de Loppinot's account is a transmission of the oral reminiscences of one informant, and de Loppinot seems to have been faithful to that task. While Agibu's testimony certainly expressed his own feelings about the revolt, the references to so many episodes in his account and the diversity

of views implicit in the episodes suggests that Agibu was informed and influenced by the reminiscences of many others.

Agibu's testimony probably reflects the emerging internal assessment of the revolt as it was being created at Bandiagara. There the remnants of the Tal family gathered under the protection of Agibu and tried to make sense of the events of the last years of Amadu's reign. Agibu reveals sympathy for and intimate details of Muntaga's complaints against Amadu Sheku; he also recounts the exploits of Amadu's army as it travelled from Segou to Nioro, and as they put the fort of Nioro under siege. Neither Amadu nor Muntaga escaped criticism in Agibu's account. Although most of the blame fell on Amadu, the actions of Muntaga are not portrayed as heroic. Agibu's account incorporates a wide spectrum of opinion.

By the early colonial period, then, the collective assessment of Muntaga's revolt had begun, and the internal dialogue had not produced a single narrative tradition of the political drama. At Bandiagara, far removed from the scene of the revolt, an account had emerged which included a range of perspectives, and criticized the actions of both Amadu Sheku and Muntaga. In Nioro, the internal debate seems to have been more heated, and a general consensus had not emerged. On the one hand, supporters of Amadu Sheku, such as the Kaba Jakite family and Samba Altine Ba, felt that the tragic conclusion to the siege was the result of Muntaga's intransigence. On the other hand, Muntaga's supporters saw their former leader as a martyr for the cause of local autonomy, and celebrated the actions of other Futanke who had joined in the resistance to Amadu Sheku. Even though the latter group may have been in the majority, the process was open to public discussion and neither group seemed capable of imposing their opinions on the other.

As I embarked on field research in the Nioro area in 1986, I was quite interested to discover whether a consensus of opinion had emerged, or whether two strands of opinion still divided the community some one hundred years after the revolt. I was initially discouraged to find that many informants expressed a reluctance to speak openly about any aspect of Muntaga's reign. Those who eventually agreed to talk usually refused to have the session taped.<sup>9</sup> In most cases in which informants refused to discuss the history of Muntaga's reign, they would refer me to Cerno Hadi Tal of Nioro, the religious leader of the Umarian Tijaniyya community in western Mali. Cerno Hadi is Muntaga's grandson, and his reputation for Islamic learning combine with his descent from Muntaga to create, in the minds and hearts of most Futanke, the ideal expression of religious leadership for their community. An historical tradition repeated widely in western Mali captures the current sentiments accurately: Shaykh Umar appointed Muntaga as the first governor of Nioro, and Cerno Hadi's return to Nioro in the 1950s was the fulfillment of the Shaykh Umar's dreams for the region.

Oral traditions concerning Muntaga's revolt collected in contemporary western Mali, therefore, must be assessed with an eye to the influence of Cerno Hadi's reputation. Since Cerno Hadi's arrival to Nioro from Futa Toro, he has consolidated support among the Futanke of western Mali. Annually, members of Cerno Hadi's family visit his followers to collect a tenth of their harvests or commercial profits. They willingly contribute because Cerno Hadi's emergence as a religious leader fills the void created by Muntaga's death and the French conquest.<sup>10</sup> While history enhances Cerno Hadi's credentials, his status as their current leader in turn alters Futanke perceptions of his grandfather's era. Indeed, the religious ideals of the current Futanke community, as articulated by

Cerno Hadi, inform the process of creating a standard tradition of Muntaga's revolt.

For example, even those informants who talk about the revolt are reluctant to discuss the details of Muntaga's death.<sup>11</sup> Those who do talk about Muntaga's death usually emphasize the role of Farangelli, Muntaga's griot, who reportedly first suggested suicide as a means of ending the drama and then ignited the gunpowder on the fateful day.<sup>12</sup> This transfer of responsibility from Muntaga to his griot contrasts with the emphasis on Muntaga's purposeful and decisive action which dominates the narrative in earlier traditions. This change of emphasis probably reflects current concern for the stigma associated with suicide in the Muslim faith. Another informant added that Muntaga's body, after being thrown and landing hundreds of meters from the fort, was found to have no blemishes - a sign that Muntaga had ascended into heaven as a Muslim saint. This interest in Muntaga's religious status, and the general ambiguity regarding Muntaga's decision to take his own life, suggests that current sensibilities regarding Muslim beliefs have influenced the traditions of Muntaga's revolt. His decision to take his own life, an act which previously was celebrated as a heroic expression of his resistance to Amadu, has less significance than Muntaga's status as a devout Muslim leader.

Despite such alterations in the oral record, and the reluctance among informants to recount the history of the revolt, persistent fieldwork has added oral traditions to the historical record. Several researchers besides myself have collected oral information in western Mali. During the mid-1970s, David Robinson sought oral traditions of Umar's holy war, and collected some reminiscences of the siege of Nioro from members of the Tal family at Kayes and at Bandiagara. Abdoul Aziz Diallo, a great grandson of an important

ferganke leader, collected oral traditions among the immigrant Fulbe in the Nioro area during 1979 and again in the early 1980s. Oudiary Makan Dantioko gathered some oral traditions on the siege from oral historians in Balle. Robinson, Diallo and Dantioko allowed me to consult their oral materials.

These recently-collected oral accounts show signs of the process whereby a standard historical tradition emerges from numerous oral reminiscences.<sup>13</sup> For example, informants often telescope the siege of Nioro into a confrontation which lasted four days instead of nine months.<sup>14</sup> "One day" clearly marks the passage of an episode in the nine month drama, and is a device which helps the informant remember the past. The use of "days" instead of "weeks" or "months" to mark time, however, excludes many episodes from the oral account because it enshrines only four among many possible sub-plots for commitment to memory. When I asked informants about the length of the siege, most acknowledged that the ordeal lasted much longer than four days. Although these informants did not mention episodes which they chose not to include, it is clear that some reminiscences are being excluded from the standard account of the revolt.<sup>15</sup>

The shortened chronology narrates Amadu Sheku's arrival from Segu, the execution of Cerno Mamadu Khayar, the death of Falel (a Fulbe Wodaabe leader and one of Muntaga's closest allies who died while fighting Amadu's forces during the siege of Nioro) and Muntaga's suicide. This narrative structure is not evident in the earlier accounts, but had its origins in the late nineteenth century. According to a French envoy who visited Nioro in May, 1885, a Futanke notable stood up at a gathering of Nioranke and chastised Amadu Sheku for his siege of Muntaga, his execution of Cerno Mamadu and his proposed military action against Falel. The Futanke reportedly argued that Amadu Sheku's herd included only three bulls, Muntaga, Mamadu and Falel, and

that his actions had begun to decimate the herd.<sup>16</sup> While current oral accounts do not adopt the analogy of the herd to describe the local leadership of Nioro at the time of the revolt, they focus on the same three leaders and implicitly express the late nineteenth century criticism of Amadu's actions.

Despite the implicit criticism of Amadu Sheku in the narrative structure of these oral accounts of the revolt, the informants themselves did not draw such judgments or conclusions from the story. Most notably, those who narrated the history of the revolt for Diallo identified their ancestors as supporters of Amadu Sheku who joined his expedition against Falel. While the informants of the 1980's no longer view themselves in terms of the political divisions of the late nineteenth century, their historical traditions reflect a pro-Muntaga position on the revolt. Sometime between the early twentieth century inquiries of Adam and Blanc, and the field investigations of Diallo and myself, the two strands of opinion merged and the perspectives of Muntaga's supporters won over the views of Amadu's supporters. Whether Cerno Hadi's arrival played a role in the process is unclear; his presence may further encourage a consolidation of the account to minimize Muntaga's suicide.

This overview of the oral accounts from the Nioro area does not diminish their importance for the historian of the siege of Nioro. The identification of the social and political bases of the oral data serves to facilitate its use for the reconstruction of the past. As a result of such an analysis, additions to the oral record may be more easily recognized, and interpretive traditions within the oral historiography can be separated and assessed. An understanding of the emergence of current historical perspectives in the Nioro area helps to locate the present attempt to reconstruct the siege within an on-going and vital tradition of inquiry and analysis. My findings will diverge from those of

previous historians, both oral and literate, but my work clearly builds upon the firm historiographical tradition established by local historians.

### Amadu Sheku's march to Nioro

The events which immediately preceded Amadu Sheku's siege of the fort at Nioro are not reported very completely in the extant sources. Most oral accounts condense the years prior to Amadu's arrival in Kingi into a short narrative: Muntaga defied Amadu Sheku by not visiting him at Segu and Amadu responded by marching to confront him at Nioro.<sup>17</sup> Some Arabic letters written in 1884 survive, but they do not shed much light on the activities of the principal actors.<sup>18</sup> French reports also add very little information: the Medine materials for 1884 largely have been lost or misfiled in the archives, and other materials do not compensate adequately for the loss.<sup>19</sup> Nonetheless, the major events of 1884 - Amadu's march to Nioro, Muntaga's preparations for his brother's arrival, and their meeting at Bassaga, a village in Bakunu - have left traces in the data, and the outline of the year emerges fairly clearly.

Amadu Sheku left Segu for Nioro in early 1884. The route to Nioro was not free from Bambara raids, and the French position on the Niger River at Bamako exposed the western flank of the Segovian state to attack. The movement of Samori Ture's army into the savanna south of Segu also posed a potential threat to Segu. In addition to these developments, Amadu was in the unenviable position of having to return to Karta and confront his younger brothers after the embarrassing conclusion to the revolt of Habib and Moktar. Amadu felt, however, that he needed to unite the Umarian community under his leadership if they were to have any chance against their external enemies. His



closest advisors also pushed him to make the trip, and Amadu redistributed a large quantity of gold from the state treasury to recruit them for the campaign.<sup>20</sup> Given the threats posed by the Bambara, the French and Samori's troops, Amadu had to leave a sizable army in Segou, and entrusted its command to Madani, his oldest son. After handing the reigns of power to Madani, Amadu marched to the west with a force which probably numbered about ten thousand men.<sup>21</sup>

Amadu and his forces travelled from Segou to Nyamina, the last Futanke garrison of the middle Niger valley. They remained at this garrison for much of 1884 because of insecurity along the Nioro-Segou route. While Amadu waited at Nyamina, his army clashed with some Bambara forces which operated in the western marches of Segou, and Amadu lost several generals and a considerable number of men.<sup>22</sup> Despite these losses, Amadu remained committed to the march to Nioro and planned an alternate route to Nioro so as to avoid the Bambara general N'To, whose troops assembled near Nyamina for a major offensive against the Umarians.<sup>23</sup> Since the Bambara threat had grown in seriousness in part because Segovian requests for assistance from the Futanke of Karta had been refused, Amadu's anger with Muntaga and his Futanke supporters must have increased. Nevertheless, Amadu wrote to some of his supporters in Kingi during this period and expressed his hope that his arrival in Karta would lead to an amicable solution to the political disagreement with Muntaga and the Futanke of Karta.<sup>24</sup> He reminded his followers that all Umarians were Muslims, and that the Christian French were the enemies of Islam.

While Amadu Sheku resided at Nyamina, Muntaga countered Amadu's earlier moves at Jalla and Konyakary by removing Amadu Moktar Njay as the leader of

Farabugu.<sup>25</sup> Muntaga feared that, if Amadu Sheku attacked him from the east, Demba Ibrahim of Jalla and Amadu Moktar of Farabugu would join the assault from the south. Muntaga also knew that Amadu Moktar of Konyakary would not come to his assistance because he represented the "peace" faction of Nioro and because Amadu had appointed him leader at Konyakary in 1882. Muntaga decided to move against Amadu Moktar of Farabugu since he did not command many Futanke and was open to attack. His taxation policies also had engendered considerable local animosity toward his leadership.<sup>26</sup> Daha, Muntaga's half-brother who resided at Nioro, was eager to lead the attack, recruited a force of Futanke and Soninke soldiers and easily defeated Amadu Moktar sometime in 1884.<sup>27</sup> Daha then consolidated his position in southwest Karta as a first step toward moving against Demba Ibrahim at Jalla.

The Futanke community of Kingi largely supported Muntaga's actions. His most fervent supporters used reports of Amadu Sheku's impending march to Nioro to stir memories of Amadu's earlier residence in Nioro and his harsh treatment of Habib and Moktar. Amadu's arrival also was a direct challenge to their desire for autonomy, for the Futanke knew that he would demand that they fight against the Bambara and move to Segu with him. Cerno Mamadu Khayar remained a spokesman for Kartan autonomy, and was joined by a leading member of the "war" faction, Cerno Bokar Sammolde.<sup>28</sup> While Cerno Mamadu had opposed Muntaga's actions against Demba Ibrahim in 1883, he now knew that Amadu's march to Nioro would force a confrontation in Karta. The desire for autonomy from Amadu's imperial demands swung most of the Futanke of Karta behind Muntaga as he faced the challenge of Amadu's arrival from the east.

Amadu Sheku responded to Muntaga's initiative at Farabugu by sending Bassiru back to Konyakary to recruit an army of Futanke in Jomboxo and join him when he arrived in Karta.<sup>29</sup> Bassiru probably accompanied Amadu Sheku to Nyamina and then made his way to Konyakary in a small caravan along a southern route which avoided the main Bambara forces.<sup>30</sup> Bassiru's return to Jomboxo angered Amadu Moktar and his supporters.<sup>31</sup> Futanke who had arrived recently in Jomboxo, however, rallied around Bassiru's leadership in hopes of a return to the wars and raids of the past. Amadu Sheku's decision to send Bassiru to Konyakary, therefore, heightened the divisions within the Futanke community of Jomboxo on the eve of Amadu's return.

Amadu Sheku and his Segovian army made their way from Nyamina to Karta in late 1884.<sup>32</sup> They camped at Bassaga, a village in Bakunu, well to the east of Nioro. From Bassaga, Amadu sent word to Nioro that he expected his brothers to come with troops to mount a campaign against the Bambara. Most oral accounts present Amadu's motivations in sinister terms: he wanted to lure Muntaga from Nioro either to assassinate or imprison him.<sup>33</sup> An assassination of Muntaga made no sense from Amadu's perspective, since he wanted to forge a united front against the Bambara and the French. The letter that he wrote at Nyamina in 1884 suggests that he had adopted a conciliatory approach toward Muntaga, and Bassiru's return to Konyakary suggests that Amadu planned to include his brothers in the campaign. Amadu's call for the renewal of the holy war from Bassaga, therefore, probably was a genuine attempt to try and resolve the conflict by allowing Muntaga and the Futanke of Kingi one last chance to honor his requests for assistance.

Muntaga assembled the leaders of the Futanke and Soninke communities of Kingi to inform them of Amadu Sheku's request. Amadu's supporters seized

upon his arrival to argue that Muntaga should honor the Commander of the Faithful's order.<sup>34</sup> Most Futanke did not want to join Amadu's army, but they feared the outcome of a direct refusal to participate with Amadu's forces so close to Nioro. They counseled Muntaga to meet with his brother at Bassaga. Muntaga agreed to travel to Bassaga, but decided to order his agents to move military supplies and surplus grain into the fort in case he needed to withdraw from Bassaga.<sup>35</sup> Some Futanke notables preceded him to Bassaga to stall Amadu and secure additional time for Muntaga to complete his preparations.<sup>36</sup> Muntaga made his way to Bassaga with an entourage which included his armed guard and several of his brothers.<sup>37</sup>

At Bassaga, Muntaga and Amadu Sheku did very little to resolve the conflict and quite a bit to increase their distrust and anger toward one another.<sup>38</sup> They met at least once, but failed to address the issues which divided them; the final interaction ended with Muntaga refusing to meet again with his older brother.<sup>39</sup> Most accounts also emphasize Amadu's insistence that he meet with Muntaga alone. Muntaga's suspicions eventually reached the point where he organized his escape from Bassaga. He fled at night and marched to Kingi with a small force. Some of Amadu's men caught up with Muntaga, but he successfully avoided capture with the assistance of a local village chief.<sup>40</sup> He made his way to Nioro and withdrew into the fort in anticipation of Amadu's march to Nioro.

Most oral accounts of the siege of Nioro locate subsequent events within the context set at Bassaga: Amadu Sheku's sinister motives forced Muntaga to flee Bassaga, withdraw into the fort and take his own life after Amadu pursued him to Nioro. This emphasis on the motives of Amadu not only reflects the bias of the tradition, but diverts attention from Futanke resistance to joining

Amadu's campaigns. Clearly the Futanke of Kingi were responsible for the turn of events at Bassaga. Their opposition to fighting the Bambara prevented Muntaga from offering to join Amadu's forces as a sign of compromise, and they did not discourage him from fleeing from Bassaga to the fort at Nioro. The failure to reach a solution to the political crisis at Bassaga relates directly to the continuing desire for autonomy on the part of the Futanke of Kingi.

Bassaga clearly was a turning point in the political drama. Rumors of Amadu Sheku's plan to kill or capture his younger brother influenced Muntaga's actions: his flight from Bassaga marked the end of his interest in dialogue with Amadu. The Futanke of Karta also sided with Muntaga, further isolating the Commander of the Faithful and forcing a confrontation. Amadu marched toward Nioro and stopped at Yerere, a major Jawara settlement, where he sent several envoys to Muntaga over the course of January, 1885.<sup>41</sup> Later that month, Amadu's forces arrived at Nioro, occupied the city and surrounded the fort. As Amadu's men approached the front gate, Muntaga's supporters fired and drove them back. The first exchange of fire opened a new chapter in the political drama.

### The siege of Nioro

Muntaga's position in the fort was strong but not invincible. He probably had over two hundred soldiers in the fort, enough to keep a sizable force at bay but certainly not sufficient to hold back the thousands of soldiers under Amadu's command. Amadu's decision not to take the fort by force reflected his hope that Muntaga would end the drama of his own volition and submit to his authority as the Commander of the Faithful. Throughout the siege, Amadu

Sheku stressed the campaign against the Bambara and a united front against the French as the major goals of the Umarian community. Muntaga and most of the Futanke of Kingi felt that Amadu's insistence that he lead the Umarian community was overreaching the social contract of the holy war. Futanke desires for autonomy and Muntaga's claim for his own share of political power had converged in 1884 and survived through the long months of the siege. Muntaga's refusal to end the drama came to symbolize Futanke desires for autonomy from Segu.

The fort at Nioro was quite large and had only one entrance which could be closed and defended by artillery positions along the walls.<sup>42</sup> Constructed with a wooden sub-structure and a thick mud covering, the walls of the fort measured over twelve feet high and six hundred feet long.<sup>43</sup> The walls formed a square which enclosed a military supply house, the state treasury and living quarters for Muntaga's personal guard (see Figure D). The main building inside the fortress served as his official residence and private chambers for meetings with advisors and notables (see Figure E). At the center of the fort was a platform where edicts and degrees were announced to the public. The fort had several wells and granaries, where Muntaga had stored enough food to feed all his supporters for over a year. His supporters in the fort included most of his family, his half-brother Daye and several praise-singers.

Outside the fort, the next largest structure in Nioro was the mosque, which stood less than a thousand feet from the southern walls of the fort. Amadu Sheku controlled the mosque, and occupied residences to the south and west of the mosque. These residences ran along the course of a rainy season stream which curved around the fort and emptied its waters to the west. The market of Nioro was to the north of the fort, and Moorish groups occupied the

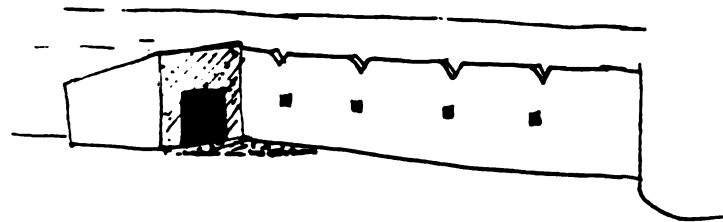
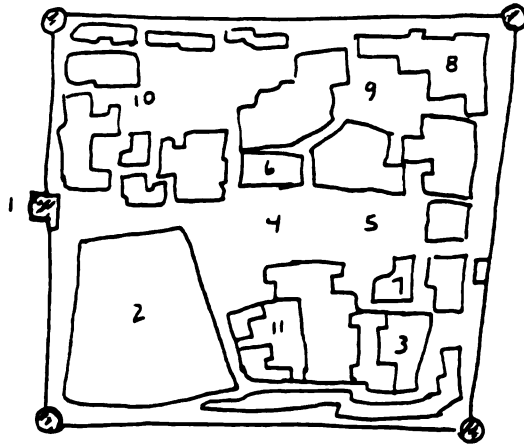
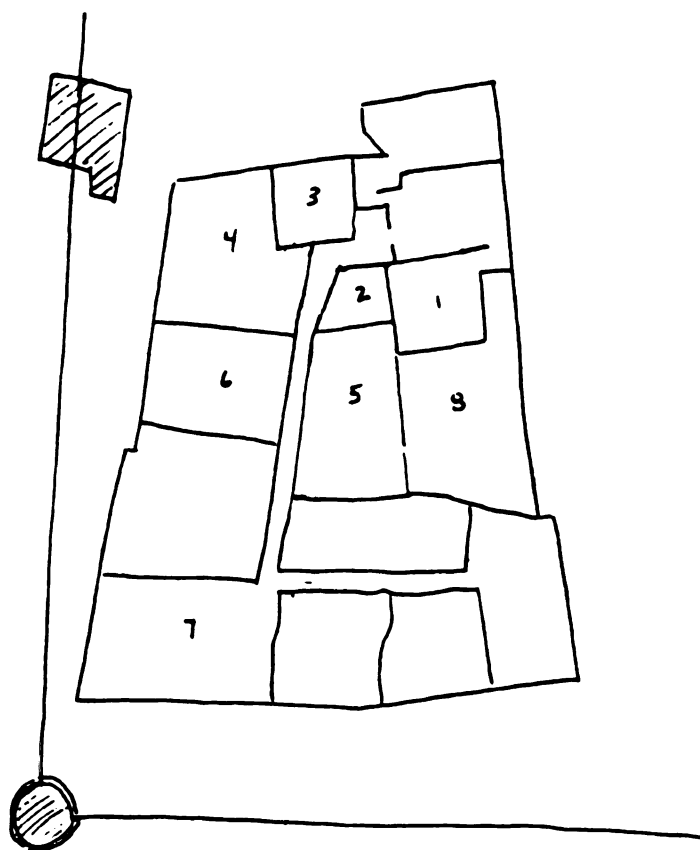


FIGURE E : The Fort at Nioro

1. Entrance
2. Main building
3. Armory
4. Public square
5. Open space
6. Hospital (added in French era)
7. Armory (added in Amadu Sheku's era)
8. Storehouses
9. Wells
10. Barracks
11. Barracks

adapted from: ANS 1D117: pièce 38



**FIGURE F: The Main Building  
(#2 in Figure D)**

- 1. Court
- 2-7. Private Rooms
- 8. Ruins (where Muntaga lit the explosives).

adapted from: ANS 1D117: pièce 39



residential quarter contiguous with the market. In January, when Amadu's forces occupied the town, many of the men camped on the outskirts of Nioro because the physical structures could not accommodate all the troops. Amadu supported his men by demanding taxes from all the villages of Kingi. As the siege wore on, the weight of the demands grew burdensome of the populations of the region.<sup>44</sup>

Most of the residents of Kingi supported Muntaga from the inception of the political drama. These supporters included the Futanke who lived in Nioro and in settlements encircling the capital. He also counted supporters among the indigenous populations of the region. Muntaga's army drew soldiers from the Soninke of Kanyareme to the west and the Jawara of eastern Kingi. He also drew an elite guard from the Fulbe Wodaabe group known as the Samburu. Falel, the leader of the Samburu, and his followers lived near Nioro in villages to the southeast.<sup>45</sup> The Jawaambe, another Pulaar-speaking group, lived in villages to the south. The leaders of each of these communities had sworn to obey Muntaga and were sympathetic to Muntaga's plight. These leaders offered support to Muntaga throughout the siege of Nioro. Thus, while Amadu's men formed an organized fighting force, they were surrounded by a large population which resented their demands for grain and their occupation of the region.

During the first months of the siege, Cerno Mamadu Khayar tried to work for a peaceful resolution to the conflict.<sup>46</sup> He used his status as a learned Muslim and an elderly man who had joined the holy war during Umar's life to try and mediate between the Tal brothers. As a major advocate of Kartan autonomy over the years, however, Cerno Mamadu could not convince Amadu to alter his position *vis-à-vis* Muntaga: Amadu Sheku demanded that Muntaga submit to his authority as Commander of the Faithful without any conditions

attached. By late March, Cerno Mamadu's frustrations grew and he became involved in a plot to erode support from Amadu's own ranks. Cerno Mamadu tried to purchase the loyalty of some of Amadu's Futanke generals with gold bars, and probably spoke to local Soninke, Fulbe Samburu and Jawaambe leaders.<sup>47</sup> Amadu Moktar of Konyakary, who was in Nioro in response to Amadu's request for a meeting, heard of the plot and exposed it during a private session with Amadu Sheku.<sup>48</sup>

Amadu Sheku put Cerno Mamadu on trial before all the Futanke notables of Kingi. He asked several Futanke notables to serve as judges for the trial, but no one agreed. Amadu turned instead to some Walati merchants who were passing through the region, and they attended the proceedings. During the trial, Cerno Mamadu confessed to the charges, but argued that Amadu Sheku's behavior toward his brothers was an assault on the ideals of the holy war. With the confession, Cerno Mamadu received a sentence of death from the Walati judges. Amadu ordered a member of Cerno Mamadu's family to behead the cleric. The execution occurred on Friday of that week at the public square near the entrance to the fort. Amadu had the execution in the early afternoon, so that everyone would observe the execution before meeting for the mid-day prayer.

Amadu's handling of the Cerno Mamadu affair deeply offended many Futanke. Most felt that the sentence was too severe, and withdrew their support for the siege of the fort. These Futanke included those who had accompanied Amadu from Segu as well as former supporters from Karta.<sup>49</sup> As a result of the Futanke response to the execution, Amadu assigned responsibility to watching the fort to non-Futanke generals in his army. Rumors also circulated that the leaders of the Jawara, Fulbe Samburu and Jawaambe were

planning to attack. Amadu Sheku probably knew that Cerno Mamadu's execution would erode support among the Futanke of Kingi and anger Muntaga's supporters in the region, but he nonetheless acted to silence the most eloquent spokesman for Kartan autonomy. Months after the execution, a Futanke from Nioro who passed through the French post at Kita admitted that Cerno Mamadu's death had worked to destroy the "peace" faction as an active force in Nioro.<sup>50</sup>

Within a month after the execution of Cerno Mamadu Khayar, Amadu Sheku moved to eliminate the challenge to his authority raised by Bassiru. By early April, Bassiru had not yet made his way from Konyakary to meet with Amadu.<sup>51</sup> Bassiru had returned to Konyakary with the implicit understanding that he would rally the Futanke to fight against the Bambara, but he did not move from Jomboxo, even after Amadu made specific requests that he march to Kingi. Bassiru complained that his long absence required that he resolve some disputes before leaving Konyakary. In contrast to Bassiru's equivocation, Amadu Moktar of Konyakary led a large Futanke contingent to meet with the Commander of the Faithful at Yerere in early January, making Bassiru's absence all the more obvious. In mid-April, Amadu Sheku sent an armed guard to force Bassiru to Nioro. Upon his arrival at Nioro, Amadu immediately put Bassiru under house arrest. On the question of his continuing as leader of Jomboxo, Amadu deferred a decision until the end of the Muntaga affair.

Amadu Sheku had again shown his ability to act decisively when pushed by the opposition. Cerno Mamadu clearly was the spokesman of the movement for autonomy and against the holy war, and the loss of his dissident voice made Amadu's arguments seem much more persuasive. Amadu's action against Bassiru also drew Amadu Moktar and the "peace" faction of Jomboxo into Amadu's

camp, and eliminated potential attacks from that faction. Amadu's other half-brothers such as Murtada and Bassiru, who were not safely protected within the walls of the fort at Nioro, eventually submitted to him. With these submissions, Amadu gathered momentum in his waiting game with Muntaga. His calls for unity in the face of external enemies to Islam rallied supporters from among Futanke who arrived in Nioro from the Senegal valley in March and April.<sup>52</sup>

In the months of April and May, however, Amadu Sheku's lost some ground because of events in southern Karta. In late April, Demba Ibrahim of Jalla lost a major battle to Musa Fatuma, a Soninke leader from Lambidu who acted in concert with Daha of Farabugu.<sup>53</sup> Amadu responded to the news of Demba's defeat by ordering Abdulay Jeliya, a close advisor who accompanied him from Segu, to recruit five cavaliers and seven soldiers from each Futanke village in the Nioro region.<sup>54</sup> Resistance to this attempt forced Abdulay to imprison twelve village chiefs until their villages provided men.<sup>55</sup> In late May, Abdulay still was trying to recruit an army while Demba Ibrahim lost another battle to Daha's forces.<sup>56</sup> Abdulay finally left for the south in early June, but Demba Ibrahim's forces could not avert a third defeat at the hands of Daha.<sup>57</sup> Daha seemed poised to mount an offensive against Nioro and Demba Ibrahim could offer very little assistance.

The momentum shifted more firmly against Amadu Sheku in May and early June. While the execution of Cerno Mamadu Khayar had silenced his voice, most Futanke still had not forgiven Amadu for his handling of the affair.<sup>58</sup> Amadu's imprisonment of Bassiru also reinforced his reputation as an unforgiving and greedy brother. As the siege dragged on, the leaders of the Fulbe Samburu, the Jawara and the Jawaambe of the region edged closer to breaking their neutrality and joining an attack on Amadu's position. Daha's

victories in the south made that possibility much more likely than in the initial months of the siege. In May, Muntaga made plans to marry off one of his daughters, and boldly announced that he would remain in the fort indefinitely. He taunted Amadu Sheku by stating publicly that it would take a great Muslim leader or a French general to force him to leave the fort.<sup>59</sup>

Amadu Sheku's position strengthened considerably in mid-June with the arrival of a major caravan of ferganke from the lower and middle valley. His call for holy war against the Bambara and the French resonated with many migrants who wanted booty and were fleeing from regions controlled by the French. Samba Ngumma, the leader of the caravan which arrived in June, had been a French-designated chief in the lower Senegal before renouncing his ties to the French and leading well over a thousand men to Nioro in June.<sup>60</sup> Amadu successfully recruited most of the ferganke in Ngumma's caravan to fight in his armies. Amadu's success in recruiting ferganke led supporters of Muntaga to try and halt the population flow by circulating negative rumors about Amadu Sheku in Futa Toro. Despite these attempt to halt the flow, Amadu Sheku probably added at least a thousand ferganke soldiers to his forces over the course of 1885. These new recruits added momentum to Amadu's siege at a time when Muntaga's position seemed strong.

With these new forces, Amadu Sheku turned against Falel, the leader of the Fulbe Samburu. Falel and the Fulbe Samburu he commanded were Muntaga's elite guard, and led the army into battle during its annual campaigns. Falel had not joined Muntaga in the fort, but withdrew from Nioro and observed events with an eye to breaking the siege militarily. Daha's successes in southern Karta were encouraging, and Falel tried to organize an attack on the fort in July.<sup>61</sup> Amadu moved against Falel before he could join forces with Daha. He

sent a large force of ferganke along with some trusted sofa to confront Falel. After some discussions ostensibly aimed at a mediation of the conflict, Amadu's forces attacked the vastly outnumbered Fulbe the next day at dawn.<sup>62</sup> After a battle which raged until dusk, the forces of Amadu defeated the Fulbe and Falel died in battle. Amadu's men decapitated him and carried his head to Amadu.

Falel's defeat occurred just as the rainy season began in 1885. The victory took the momentum from Muntaga's only hope to break the siege by force, while the rains took their toll on Muntaga's forces inside the fort. Malaria and other illnesses associated with the rainy season grew into an epidemic which claimed the lives of many men, women and children.<sup>63</sup> The supply of wood for cooking also began to give out, and hunger furthered weakened the troops, although the actual grain reserves remained abundant.<sup>64</sup> In mid-September, Musa Ndi, one of the leaders of Muntaga's military force, pressed Muntaga to bring the drama to an end. Muntaga declared that he would never submit to Amadu, but allowed everyone to leave the fort if they desired. Musa and some forty soldiers left the fort, leaving Muntaga, his family and a few loyal supporters behind.

The end of the siege receives considerable attention in the sources. Some accounts portray a moving end in which Muntaga turns to his sons and tells them to accept Amadu Sheku as their father, and then retires into his palace and ignites the explosives. Other accounts emphasize the continuing resistance to Amadu's authority and note that he told his followers that he had kept his word and not surrendered to his older brother. Yet another variant emphasizes Amadu's suspicions, and notes that Amadu's men searched the fort room by room and failed to capture Muntaga before he lit the explosives. Recent narratives emphasize the role of Muntaga's praise-singer Farangelli in

convincing Muntaga to commit suicide. All accounts agree that Muntaga, his brother Daye and his praise-singer Farangelli died in a massive explosion which destroyed several rooms in the main building within the fort.

The conclusion of the siege of Nioro was tragic, the result of Muntaga's determination to deprive Amadu Sheku from claiming victory in the struggle. Throughout the long siege, the Segovian army held the upper hand militarily, but Amadu's reluctance to force Muntaga out of the fort reflected his ulterior motive. He wanted to win the allegiance of the Futanke of Kingi, whom he hoped would join him as he engaged the Bambara and the French. The Futanke supported Muntaga's preparations in anticipation of Amadu's arrival and refused to honor Amadu's request that they join his campaign against the Bambara of Beledugu. Although they lost a major leader with the execution of Cerno Mamadu Khayar, they still refused to acknowledge Amadu's authority. Daha's victories in the south encouraged them, and their resistance delayed the departure of Abdulay Jeliya, whom Amadu sent to assist Demba Ibrahim. Even during the last months of the siege, as Amadu recruited ferganke into his army, they did not rally under the banner of holy war. Muntaga's decision to commit suicide rather than submit to Amadu Sheku expressed the attitudes of most Futanke of Kingi, whose descendants still celebrate his decision to defy the Commander of the Faithful.

### Notes

1. ANM 1E207: Medine, 18 May 1885, "Notice politique sur les derniers événements du Kaarta rapportée par l'émissaire Mamadou Doucré". Doucré was sent by the French at Medine to gather information on the siege of Nioro.
2. ANM 1E207: Medine, 18 May 1885, "Notice politique sur les derniers événements du Kaarta rapportée par l'émissaire Mamadou Doucré".
3. To my knowledge, no one has worked through all the materials produced by the commandants at Medine and Kita. The most detailed account of the revolt in the extant secondary literature, by Oloruntimehin, relies primarily on monthly correspondence between the Governors at Saint Louis and the Colonial Ministry in France. Abdoul Aziz Diallo's reconstruction of the revolt relies primarily on oral data that he collected in the Nioro area. See Diallo, "Le siège de Nyoro et la mort de Muntaga Tall", Etudes maliennes, no. 3 (1979).
4. Combes's assessments are offered in reports and correspondence presently found in the Senegalese and French national archives. Frey, on the other hand, published an account of his campaign in the Western Sudan in which he devoted an entire section on Muntaga's revolt. Colonel Henri Nicolas Frey, Campagne dans le Haut-Sénégal et dans le Haut-Niger (1885-86) (Paris, 1888), pp. 98-106.
5. Frey is overtly sympathetic to Muntaga's plight, and concludes that he died "heroically". He also refers to Cerno Mamadu Khayar "the preacher of Karta's emancipation". Frey, Campagne dans le Haut-Sénégal, pp. 99, 103.
6. The analysis of Cerno Mamadu Khayar's activities in the 1870s and early 1880s offered in Chapter Eight contrasts with the orthodox view of his role.
7. Unfortunately, the relevant documents do not have dates of composition and several even do not have an author clearly indicated in the text. Careful textual analysis, combined with data from other sources, points to 1884 as the date of composition.
8. Adam's account alone focuses on many details of an initial meeting between Muntaga and Amadu which other accounts note with less concern.
9. Some of the reluctance to speak with me was related to memories of the colonial experience. In the 1950s, the French collected oral data from many villages in the Nioro area. Their intent was to obtain an accurate census of the population, but they also asked questions about the past. The testimonies were made in general sessions in which all the notables of the various villages participated. During my residence and research in the Nioro area, some of the older men remembered the French effort of the 1950s, and identified close relatives or their fathers as informants. These older men stated that their fathers greeted the French attempt to collect oral traditions with suspicion; only the implicit threat of force led them to participate.



10. Other members of the Tal family lived in Nioro prior to Cerno Hadi's tenure as the religious leader of the Tijaniyya community of Karta. Murtada lived in Nioro during the early twentieth century, for example, and occupied the role as religious leader of the Umarian community.

11. Abdoul Aziz Diallo also experienced a reluctance to talk about Muntaga's death on the part of informants in the Nioro region, whom he interviewed in 1979 and again in 1980. Only his relatives at Gavinané spoke freely with him about the siege. One of Diallo's relatives explained the reluctance to speak about the siege: Cerno Hadi had forbade discussion of Muntaga's death because he had committed suicide. Diallo refers to these problems in his article, "Le siège de Nyoro et la mort de Muntaga Tall", *Etudes maliennes*, no. 3 (1979). During the course of my residences in Bamako, Mali in the mid-1980s, I spoke with him several times and at length about the problems of collecting oral data on the Umarian era. His insights proved helpful.

12. David Robinson interviewed Bougouboly Alfa Makki Tal at Bandiagara in August, 1976; Bougouboly also argued that it was Muntaga's griot who caused the conflict. Not all members of the Tal family share that sentiment. In my interview with Karamokho Tal in Bamako in March, 1986, he placed the blame on the Futanke of Kingi.

13. The process whereby oral traditions are created from oral reminiscences is most clearly discussed by Joseph Miller. See his introduction to *The African Past Speaks*, edited by J. Miller (Hamden, U.K., 1980).

14. Both Futanke and Soninke traditions telescope the lengthy siege into a few days of confrontation. In the Futanke traditions, each day corresponds to an episode in the political drama. Dantioko's informants provide considerable detail about a confrontation between Amadu Sheku and Muntaga at Bassaga before the siege of Nioro, but very little detail regarding the siege in Nioro itself. Nevertheless, they also state that Muntaga committed suicide four days after Amadu's arrival in Nioro. See Dantioko's interview with Djammé Tounkara and Sadio Sakhoné of Balle, Mali in June, 1980.

15. Bassiru Tal's involvement in the revolt, for example, is not included as an episode in any oral narrative. The French-mediated materials provide quite a bit of evidence regarding Bassiru's reluctance to go to Nioro during the siege, and note that Amadu Sheku eventually had to send an armed guard to force him to go to Nioro. No Umarian informants ever mention this episode, including his descendants who currently live at Konyakary and Kayes. The exclusion of an episode regarding Bassiru seems to be a concession to Bassiru's family, who may find the episode embarrassing.

16. ANM 1E207: Medine, 14 July 1885, "Nouvelles politiques apportées du Kaarta par l'émissaire Souaye Guibril".

17. The internal traditions which add details from this era do not attach much importance to events in 1884 until Amadu Sheku arrived at Bassaga in Bakunu. The only exception is the account by Agibu Tal.

18. Internal evidence points to 1884 as the date of composition for some of the Arabic letters in ANS 15G68 Chemise spéciale and 15G80 dossier 1.

19. The ANM Medine dossiers for 1885 (1E54 and 1E207) document the events in Kingi after Amadu's arrival in considerable detail. The ANS Medine dossiers for the period 1883 to 1888 are virtually non-existent. The ANM materials begin in 1883, but the 1883 to 1884 period is not covered very extensively.

20. A. de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", Bulletin du Comité d'Etudes Historiques et Scientifiques d'Afrique Occidentale Française Vol. 2 (1919), pp. 42-43; interview with Amadou Ba of Nioro.

21. I have found no estimate of Amadu's forces for early 1884, but Commandant Supérieur Frey put Amadu's forces at 15 thousand in late 1885. I estimate that Amadu gained over five thousand soldiers in Karta.

22. Jacques Méniand, Les pionniers du Soudan, avant, avec et après Archinard, 1879-1894, Vol. 2 (Paris, 1931), p. 357.

23. de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", p. 43.

24. ANS 15G68 Chemise spéciale, pièce h.

25. Amadu Moktar was a Futanke soldier who had assisted Amadu during the first revolt and received the command of Farabugu as a reward. Amadu Moktar also was outspoken in his criticism of Muntaga's raids into the south of Karta. He also offered shelter to Amadu Sheku's most vocal supporters whom Muntaga drove out of Nioro in 1884. See, for Amadu Moktar's role in the first revolt and his appointment as Governor of Farabugu, Paul Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, 1878-79, rédigé d'après les notes et journaux de voyage de Soleillet par Gabriel Gravier (Paris, 1887), pp. 372, 380. See, for his criticisms of Muntaga's raids, ANS 1D73: Kayes, 4 October 1883, "Renseignements donnés par Abdoul Lamine envoyé en mission à Nioro".

26. See, for Soninke resistance to Amadu Moktar's taxes, Blanc, "Contribution à l'étude", p. 262.

27. Daha had not received an appointment from Amadu Sheku in 1874. He had joined Habib and Moktar's revolt, accompanied the brothers to Segou, and then returned to Nioro with Muntaga in 1874. Soleillet, Voyage à Ségou, pp. 380, 384.

Malik Samba Sy's involvement in Daha's action is unclear. Malik Samba had tried to depose Demba Ibrahim in 1883, and took refuge at Farabugu after the attempt. Daha eventually expelled Malik Samba and his Bundunke followers from Farabugu in 1886. Blanc, "Contribution à l'étude", pp. 304-305.

28. An Arabic letter from the era identifies Cerno Mamadu and Cerno Bokar as the leading advocates of Kartan autonomy at this time. Lamine Bassiru Tal also remembers two Futanke notables as leading the challenge against Amadu Sheku when he arrived in Karta. See David Robinson's interview with him at Kayes on 13 September 1976.

29. I interviewed members of the Tal family in Konyakary and Kayes, and no one remembered any interruption in the reign of Bassiru. David Robinson did not explore this topic with Lamine Bassiru in 1976 (he has since died, and I spoke with his son in 1986). Since local accounts of Bassiru's reign do not note his departure from Konyakary, this reconstruction relies on external evidence to establish the events of the period.

The French referred to Amadu Moktar as the leader of Konyakary when he wrote the French regarding Malik Samba Sy's fergo from Bundu in mid-1883. He also was identified as the leader of Konyakary in October 1883, when the French sent several envoys to Konyakary and Nioro. In early 1885, the French first noted Bassiru's return to Konyakary. ANS 1D68: Kayes, 2 July 1883, Ct. Sup. to the Governor; ANS 1D73: Kayes, 4 October 1883, "Renseignements donnés par Abdoul Lamine envoyé en mission à Nioro"; ANS 1D73: Kayes, 13 October 1883, Ct. Sup. to the Governor; ANM 1E207: Medine, 19 January 1885, Ct. Medine to Ct. Cercles.

I have no direct evidence for my argument that Bassiru accompanied Amadu Sheku to Nyamina and then headed to Konyakary in a separate caravan. It is possible, therefore, that Bassiru may have never made the trip to Segou because of insecurity along the route, and merely returned to Konyakary in late 1884 after residing elsewhere for the period between 1882 and 1884. This reading of events is unlikely, since it assumes, firstly, that Bassiru escaped from Amadu Sheku's soldiers on route from Konyakary to Segou and secondly, that this escape was never reported in contemporaneous materials nor remembered in the oral traditions of western Mali. Bassiru's ancestors presumably forget his departure from the helm and his trip to Segou because it implicates him in the fraternal conflict. They probably could not neglect a dramatic story of his escape from Amadu's soldiers if it had occurred.

30. My work in the Kita dossiers, however, has not uncovered a reference to Bassiru's movement. Nevertheless, Bassiru probably travelled to Konyakary via Jalla, and may have been escorted in part by Demba Ibrahim's troops.

31. Amadu Moktar of Konyakary clearly represented the interests of the initial Futanke settlers who participated in the grain trade with the gum merchants at Medine. They opposed Bassiru's wars and raids, as well as his trade embargo against the French. While Amadu Moktar and his supporters were not pro-French, they advocated an amicable relationship with the French at Medine's post and tolerated the French advance south of Karta as long as they did not move into Kartan territory. See Chapters Five and Eight for a lengthy treatment of the "peace" camp in Jomboxo.

32. Amadu's forces avoided N'To and his Bambara troops who pursued them on the route to Nioro. de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", p. 43. Saint-Martin cites a French report which places Amadu Sheku in Karta by November 1884. His source is ANS 15G83 pièce 35 (Saint-Martin, Empire toucouleur et la France, p. 321). I could not find the document when I worked with this file.

33. See, for the most extensive account of the assassination plot, Blanc, "Contribution à l'étude", pp. 302-303. Variations appear in the accounts of Adam and de Loppinot. Dantioko's account implies that Amadu wanted to kill Muntaga, but the accusation is not made overtly by his informants.

34. Adam's Kaba Jakite informants emphasizes the perspectives of those who counseled Muntaga to go to Bassaga. Adam, Légendes historiques, p. 113.

35. Most oral accounts argue that Muntaga moved supplies into the fort after his meeting with Amadu Sheku. The task of moving grain into the fort, however, required considerable planning. Muntaga probably instructed his agents to bring the state share of the harvest of 1884 directly to the fort at Nioro. They normally collected the tax at harvest time, which coincided with Amadu's arrival at Bassaga in late 1884. While Muntaga may have continued moving grain into the fort after his meeting with Amadu, the process certainly had begun much earlier. Indeed, Muntaga may have started to store additional grain in the fort after the 1883 harvest.

36. This tradition was mentioned in passing by Amadou Ba of Nioro. Agibu's account notes that a group of Nioranke notables arrived before Muntaga arrived at Bassaga. de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", p. 44.

37. Blanc is the only account to provide the names of the Tal brothers who accompanied Muntaga to Bassaga. He states that it was Daha, Muniru, Amidu and Daye. Daha probably was not a member of the entourage, since he was in the process of consolidating power at Farabugu. Blanc, "Contribution à l'étude,

p. 303. Nuru also was not in the entourage, since he only met with Amadu when he marched to Yerere. ANM 1E207: Medine, 19 January 1885, Ct. Medine to the Ct. Cercles.

38. See, for accounts of the Bassaga encounter, Adam, Légendes historiques, pp. 113-115; Blanc, "Contribution à l'étude, pp. 302-303; de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", pp. 43-44; Oudiary Makan Dantioko's interview with Djammé Tounkara and Sadio Sakhoné at Balle in June 1980. I also spoke with Amadou Ba of Nioro regarding the Bassaga encounter.

39. Most accounts narrate several meetings between Muntaga and Amadu, but Dantioko's informants mention only one encounter. The difference may be based on the fact that Dantioko's informants narrate several interactions between Amadu Sheku and Farangelli, Muntaga's praise singer. One images that Muntaga was present during some of the interactions. All versions agree that the Tal brothers never met privately and that their final discussion ended in a dispute over the question of Amadu's authority.

40. Adam and Blanc note that Muntaga was overtaken at Tourougoumbe, whereas

de Loppinot states that it was Yerere. Adam, Légendes historiques, p. 115; Blanc, "Contribution à l'étude, p. 303; de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", p. 44. In Adam's and Blanc's accounts, Muntaga convinced the leader of Amadu's troops to let him go to Nioro. Adam, Légendes historiques, p. 115; Blanc, "Contribution à l'étude", p. 303. Agibu asserts that Muntaga received help from the leader of the Jawara. de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", p. 44. Dantioko's account does not discuss the details of Muntaga's movements after he leaves Bassaga.

41. Adam, Légendes historiques, pp. 115-116; Blanc, "Contribution à l'étude", p. 303; "Traditions historiques", p. 365; ANM 1E207: Medine, 19 January 1885, Ct. Medine to Ct. Cercles.

42. The following discussion of the fort at Nioro draws on French descriptions of the early 1890s, after they had defeated the Umarians. Amadu had occupied the fort for over five years, and partially altered the interior to meet his needs and tastes, but the main features of the fort survived Amadu's residence and the French conquest.

43. See, for a discussion of the military architecture of the Western Sudan, Thierno Mouctar Bah, Architecture militaire traditionnelle et poliorcétique dans le Soudan occidental du XVII<sup>e</sup> à la fin du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle (Yaoundé, 1985).

44. Amadu's agents travelled as far as Gidimaxa to collect grain, cattle and guns as tribute for Amadu Sheku. ANS 13G185: Bakel, 23 April 1885, Ct. Bakel to Ct. Cercles.

45. According to Aliou Sow, the Fulbe Samburu lived at Jakamodi, Bemma, Damma and Carinke. See his interview with Abdoul Aziz Diallo at Yelimane.

46. Cerno Mamadu Khayar's activities in Nioro during the initial months of 1885 were the topic of several contemporaneous French reports: ANM 1E207: Medine 13 April 1885, Ct. Medine to Ct. Supérieur; ANM 1E54: Medine 15 April 1885, "Rapport politique". I also draw on the oral accounts discussed in the first section of the chapter.

47. Accounts of the plot vary, and oral traditions state that Cerno Mamadu tried to recruit from among the following groups: the Bambara of Beledugu, the Jawara of Kingi, the Fulbe Samburu of Bakunu, Daha and his forces at Farabugu, and Futanke from Karta and Segou. All these groups resisted Amadu Sheku at one point during the siege of Nioro. The association of Cerno Mamadu's plot with these groups reflects Cerno Mamadu's stature as a leader of Kartan resistance. The French reports from Medine state that Cerno Mamadu tried to recruit some Futanke, Jawaambe and Fulbe Samburu leaders. All the reports and oral accounts agree that Cerno Mamadu tried to recruit Futanke leaders from Amadu's army.

48. The French reports are the only accounts to identify who exposed Cerno Mamadu's activities. Cerno Mamadu probably was trying to include the "peace" faction of Jomboxo in his coalition. ANM 1E207: Medine, 13 April 1885, Ct. Medine to Ct. Sup.

49. ANM 1E207: Medine, 13 April 1885, Ct. Medine to Ct. Sup.; ANM 1E54: Medine, 15 April 1885, "Rapport politique".

50. ANS 15G127: Kita, 17 May 1885, Ct. Kita to Ct. Sup.

51. Bassiru's activities during the siege of Nioro are not mentioned in any oral accounts. I draw the data exclusively from French reports. ANM 1E207: Medine, 19 January, 5 and 13 April, 8 and 18 May 1885, Ct. Medine to Ct. Sup.; ANM 1E54: Medine, 15 April 1885, "Rapport politique"; ANS 15G127: Kita,

15 May 1885, Ct. Kita to Ct. Sup.

52. ANM 1E207: Medine, 6 March and 28 April 1885, Ct. Medine to Ct. Sup.

53. The French actively encouraged Daha's efforts without directly supplying military supplies or troops. In late March, the commandant at Kita received letters from Daha of Farabugu and Musa Fatuma, a Soninke leader from Lambidu, another settlement in southern Karta. Both Daha and Musa asked for French assistance against Demba Ibrahim. The commandant responded by stating that the French would remain neutral in the affair of the Umarians, but suggested that they act in concert against Demba Ibrahim. ANS 15G127: Kita, 1, 3 and 18 April and 17 May 1885, Ct. Kita to Ct. Sup.

The references to Musa Fatuma's battle with Demba Ibrahim are ANM 1E207: Medine, 28 April and 18 May 1885, Ct. Medine to Ct. Sup; ANS 15G127: Kita, 15 May 1885, Ct. Kita to Ct. Sup.

54. ANM 1E207: Medine, 8 May 1885, Ct. Medine to Ct. Sup.

55. ANS 1E207: 18 and 27 May 1885, Ct. Medine to Ct. Sup. ANM 1E54: Medine, 1 June 1885, "Rapport politique".

56. ANM 1E54: Medine, 10 June 1885, "Notice politique".

57. ANM 1E54: Medine, 17 July 1885, "Notice politique".

58. Amadu Sheku reportedly had the support of less than 20 Futanke notables. ANS 15G127: Kita, 17 May 1885, Ct. Kita to Ct. Sup.

59. ANM 1E207: Medine, 18 May 1885, "Notice politique sur les derniers événements du Kaarta rapportée par l'émissaire Mamadou Doucré".

60. Samba Ngumma left the lower valley in April and passed by Bakel in late May. See, for a description of his caravan by the commandant at Bakel, ANS 13G185: Bakel, Copie du registre journal de poste, May, 1885. Abdoul Aziz Diallo's informants also provide information and perspectives on the fergo of 1885.

61. Adam, Légendes historiques, p. 117; de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", p. 45; ANM 1E207: Medine, 14 July 1885, "Nouvelles politiques".

62. I collected a lengthy tradition of the battle, recounted by Baedel Diallo in Nioro on 17 February 1986. Abdoul Aziz Diallo also collected some accounts of the battle. See his interviews with Mamadou Alfa and Bassiru Alfa Diallo. See also, for a published account of the battle, Frey, Campagne dans le Haut-Sénégal, p. 102.

63. All the oral accounts refer to an epidemic in the fort. Contemporaneous French reports also mention the death toll inside the fort. ANM 1E207: Medine, 16 September 1885, Ct. Medine to Ct. Sup.

64. Most of the oral accounts refer to famine in the fort, but only the French report notes that it was the lack of firewood to cook meals and not the lack of grain and meat which caused the famine. ANM 1E207: Medine, 16 September 1885, Ct. Medine to Ct. Sup.

## CHAPTER TEN

### The End of the Umarian Era in Karta

The sense of mission which prompted many Senegambians to join Umar Tal's holy war or to migrate to Karta during the late nineteenth century remains a point of pride among Futanke men and women in contemporary Mali. They recount the history of the holy war to reaffirm their commitment to Islam and remind one another that Shaykh Umar will return one day in the future.<sup>1</sup> They also celebrate Amadu Sheku's flight from Karta (hijra) in reaction to the French conquest of the Western Sudan.<sup>2</sup> An Arabic account of Amadu's last years focuses on his hijra as the event which closes the Umarian era with dignity and purpose.<sup>3</sup> The celebration of the hijra as the final act of the Umarian drama indicates that, in the memory of the Futanke community of western Mali, Amadu gained the respect which had eluded him during his thirty year reign as Commander of the Faithful in Segou and Nioro.

The solidarity expressed in the hijra chronicle contrasts with the circumstances of Amadu Sheku's residence in Karta for the half-decade between Muntaga's death and the French conquest. Amadu failed to maintain the Umarian coalition intact as the French advanced on the Umarian territories.



Futanke resistance, Soninke initiative and political fragmentation in the desert-side north of Karta contributed to the collapse. French actions also influenced the course of Umarian history in this era, as they moved more deeply into the Western Sudan, sought political allies and then launched a direct attack on the Umarians at Segou and Karta. After the French captured Nioro in 1891, the French victory and Commandant Supérieur Louis Archinard's direct orders led to the return of some twenty thousand Futanke to the Senegal valley.

This chapter reviews the history of the final years of Umarian rule in Karta. The extant historical literature covers this period in considerable detail, but largely from a French perspective.<sup>4</sup> The source materials from the late 1880s and early 1890s allow for a broader assessment of the collapse of the Umarian coalition and the Futanke departure from Karta. The French military collected data about Umarian Karta in preparation for their conquest, and then produced first-hand accounts of the region during and after their campaigns. The Kaba Jakite Arabic chronicle provides a narrative of the major military battles of the era, and some of Amadu Sheku's correspondence from the period still survives. Oral traditions collected at various points in the twentieth century also fill in details of the last years of Umarian rule.<sup>5</sup> The narrative of the present chapter highlights the major political events of the jaamanu Laam Juulbe (the era of Amadu Sheku's residence in Karta) and how the Umarians came to celebrate Amadu's hijra from the Western Sudan.

### The collapse of the Umarian coalition in Karta

At the conclusion of the siege of Nioro, Amadu Sheku could not direct his attention to fighting the Bambara as he initially had planned. Local challenges

to his authority forced Amadu to consolidate his position before contemplating an offensive outside of Kartan territory. The most immediate threat to Amadu Sheku was led by Daha, Amadu's half-brother who seized control at Farabugu in 1884 and attacked Demba Ibrahim of Jalla during Amadu's siege of the fort. Daha's position in the southern provinces of Karta allowed him to forge an a powerful coalition among the non-Futanke populations of the region. Another threat was the Muslim movement led by Mamadu Lamine, a Soninke cleric who called for the creation of a new Muslim state in the upper Senegal valley. Lamine attracted Soninke followers from the western regions of Karta and asserted control over several provinces of Karta in early 1886. Finally, to the north, succession disputes among desert-side groups led to their withdrawal from the Umarian coalition in Karta.

After Muntaga's death, Amadu Sheku did not occupy the fort at Nioro, and resided instead at Madina, a Futanke settlement south of Nioro.<sup>6</sup> During his residence at Madina, Amadu tried to recruit a Futanke army to fight against Daha. Despite the threats which accompanied Amadu's request for recruits, local Futanke leaders refused to provide many soldiers for his campaign and forced Amadu to move his residence to Yerere in November 1885.<sup>7</sup> Amadu remained at Yerere, a major Jawara settlement, for several months trying to convince local leaders to join his campaign against Daha.<sup>8</sup> Most Jawara leaders rejected Amadu's invitation to join his army out of respect for Muntaga, who had incorporated Jawara contingents into his armies during the annual military campaigns of the early 1880s.<sup>9</sup> As a result, Amadu Sheku relied on the Futanke and sofa contingents which had accompanied him from Segou. He also recruited ferganke from the Senegal valley throughout the late 1880s, and these migrants formed an important part of his army.<sup>10</sup>

Amadu Sheku received support from the Futanke of Jomboxo during this period. In early 1885, Amadu Moktar and Suleyman Eliman had responded to Amadu's initial call for troops, and remained in Nioro during the siege. Amadu Moktar had played an important role in the drama by exposing Cerno Mamadu Khayar's plot to Amadu Sheku. In contrast to Amadu Moktar's service, Bassiru had remained in Konyakary and only arrived in Nioro under armed guard. Amadu Sheku rewarded Amadu Moktar for his loyalty by retaining him as the leader of Jomboxo. The Commander of the Faithful sent Amadu Moktar to Konyakary to recruit a large force of Futanke and join his campaign against Daha.

Amadu Sheku's relations with his brothers were strained during this period. He kept most of them under surveillance in Nioro and allowed them to leave only under the supervision of a loyal supporter. In contrast to Amadu's ability to attract half-brothers such as Muntaga and Bassiru to his side during the revolt of Habib and Moktar in 1870, the Commander of the Faithful could not count on the support of any brother as he moved against Daha. Amadu could not afford to delay in responding to Daha's challenge, however, because he needed to counter Mamadu Lamine's movement in the west, the French move into the Western Sudan and Bambara actions in Segou and Beledugu. While the Futanke and Jawara did not provide many men for his army, Amadu did not wait for a break in relations.<sup>11</sup> He set out from Yerere in late February in expectation that Amadu Moktar and his Futanke recruiters would join him with additional troops as he marched into southern Karta.<sup>12</sup>

Daha consolidated his position in the southern provinces of Karta as Amadu Sheku organized his forces at Yerere.<sup>13</sup> Daha led an attack on Jalla which killed Demba Ibrahim in early 1886 and then installed himself at Lambidu,

where he deposed a local chief who had remained loyal to Amadu Sheku. Daha drew most of his supporters from the Soninke communities of the region. He also tried to recruit the Bambara leader N'To into his coalition. In the process, Daha lost the support of Malik Samba Sy, the Bundunke leader who resided at Farabugu, but added the forces of the Fulbe Samburu, whose leader had been killed by Amadu's army during the siege of Nioro.<sup>14</sup> Hostility to Amadu united the disparate forces under Daha's command. Daha emphasized his opposition to Amadu in an attempt to secure French support for his effort, but they refused to involve themselves in the struggle.<sup>15</sup>

Daha's actions were less an expression of Futanke desires for autonomy than an embodiment of Soninke rebellion against Umarian authority. He tapped the anger over excessive Umarian taxes among the Soninke groups of southern Karta and organized a movement which challenged the basis of Umarian rule in the region. Daha's effort certainly was tied to Muntaga's suicide: he tried to avenge his brother's death and prevent Amadu from claiming victory in Karta, but Daha's movement differed from Muntaga's challenge due to his reliance of Soninke recruits. Not surprisingly, Daha's revolt is not enshrined in the internal traditions of the Futanke. Nor did Amadu's actions against his half-brother Daha inspire the wrath of the Futanke. Amadu responded to Daha's challenge as the leader of Umarian Karta instead of the Tal brother who hoped to create an imperial state. While not all Futanke supported Amadu's action, they reserved their criticisms for his treatment of Muntaga.

Amadu Sheku left Yerere with a force of around nine thousand men, and camped at several points along the way both to give Daha an opportunity to submit and to wait for additional recruits.<sup>16</sup> Daha refused all of Amadu's offers and withdrew into the fort at Lambidu. Amadu waited until late April,

when he learned that Amadu Moktar of Konyakary had died on his way to meet him at the head a large force of Futanke from Jomboxo.<sup>17</sup> Amadu delayed no longer and made preparations for an attack on Lambidu.<sup>18</sup> He launched an offensive against Daha in mid-May and a bloody encounter ensued. Both sides lost several hundred soldiers in a battle which lasted until the evening.<sup>19</sup> When the forces stopped for the day, many of Daha's men deserted him because of the depletion of military supplies in the fort.<sup>20</sup>

The next day, Daha and those who remained with him lit what explosives remained in the fort and committed suicide before Amadu Sheku's forces could capture them. Amadu moved into the fort and remained at Lambidu to obtain the submissions of Soninke from the region before continuing with his forces to Farabugu.<sup>21</sup> He used the garrison to launch raids into the region and receive delegations of Soninke leaders who submitted to him. Amadu then led a slow march back to Nioro during which his army raided the communities along the route. Amadu's harsh treatment of the populations of the region was meant to show his power, but it had the effect of reinforcing his image as a brutal leader and further eroded his position among the Soninke of the south.

Upon his return to Nioro, Amadu Sheku turned immediately to the challenge presented by Mamadu Lamine. The Soninke cleric was born at Gunjuru in the upper Senegal valley during the late 1830s, made the hajj to Mecca in the early 1860s, and returned to the Western Sudan in the late 1870s.<sup>22</sup> Although Shaykh Umar's holy war had been an inspiration to him, he presented a challenge to Umar's sons. In 1885 Mamadu Lamine returned to the upper Senegal valley and began to call upon the Soninke of the region to join him in creating a new Muslim state. He sent Suaybu, his son, to the Umarian province of Jafunu in early 1886 to rally support in the region.<sup>23</sup>

Mamadu Lamine's actions threatened both the French and Umarian positions in the upper Senegal valley. Lamine's attack of the French post at Bakel led Commandant Supérieur Frey to move against the Muslim cleric's forces and his supporters in Gidimaxa. Lamine and his men retreated south toward the Gambia River, but Suaybu remained in Jafunu at his base at Gori. Frey wanted to attack Suaybu, but hesitated from moving further into Umarian territory because it might disturb relations between the French and Amadu Sheku. Frey instead obtained an understanding that Amadu would force Suaybu out of Jafunu while the French moved against Lamine in the south.<sup>24</sup> The following year, the French honored their commitment to fighting Lamine's forces, and Commandant Supérieur Joseph Gallieni spent most of his campaign in 1887 in pursuit of the Soninke cleric.<sup>25</sup>

Amadu Sheku tried to obtain a peaceful resolution to the conflict by asking the Soninke of Jafunu to expel Suaybu from Jafunu. He sent envoys to Jafunu in mid-June, 1886, asking that the Soninke village chiefs visit Nioro and reaffirm their submission to the Commander of the Faithful; most refused to visit Nioro.<sup>26</sup> In August, Amadu demanded that the village chiefs of Jafunu expel Suaybu or send him to Nioro.<sup>27</sup> When the chiefs refused this second request, Amadu decided to march to Gori after the rainy season ended in late 1886. He had not occupied the fort at Nioro for more than a few months before being forced to meet another challenge to his authority. Amadu called for Futanke troops to fight Suaybu, they once again refused and Amadu had to rely primarily on his Segovian forces and ferganke who continued to arrive from the Senegal valley.<sup>28</sup>

Before Amadu Sheku mounted his campaign against Suaybu, he appointed Bassiru the Umarian leader in Konyakary. Amadu was forced by the need for

military reinforcements to swallow his anger and ask Bassiru for assistance. Bassiru received Amadu's appointment as Amadu Moktar's replacement in exchange for his promise that he would recruit an army of Futanke from Jomboxo for the Jafunu campaign. Bassiru left Nioro in June of 1886 and arrived in Jafunu with a large force in December.<sup>29</sup> Bassiru fought loyally at Amadu's side for the remaining years of Umorian control, rewarding his brother's decision to trust him despite his behavior during the siege of Nioro. Amadu's reappointment of Bassiru as the leader of Jomboxo merely was the first in a series of decisions to include his brothers in the activities of the Umorian state despite the fact that they had not supported him during the siege of Nioro.<sup>30</sup> These decisions reflected Amadu's growing recognition that he alone did not inspire the Futanke of the region.

In late 1886, Suaybu consolidated his position in Jafunu. He built a fortress with high walls around his capital at Gori and proclaimed himself the Almamy of Jafunu. Suaybu successfully recruited many supporters from the communities of Jafunu. One account notes that Suaybu had assembled all the strong Jafununke men at Gori.<sup>31</sup> Amadu Sheku left Nioro in early December and put Suaybu's fort under siege at the end of the month.<sup>32</sup> His anger with the challenge was muted by his concern that a direct attack on another Muslim reformer in an important region would erode solidarity within the Umorian community. Amadu had attacked Daha because he organized a rebellion among Soninke communities which did not figure very prominently in the Umorian coalition. The Soninke provinces of the Xoolimbinne valley, however, were central to the state, and Amadu moved as cautiously against the Soninke of Jafunu as he had against Muntaga and the Futanke of Kingi.





Amadu Sheku surrounded the fort at Gori for several months. Suaybu's men kept Amadu's forces at bay with gunfire and evening attacks during the months of January and February.<sup>33</sup> Amadu did not attack the fort and made constant appeals for Suaybu to surrender and submit to his authority. Ferganke who arrived in Karta during the siege grew impatient with the siege and raided some Soninke villages in Jomboxo.<sup>34</sup> Some of Amadu's principal generals also found the wait to be tiring. When Amadu received word from Nioro of a possible attack from the Bambara in the south, several of Amadu's lieutenants volunteered to go back and defend Nioro. Despite these movements within the ranks of his soldiers, Amadu bided his time in anticipation that the grain reserves in the fort would give out and force Suaybu to submit peacefully.

While Amadu followed the strategy which he adopted against Muntaga, Suaybu took the initiative and attacked Amadu's forces in late March. The Soninke killed over 350 Futanke and wounded another seventy.<sup>35</sup> Suaybu's attack caused many Futanke from Jomboxo who had questioned the wisdom of Amadu's siege to make their doubts public. The attack was Suaybu's effort to break the siege before his supplies ran out. Shortly thereafter Suaybu and the Jafununke chiefs in the fort agreed to submit to Amadu. Lamine's son used the cover of the Soninke exodus from the fort, however, to escape from Gori. He marched to a neighboring village and organized a second rebellion against Amadu's forces.

Suaybu's deception angered Amadu Sheku, and he ordered his army to level the villages of Jafunu. Hundreds of Soninke were killed or taken prisoner, Suaybu was captured and Amadu eventually ordered the execution of close to one hundred fifty men. The siege of Gori ended with as meager results for Amadu as had the campaigns against Muntaga and Daha: he claimed victory at



great cost to his reputation as a Muslim leader. The Futanke of Kingi and the Soninke of Jafunu challenged Amadu's authority, lost on the battlefield but did not respect the Commander of the Faithful. Additionally, his credibility as a military leader dissipated since he gained his victories at the cost of several hundred followers.

Amadu Sheku realized that he governed an uneasy coalition in mid-1887. He decided to leave Karta and march to Segou, where he planned to reinforce his position in the middle Niger. He hoped that the ferganke who had provided support during his recent campaigns would accompany him to Segou. He also clung to the dream that the Futanke of Karta would join him in Segou. At a public meeting in Nioro just before the rains fell in June, Amadu Sheku announced his plans to return to Segou after the harvest.<sup>36</sup> Amadu's rhetoric called for a united front against the French, and he argued that Segou was the best location for a stand.<sup>37</sup> The Futanke of Karta again refused to honor Amadu's request. Additionally, the recently arrived ferganke also preferred to remain in Karta. Since Amadu Sheku's force of Segovians was not sufficiently strong to make the march by themselves, Amadu needed to recruit an army in Karta if he wanted to get to Segou. Amadu therefore turned his attention to consolidating control over Karta in hopes of forcing the Futanke to accept him as their leader.

Amadu Sheku reorganized the system of command in Kingi by placing loyal followers in garrisons throughout the Futanke villages which encircled Nioro.<sup>38</sup> He required that his soldiers march to Nioro everyday to greet him in the morning and receive his instructions regarding their duties for the day.<sup>39</sup> Amadu also instituted a judicial system in which each garrison had a qadi or judge who would rule over day to day affairs.<sup>40</sup> Both the military leaders and



qadis at the garrisons were ferganke or Futanke who had come with Amadu from Segu: the Futanke of Kingi largely lost access to the institutions of the Umarian state. Amadu's plan was to create a rigid framework in which public dissent with Amadu Sheku's orders was no longer tolerated. Public beatings became commonplace outside the gates of the fort at Nioro as a means of reinforcing Amadu's rule.

Amadu Sheku's inner circle in Nioro included counsellors and friends from Segu.<sup>41</sup> His most intimate advisors were the two Jeliya brothers, Saydu and Abdulay, who composed praise poetry and led military campaigns for the Commander of the Faithful.<sup>42</sup> Samba Njay was also a long-time friend who served as Amadu's host for visiting dignitaries. Baba Wulibu also was a confidant, whom Amadu entrusted with the responsibility of watching over Jafunu after the siege of Gori. Finally, Amadu relied on the advice of his sofa generals, whom he sent on military missions throughout Karta. He had a sofa general in residence at Konyakary to watch over Bassiru.<sup>43</sup> Thus, while Amadu remained in Karta, he did not seek to integrate local notables into his inner circle. He even kept distance between himself and the migration leaders who contributed so valiantly to his military campaigns. Samba Ngumma and Yero Balel both felt that Amadu Sheku did not take their advice as seriously as he took the counsel of the Segovian clique.<sup>44</sup>

In late 1888, Amadu Sheku reiterated his request that the ferganke and resident Futanke of Karta join him and march to Segu. All groups balked at the request. The Futanke of Kingi, who had grown tired of the favoritism to Amadu's Segovian clique of advisors, responded to his request by asking Amadu not to join them in prayer at the main mosque at Nioro.<sup>45</sup> This action further chilled relations between Amadu and the Futanke community. Twelve Futanke



notables from Kingi subsequently approached Amadu with a plan: they would march to Segu with Amadu if he would withdraw all claims to Karta and agree to the creation of an autonomous state in the western regions of the conquered territories.<sup>46</sup> In exchange, they proposed that Amadu recognize Agibu as the leader of the western regions of the Umarian territories. The Futanke who accompanied Amadu to Segu also expected to return to Karta.

The Futanke proposal expressed an enduring commitment to residence in Karta and reiterated their desire for autonomy from Amadu Sheku. The proposal also rekindled the flames of earlier revolts against the Commander of the Faithful. Additionally, the designation of Agibu as the leader of the state may have been a statement of their preference for the accommodationist approach which he adopted toward the French.<sup>47</sup> Less than a year after this proposal, several of the oldest Futanke residents of Nioro reminded Amadu Sheku that Umar had specifically instructed them not to attack the French.<sup>48</sup> The Futanke of Kingi wanted to preserve and protect their new residences in Karta and feared that Amadu's approach was too provocative. They may have felt that Amadu had little of his own to lose in Karta.

Many Futanke from Jomboxo also expressed an accommodationist approach to the French. The Futanke slave-owners who invested in surplus grain production continued to sell millet at Medine. Grain statistics do not survive from this era, so Futanke involvement in the grain trade cannot be quantified. Amadu Sheku, nevertheless, was aware of their continuing involvement. In mid-1889, he responded with anger to Futanke protests that they did not have sufficient grain reserves to support Amadu's demands by retorting that they should not have sold it at the market at Medine.<sup>49</sup> Amadu's fears that the Futanke of Jomboxo were not prepared to fight the French led him to send his





supporters to live in Jomboxo.<sup>50</sup> Amadu's men occupied the villages in the western areas of the province where they would be in the line of attack if the French moved out of their Senegal valley headquarters at Kayes.

As the Futanke of Karta distanced themselves from Amadu Sheku's leadership, political rivalries in the desert-side north of Karta further unravelled the Umarian coalition. The death of Ahmad Mahmud, who led the Mashduff confederation ever since the 1860s, precipitated a bitter succession dispute among his relatives. In 1884, the year of Ahmad's death, his son Muhammad Mahmud succeeded his father as the leader of the Mashduff.<sup>51</sup> Ahmad Aly Mahmud, Muhammad's uncle, however, recruited a sizable following and challenged the succession.<sup>52</sup> Amadu Sheku called on Muhammad for support during the siege of Nioro and thereby involved himself in the dispute.<sup>53</sup> The dissident faction attacked caravans which passed through the north of Karta and raided groups which supported his rival. Muhammad was assassinated during the late 1880s, and the fraction led by Ahmad Aly Mahmud gained the initiative for the moment. Muhammad Mahmud's successor, his brother Moktar Shaykh, decided to turn to the French for support and left the Umarian coalition as the French moved into Karta in 1890.<sup>54</sup>

The interests of other African groups in Karta similarly led them to pull out of the Umarian coalition and accept the French as replacements for their Futanke overlords. French preparations for the conquest of Karta resembled Umar's strategy of the 1850s in that they exploited cleavages in Kartan society to ensure the neutrality if not the active support of former allies of the ruling elite. Soninke and Xassonke leaders throughout Karta sent signals to the French that they would not resist their advance on Karta.<sup>55</sup> When the French eventually marched into Karta in the early 1890s, several local Soninke and



Xassonke leaders joined the conquering army as it engaged the Umarian armies at several battles in Karta.

Commandant Supérieur Louis Archinard directed the French conquest of Karta.<sup>56</sup> He launched his conquest from Kayes, the upper Senegal valley post established by the French in the early 1880s. Archinard's army consisted of African soldiers (the tirailleurs sénégalais) who were recruited in Senegambia and led by French officers. Archinard also recruited Africans from the upper Senegal valley who would know the terrain and tactics of the Umarians. Among the upper Senegal valley recruits were Usman Gassi Sy, the Fulbe leader whom the French recognized as the Almamy of Bundu, and Demba Yamadu Diallo, the Xassonke leader from the upper Senegal valley.<sup>57</sup> Archinard attacked Umarian Segu before moving against Amadu Sheku in Karta, and claimed a victory in the middle Niger valley in April, 1890.

The French victory over Segu reinforced solidarity among the Futanke of Karta. Reports of Archinard's treatment of the Futanke of Segu - the executions, the forced march back to the Senegal valley, the distribution of wives and children - angered the Futanke of Karta greatly and instilled a will to fight the French to the death.<sup>58</sup> Archinard was unaware of the change in attitudes among the Futanke of Karta and sent letters to several Nioranke leaders in May, telling them that he was willing to negotiate with them separately from Amadu.<sup>59</sup> All recipients of the letters refused to respond, and told the envoy who delivered the letters to address all correspondence to Amadu Sheku.<sup>60</sup> The conflict between Amadu and the Futanke of Karta was put aside as they prepared for a last stand against the French.

Commandant Supérieur Archinard drove his forces against Konyakary in early June.<sup>61</sup> He defeated the Umarian armies, took control of the fort and



installed Demba Yamadu as the indigenous ruler of the region.<sup>62</sup> Many Futanke fled into the Gidiyumme hills and others moved to Kingi, but a thousand men remained in the surrounding villages to harass the French at Konyakary.<sup>63</sup> Amadu Sheku rallied a large force of Futanke from Kingi to join the forces in Jomboxo, and led nine thousand men into the province in August.<sup>64</sup> The combined forces of Jomboxo and Kingi mounted an attack on the fort at Konyakary on September 8th. Although the Futanke fought valiantly, the initiative did not dislodge the French and cost their forces dearly in lives, supplies and horses.<sup>65</sup> After the attack, the Futanke withdrew from Jomboxo and reinforced the Umarian garrisons in the upper Xoolimbinne valley.<sup>66</sup> In the wake of this defeat, the Futanke realized that the French advance could not be stopped, but decided nonetheless to fight to the end.<sup>67</sup>

Archinard resumed the French advance toward Nioro in early December. The Futanke fought valiantly at several battles in the upper Xoolimbinne valley, where several thousand died trying to slow Archinard's march to Nioro.<sup>68</sup> As Futanke losses mounted, Amadu Sheku assembled the Futanke army on the Kingi plateau and communicated his decision to embark on a hijra to the east.<sup>69</sup> He welcomed all who wanted to join him, but most Futanke chose to remain behind.<sup>70</sup> The Futanke allowed Archinard's forces to occupy the fort at Nioro without a struggle on the first of January, 1891, as Amadu retreated to the southeast of Nioro. The main Futanke army camped to the southwest of Nioro, and attracted Archinard's forces, which moved against them on January 4th. Amadu escaped to begin his hijra to the east.

After the battle and Amadu's departure from Karta, the Futanke army disbanded. Many soldiers did not want to suffer the humiliation of submitting to the French and decided to return to the Senegal valley. Among the initial



Futanke migrants were several hundred Halaybe who had made the fergo Nioro some five years earlier. They retreated into the Gidiyumme hills and returned to Futa Toro by way of the desert-side north of the Senegal valley.<sup>71</sup> While others similarly made their way to the middle valley without submitting to the French, most remained in Karta because Archinard's troops closed the routes between Karta and the Senegal valley.<sup>72</sup> Archinard's move was prompted by his fear that Futanke from the Senegal valley would migrate to Karta and organize a revolt against the French. As a result, most Futanke who wanted to return to the Senegal valley had to submit to Archinard and ask for French approval to leave Karta.

During the initial weeks of January, the Futanke sent envoys to Nioro to offer Archinard their submission.<sup>73</sup> As Archinard received the submissions, he told his superiors that his first inclination was to order the execution of all Futanke in Karta, but added that humanitarian and practical concerns stopped him.<sup>74</sup> He decided instead to send the Futanke back to the Senegal valley. Archinard was unable to issue a general order of expulsion in January, 1891 because it would have jeopardized the French campaign against Abdoul Bokar Kane in eastern Futa.<sup>75</sup> Given the desire to leave Karta among many Futanke, Archinard merely approved the requests of those who wanted to return and thereby reduced the number of Futanke in Karta without having to use force.<sup>76</sup>

Most Futanke who left Karta after the French conquest were migrants who had arrived in Karta in the 1880s and had not established a large household, but some of those who left Karta were long-time residents of Jomboxo whom Archinard prevented from returning to the province. After the conquest of Jomboxo, most Futanke had fled the province and taken refuge in Kingi or the Gidiyumme hills. Once Archinard captured the fort at Nioro, he ordered his





troops to prevent these emigrants from returning to Jomboxo for fear that the return of the Futanke would disrupt Demba Yamadu's attempt to consolidate power.<sup>77</sup> Since these Futanke distrusted Archinard and did not know what he planned to do with them, many left Karta in early 1891.<sup>78</sup> Those who remained with relatives in Kingi returned to Jomboxo after the relaxation of Archinard's policy beginning in 1894.<sup>79</sup>

In addition to recent migrants and residents of Jomboxo who "volunteered" to leave in 1891, Archinard expelled nine thousand Futanke from Kingi in 1893. His decision reflected his policy to send the Futanke back to Futa Toro, but it also was a response to developments in Kingi. Many Futanke who had decided to remain in Kingi in 1891 planned to return to the valley once they had accumulated enough foodstuffs to make the trip to Futa. Their strategy resembled the actions of ferganke from the Senegal valley, who often waited until after a good harvest to make the journey.<sup>80</sup> While they resided in Kingi, however, they came into conflict with Futanke leaders appointed by the French. These problems led Archinard to expel all the residents living in several villages in western Kingi.

Before leaving Karta to continue the French conquests in January, 1891, Commandant Supérieur Archinard organized the Futanke who decided to stay in Kingi into two administrative districts and designated a leader to collect taxes and recruit forced labor for the French. He appointed the former Eliman of Rindiaw to lead the Futanke living in villages to the west of Nioro and Malik Samba Sy, a member of the ruling house of Bundu, to supervise the Futanke living in villages to the south of Nioro.<sup>81</sup> Many Futanke in Eliman's district planned to leave Karta for the Senegal valley if the harvest of 1891 was abundant.<sup>82</sup> Since the primary reason for remaining in Kingi had been to



produce grain for the return to Futa, many refused to pay the colonial tax in grains and complained of Eliman's abuses.<sup>83</sup> Futanke resistance to Eliman's authority led the French to depose him in March, 1892.<sup>84</sup> Even after the move, the Futanke still resisted paying taxes and supplying forced labor to the French.<sup>85</sup>

Commandant Supérieur Archinard monitored the situation in Kingi, and decided to punish the Futanke of western Kingi. When he passed through Nioro on his way to the Niger River in early February, 1893, Archinard prepared a list of villages whose leaders he felt were hostile to the French and ordered them to return to the Senegal valley.<sup>86</sup> The residents of the villages had one week to pack and left under a military escort. Circumstances forced them to leave many possessions and a considerable quantity of grain behind. The order also separated many families, and thousands of Futanke applied to move to the Senegal valley in the months following the expulsion.<sup>87</sup> French officials at Nioro estimated that the region lost close to nine thousand Futanke between February and June, 1893.<sup>88</sup>

After 1893, the Futanke community in Karta did not experience any further populations losses. The French officers whom Archinard left in command at Nioro after 1893 did not order any additional expulsions because they felt that the loss of Futanke from Karta to the Senegal valley would disrupt the economy of the region.<sup>89</sup> Additionally, Futanke requests for passes to move to the Senegal valley declined in frequency until the turn of the century. Subsequent changes in the population of the region, therefore, fall properly in the domain of colonial history.

produce grain for the return to Fatick, many refused to sell the French grain and complained of Fatick's stores.<sup>87</sup> Fatick's refusal to sell grain authority led the French to depose him in March 1893.<sup>88</sup> The French the Fatick still retained having been and would not return to the French.<sup>89</sup>

Commandant Dupont, Africanist, decided to punish the Fatick of western Senegal on his way to the Niger River in early January 1893. He ordered a list of villages whose leaders he had sent to the French and ordered them to return to the Senegal valley. The French had one week to pack and left under a military escort. The French forced them to leave many positions and a considerable number of people behind. The order also separated many families and thousands of Fatick applied to move to the Senegal valley in the months following the expedition.<sup>90</sup> French officials at Niort estimated that the region lost more than 10,000 Fatick between February and June, 1893.<sup>91</sup>

After 1893, the Fatick community in Senegal did not experience any further population losses. The French officers whom Africanist left in command at Niort after 1893 did not order any additional expeditions because they felt that the loss of Fatick from Senegal to the Senegal valley would disrupt the economy of the region.<sup>92</sup> Additionally, Fatick requests for permission to move to the Senegal valley declined in frequency until the turn of the century. Subsequent changes in the population of the region, therefore, fall properly in the domain of colonial history.

### Conclusion

The disruption of the French conquest and its aftermath changed the character of the Futanke presence in Karta. If French estimates of the number of Futanke who left Karta between the French conquest and 1893 are correct, then Karta lost close to twenty thousand Futanke settlers. The dislocation also altered Futanke perceptions of the Umarian era. Instead of emphasizing the conflicts and revolts, the Futanke chose to celebrate the solidarity which characterized the movement at its inception and during Amadu Sheku's last days in Karta. The history of Shaykh Umar's holy war and Amadu's hijra became enshrined as the major events of the Umarian era. While this dissertation draws on oral data regarding other topics and eras, the jihad and hijra are the primary experiences by which Futanke in western Mali define their identity today.



### Notes

1. The most devout Futanke believe that Shaykh Umar merely disappeared and did not die at Degembere.
2. Amadu never completed the trip to Mecca, but died on route in northern Nigeria. See, for the hijra, David Robinson, "The Umarian emigration of the late nineteenth century", International Journal of African Historical Studies 20 (1987).
3. See, for an English translation of the chronicle, Robinson, "The Umarian emigration", appendix.
4. Yves Saint-Martin, L'Empire toucouleur et la France (Dakar, 1967); A.S. Kanya-Forstner, The Conquest of the Western Sudan (Cambridge, 1969); and B.O. Oloruntimehin, The Segu Tukulor Empire (London, 1972).
5. Amadu Sheku tried to institute a rigidly reformist Muslim regime in Karta during the late 1880s. Further work with the Arabic and oral materials will allow for a detailed examination of the era. The present chapter focuses narrowly on the political collapse and the French expulsion.
6. Amadu Sheku avoided occupying the fort at Nioro to deflect criticism from him for the tragic conclusion to the siege. Interview with Amadou Ba of Nioro.
7. ANM 1E207: Medine, 28 January 1886, Ct. Medine to Ct. Sup.
8. According to Blanc's informants, Amadu stayed at Nioro-Madina one month and resided at Yerere for over four months. Emile Blanc, "Contribution à l'étude des populations et de l'histoire du Sahel soudanais", Bulletin du Comité des Etudes Historiques et Scientifiques de l'Afrique Occidentale Française 7 (1924), p. 263.
9. Interview with Amadou Ba of Nioro.
10. Among the recruiters who left for the Senegal valley in late 1885 was the Eliman Rindiaw, who returned to Futa Toro in December, 1885. The Eliman had traveled to Segu in 1882 and accompanied Amadu to Nioro in 1884. ANM 1E207: Medine, 7 December 1885, Ct. Medine to Ct. Sup. See, for reports of Amadu's inability to recruit and army in Kingi, ANM 1E207: Medine, 28 February 1886, Ct. Medine to Ct. Sup.  
The migration from the lower and middle valley continued in large numbers in 1886 and 1887, but began to diminish in volume in 1888 and 1889. See, for French descriptions of the fergo of this era, ANS 1D84: Dagana, 6 and 10 June 1886, Ct. Dagana to Director of Internal Affairs; ANF.SOM SEN.I 80b: Saint Louis, 6 February 1889, Governor to the Minister; and ANS 13G41.
11. Amadu Sheku spent over a year at the end of Habib and Moktar's revolt in preparation for his campaign against the Bambara at Gemukura.





12. ANM 1E207: Medine, 28 February 1886, Ct. Medine to Ct. Cercles.
13. Historical accounts of Daha's revolt include: E. Blanc, "Contribution à l'étude", pp. 262-266; Colonel Henri Frey, Campagne dans le Haut-Sénégal et dans le Haut-Niger (Paris, 1888); A. de Loppinot, "Souvenirs d'Aguibou", Bulletin du Comité des Etudes Historiques et Scientifiques de l'Afrique Occidentale Française 2 (1919); and French correspondence and reports from Kita and Medine in ANS 15G126, 15G127, 1D79 and ANM 1E54 and 1E207.
14. See, for Malik Samba Sy's activities, Blanc, "Contribution à l'étude", p. 262. See, for the Fulbe Samburu, ANM 1E207: Medine, 28 January and 8 February 1886, Ct. Medine to Ct. Sup.
15. The Commandant at Kita encouraged Daha in 1885, but in 1886 the French concentrated on the activities of Mamadu Lamine and needed Amadu Sheku's support in this effort.
16. Blanc, "Contribution à l'étude", pp. 263-264.
17. ANM 1E207: Medine, 8 May 1886, Ct. Medine to Ct. Cercles.
18. ANM 1E207: Medine, 11 May 1886, Ct. Medine to Ct. Cercles.
19. Bassirou Alfa Diallo, one of Abdoul Aziz Diallo's informants, argued that the battle at Lambidu was as bloody as the battles fought against the French in defense of Konyakary and Nioro.
20. This argument appears in the account of Bassirou Alfa Diallo, during his interview with Abdoul Aziz Diallo.
21. Blanc, "Contribution à l'étude", p. 264.
22. See, for Mamadu Lamine's activities, Ivan Hrbek, "The early period of Mahmadu Lamin's activities", in Studies in West African Islamic History, Vol. I, edited by John Ralph Willis (London, 1979); Humphrey Fisher, "The early life and pilgrimage of al-Hajj Muhammad al-Amin the Soninke", Journal of African History 11 (1970); Daniel Nyambarza, "Le marabout El Hadj Mamadou Lamine d'après les archives française", Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines 9 (1969) and B.O. Oloruntimehin, "Muhammad Lamine in Franco-Tukulor relations, 1885-1887", Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria 4 (1968).
23. Samba Ngumma, whom Amadu had asked to supervise Jafunu during his campaign against Daha, tried to prevent Suaybu from moving into Gori. ANM 1E207: Medine, 1 May 1886, Ct. Medine to Ct. Cercles.
24. Jacques Méniand, Les Pionniers du Soudan, avant, avec et après Archinard, Volume 2 (Paris, 1931), p. 349.
25. Joseph Gallieni, Deux campagnes au Soudan français, 1886-88 (Paris, 1891).
26. ANM 1E54: Medine, 18 June 1886, "Notice politique".

12. ANM 18207: *Médecine*, 24 February 1886, 2: 104-105.
13. Historical account of Dab's early life, "Le Dab", pp. 262-266. *Colonial French Press*, 1886, 1: 104-105. Also in *Revue de l'Inde*, 1886, 1: 104-105.
14. See for Malik Zaid's early life, "Le Dab", pp. 262-266. *Colonial French Press*, 1886, 1: 104-105. Also in *Revue de l'Inde*, 1886, 1: 104-105.
15. The Commission on the activities of the French in the region of Kourou, 1886, 1: 104-105.
16. Blanc, "Contribution à l'histoire de la médecine en France", p. 104.
17. ANM 18207: *Médecine*, 1886, 1: 104-105.
18. ANM 18207: *Médecine*, 1886, 1: 104-105.
19. Bassirou Ali Lamin, son of Abdou Lamin, was a doctor in the region of Kourou, 1886, 1: 104-105.
20. This argument appears in the region of Kourou, 1886, 1: 104-105.
21. Blanc, "Contribution à l'histoire de la médecine en France", p. 104.
22. See for Lamin's activities, "Le Dab", pp. 262-266. *Colonial French Press*, 1886, 1: 104-105. Also in *Revue de l'Inde*, 1886, 1: 104-105.
23. Lamin's activities, "Le Dab", pp. 262-266. *Colonial French Press*, 1886, 1: 104-105. Also in *Revue de l'Inde*, 1886, 1: 104-105.
24. Jacques Néland, *Les Français du Soudan*, 1886-88 (Paris, 1891), Volume 2 (Paris, 1911), p. 349.
25. Joseph Gallien, *Leur campagne au Soudan français*, 1886-88 (Paris, 1891).
26. ANM 1824: *Médecine*, 18 June 1886, "Notice politique".

27. ANM 1E207: Medine, 3 August 1886, Ct. Medine to Ct. Sup.
28. Many ferganke joined Amadu's armies as he marched to Gori in late 1886 and put Suaybu under siege. See Abdoul Aziz Diallo's interview with Bassirou Alfa Diallo at Gavinané. See also Blanc, "Contribution à l'étude", p. 298.
29. ANS 1E207: Medine, 15 June 1886, Ct. Medine to Ct. Cercles.
30. Amadu Sheku turned to Murtada in the months that followed to recruit ferganke in the Senegal valley. See, for Murtada's recruitment activities in Futa Toro in 1888, David Robinson, Chiefs and Clerics (Oxford, 1975), p. 150.
31. ANM 1E54: Medine, no date, "Rapport sur la situation politique pendant le mois du fevrier [1887]".
32. ANM 1E207: Medine, 3 December 1886, Ct. Medine to Ct. Cercles.
33. ANM 1E54: Medine, no date, "Rapport sur la situation politique pendant le mois du fevrier [1887]".
34. ANM 1E54: Medine, Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, March, 1887.
35. ANM 1E54: Medine, Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, March, 1887.
36. ANM 1E54: Medine, "Rapport politique", June, 1887 and Bulletin agricole, commercial et politique, June, 1887.
37. I do not have contemporaneous evidence for such a statement during this era, but Amadou Ba of Nioro argued that Amadu Sheku felt this way during the end of his stay in Nioro (ie, the late 1880s).
38. Amadu Sheku authorized ferganke to settle in villages vacated by Muntaga's supporters in the Nioro region. In some instances, Amadu's supporters forced the Futanke to vacate the village. See, for example, the settlement history of Fosse, as reported in ANM 1D51: Nioro, 22 February 1954, "Etude sur le canton des Peuls Rangabe", compiled by Jacques Tisserant. In most cases, the ferganke and other supporters of Amadu settled in villages which had been abandoned by Muntaga's supporters, such as the Fulbe Samburu. See, for example, ANM 1D51: Nioro, 29 September 1954, "Rapport sur les cantons Foutankés et Kaartankés", compiled by Tisserant. See also, Blanc, "Contribution à l'étude, pp. 297-298.
39. Abdoul Aziz Diallo's interviews with Mamadou Alfa Diallo of Gavinané.
40. Abdoul Aziz Diallo's interviews with Bassirou Alfa Diallo and Mamadou Alfa Diallo at Gavinané; my interviews with Amadou Ba of Nioro; ANM 1D51: "Notice historique sur la region du Sahel", compiled in 1896 by Commandant de Lartigue from Nioro. His report appears in Bulletin du Comité de l'Afrique Française. Renseignements Coloniaux no. 4 (1898).



41. See, for a description of Amadu Sheku's inner circle, ANS 15G76, Chemise trois: Kayes, 7 August 1889, "Compte rendu du voyage de Demba Samba"; and Kayes, 27 December 1889, "Renseignements d'Abdoulaye Sow".

42. Abdulay led the campaign which Amadu sent to assist Demba Ibrahim in 1885. Saydu composed an Arabic chronicle of the Gemukura campaign and recounted an oral account of the siege of Gori in the early colonial period. See, for the account of the siege of Gori, Blanc, "Contribution à l'étude", pp. 305-314.

43. ANM 1D108: Konyakary, 1 October 1890, "Diombokho", compiled by Ct. Valentin.

44. ANS 15G76, Chemise trois: Kayes, 27 December 1889, "Renseignements d'Abdoulaye Sow".

45. ANM 1E54: Medine, 22 October 1888, "Rapport sur la situation politique".

46. ANM 1E54: Medine, 22 October 1888, "Rapport sur la situation politique".

47. Agibu eventually would become the only Tal brother to come to terms with the French; he received an appointment in the colonial political order and offered shelter to the members of the Tal family who were dispersed during the conquest. While the content of Agibu's negotiations with the French may not have been commonly known in late 1888, Agibu's willingness to deal with the French stood in contrast to Amadu's aggressive posture by that time.

48. ANS 15G76, Chemise trois: Bakel, 23 September 1889, Ct. Bakel to Ct. Sup. This report was based on the testimony of an informant from Gidimaxa, who heard the story from a Futanke tax collector.

49. See, for Amadu Sheku's retort, ANS 15G76, Chemise trois: Kita, 2 April 1889, Ct. Kita to Ct. Sup. This report was based on testimony from an African informant who had been in Nioro. See also ANS 15G76, Chemise trois: Kayes, 27 December 1889, "Renseignements d'Abdoulaye Sow".

The grain trade came to a halt in late 1889, not due to Futanke decisions not to trade but because poor rains kept the harvest below normal.

50. ANS 15G76, Chemise trois, Kayes, 4 June 1889, "Renseignements fournis par Sharif Abdoulrahman à son retour de Nioro."

51. Paul Marty, Etudes sur l'Islam et les tribus du Soudan, Volume 4 (Paris, 1921), pp. 131-134.

52. ANM 1D84: Nema, July 1922, "Les Meschdoufs et leur constitution", compiled by Commandant Pierret.

53. Frey, Campagne dans le Haut-Sénégal, pp. 100-101.

54. ANM 1D20: Kayes, 7 June 1900, "Introduction à l'étude de la politique maure au Sahel", compiled by M.G. Adam.

41. See for a description of Amadu Diallo's death, *Le Monde*, 1989, 27 August 1989, "Compte rendu de la mort d'Amadu Diallo", *Kayes* 27 December 1989, "Renseignements d'Abdoulaye Sow".
42. Abdou led the campaign which Amadu won in 1987. In 1987, Abdou composed an Arabic chronicle in which he recounted an oral account of the reign of Gao, the founder of the Kayes empire. See for the account of the reign of Gao, *Le Monde*, 1989, 27 August 1989, 303-314.
43. ANM ID108: Kayes, 1989, 27 August 1989, "Compte rendu de la mort d'Amadu Diallo", *Kayes* 27 December 1989, "Renseignements d'Abdoulaye Sow".
44. ANS 13076: Kayes, 1989, 27 August 1989, "Compte rendu de la mort d'Amadu Diallo", *Kayes* 27 December 1989, "Renseignements d'Abdoulaye Sow".
45. ANM 1834: Kayes, 1989, 27 August 1989, "Compte rendu de la mort d'Amadu Diallo", *Kayes* 27 December 1989, "Renseignements d'Abdoulaye Sow".
46. ANM 1834: Kayes, 1989, 27 August 1989, "Compte rendu de la mort d'Amadu Diallo", *Kayes* 27 December 1989, "Renseignements d'Abdoulaye Sow".
47. Agbo eventually would be executed in 1989. In 1989, he received an amnesty and was released. During the French occupation of the Kayes empire, the French officers offered shelter to the members of the Kayes empire. While the Kayes empire was in its decline, the French may have been commonly known as the Kayes empire. French stood in contrast to Amadu's empire. French stood in contrast to Amadu's empire.
48. ANS 13076: Kayes, 1989, 27 August 1989, "Compte rendu de la mort d'Amadu Diallo", *Kayes* 27 December 1989, "Renseignements d'Abdoulaye Sow". This report was based on the testimony of a Kayes informant who had been in Kayes. This report was based on the testimony of a Kayes informant who had been in Kayes. This report was based on the testimony of a Kayes informant who had been in Kayes.
49. See for Amadu Diallo's death, *Le Monde*, 1989, 27 August 1989, "Compte rendu de la mort d'Amadu Diallo", *Kayes* 27 December 1989, "Renseignements d'Abdoulaye Sow". This report was based on the testimony of a Kayes informant who had been in Kayes. This report was based on the testimony of a Kayes informant who had been in Kayes.
50. ANS 13076: Kayes, 1989, 27 August 1989, "Compte rendu de la mort d'Amadu Diallo", *Kayes* 27 December 1989, "Renseignements d'Abdoulaye Sow". This report was based on the testimony of a Kayes informant who had been in Kayes. This report was based on the testimony of a Kayes informant who had been in Kayes.
51. Paul Mary, *Enquête sur l'islam et les tribus du Senegal*, Volume 4 (Paris: 1981), pp. 131-134.
52. ANM ID84: Kayes, 1989, 27 August 1989, "Compte rendu de la mort d'Amadu Diallo", *Kayes* 27 December 1989, "Renseignements d'Abdoulaye Sow". This report was based on the testimony of a Kayes informant who had been in Kayes. This report was based on the testimony of a Kayes informant who had been in Kayes.
53. *Freya Campaigne dans le Haut-Sénégal*, pp. 100-101.
54. ANM ID20: Kayes, 1989, 27 August 1989, "Compte rendu de la mort d'Amadu Diallo", *Kayes* 27 December 1989, "Renseignements d'Abdoulaye Sow". This report was based on the testimony of a Kayes informant who had been in Kayes. This report was based on the testimony of a Kayes informant who had been in Kayes.

55. The Xassonke leader from Sero, Segá Moriba, communicated the message to the French. ANS 15G78: Segá Moriba to Ct. Sup.

56. See, for an overview of Commandant Supérieur Archinard's military actions in the Western Sudan, A.S. Kanya-Forstner, The Conquest of the Western Sudan (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 174ff.

57. Saada Amadu, Usman Gassi's cousin, received French recognition as the leader of Bundu in 1886 when Bokar Saada died. Saada Amadu did not meet French expectations, however, and lost the title to Usman Gassi in 1888. Usman Gassi first came to the attention of Commandant Supérieur Gallieni, who awarded Gassi the French medal of honor for his military activities during the French campaign against Mamadu Lamine in 1886-87. Gassi's rise to power was due in part to his promises to fight with Archinard. See Gallieni, Deux campagnes au Soudan français, 1886-1888 (Paris, 1891), pp. 55, 130, 324, 357ff; ANS 1D86: Bakel, 6 November 1886, Lt. Bonaccorsi to Ct. Sup.; ANS 13G243: French translation of Arabic letter from Usman Gassi to Ct. Sup. Archinard received at Senedubu on 30 October 1888; ANS 13G243: French translation of Arabic letter from Saada Amadu to Ct. Sup. Archinard; ANS 1D95: "Rapport de la campagne, 1888-89".

Demba Yamadu received French recognition as "King of Xasso" in exchange for his participation in the conquest. The Medine traitant, Momar Jak, recommended Demba Yamadu to the French official at Medine, who passed the information to Archinard. ANS 1D110: Medine, n.d., Ct. Medine to Ct. Sup. Demba Yamadu initially fought on Mamadu Lamine's side against the French, but subsequently established a relationship with the Commandant at Medine. ANS 15G82: Kayes, 14 November 1888, Chief of Political Affairs to Ct. Sup.

58. Amadou Ba of Nioro argues that the French treatment of the Segovian Umarian community convinced many Futanke in Karta to fight to the death against the French.

59. Copies of the Arabic originals can be found in ANS 15G79: pièces 120-130. A French translation of the letter appears in 15G76, Chemise deux: pièce 54.

60. The Futanke response to the letters is described in a note on the margins of a copy of one of the letters. ANS 15G76: pièce 54.

61. An important but often neglected source for the French conquest of Karta is Commandant Supérieur Archinard's Journal des marches. They provide data on Archinard's decisions which the formal reports on the military actions do not mention. See ANS 1D104, 1D114, 1D115 and 1D143. See also the letters and telegrams in 1D112, 1D116 and 1D117. See, for Archinard's reports, 1D105 and 1D119.

62. ANS 1D112: Konyakary, 17 June 1890, "Convention passé avec Yamadou".

63. See, for the withdrawal of the Futanke community from Jomboxo, ANS 104: Konyakary, 15 and 22 June 1890, entries in Archinard's journal des marches; and ANS 1D112: Konyakary, 19 June 1890, Ct. Konyakary to Ct. Sup. See, for the military actions of the Futanke who remained in Jomboxo, the weekly reports of Lieutenant Valentin, the French commandant at Konyakary, in ANS 1D112. Lt.





Valentin served at Konyakary from June to October, 1890.

Archinard tried to win the Futanke of Jomboxo to the French side, but his attempt failed. See, for a French translation of Archinard's letter to the Futanke of Jomboxo, ANS 15G81: translation #47 (15 July 1890).

64. ANS 1D112: Konyakary, n.d., "Mouvements des troupes d'Ahmadou du 24 Juin au 8 Septembre".

65. ANS 1D112: Konyakary, 11 September 1890, Ct. Konyakary to Ct. Sup.

66. ANM 1D108: Konyakary, 1 October 1890, "Diombokho et itinéraires sur Nioro".

67. Many informants argue that the Futanke knew that the effort against the French would not succeed, but note with pride that the Futanke wanted to fight so that they could die as martyrs. Their effort is celebrated in numerous oral accounts of the battles.

68. The French did not count the numbers of Futanke killed during the conquest, but their reports often noted that several hundred of soldiers were left on the each battlefield. Abdoul Aziz Diallo has worked extensively with Futanke oral traditions regarding the conquest, and suggests that perhaps as many as five thousand Futanke died in the defense of Karta. Corroborating evidence of the massive loss of life is the report of a French official which notes that most of the residents in the Futanke villages in Kingi were women, children and older men. ANM 1E60: Nioro, ? January 1893, Cpt. Sensarric to Ct. Sup.

69. The exact date of the assembly is difficult to reconstruct from the oral data. Nevertheless, the decisions made during the meeting are repeated widely and quite consistently by Futanke informants in contemporary western Mali.

70. Amadu may have discussed with those who remained behind the merits of remaining in Karta or returning to the Senegal valley. Informants in western Mali argue that the assembly concluded with Amadu's approval for the Futanke attempt to create an enduring presence in Karta. In the Senegal valley, however, some informants state the Amadu did not approve of the decision to remain in Karta, and asked the Futanke either to make the hijra or return to the Senegal valley (personal communication, Mustapha Kane).

71. ANS 1D117: Tambacara, 15 January 1891, Ct. Ruault to Ct. Sup. Archinard. Mustapha Kane collected a tradition regarding the Halaybe return during his field research in the Senegal valley in 1985. See, for his discussion of the return and the "Kartanke problem" in the middle Senegal valley during the early colonial period, M. Kane, "A History of Fuuta Tooro, 1890-1920: Senegal under Colonial Rule. The Protectorate", Michigan State University, Ph.D. dissertation, 2 volumes, 1987.

72. ANS 1D114: Nioro, 9 January 1891, entry in Archinard's journal des marches. Some Futanke caravans still were able to pass through the French barrier by moving through Sero. ANS 15G78: n.p. (Kayes?), n.d.(4 June 1891?), Ct. Sup. Archinard to Sega Moriba of Sero.



73. Some groups sent written submissions to Archinard. See ANS 1D121 and ANS 15G70.

74. ANM 2N36: Nioro, 9 January 1891, Ct. Sup. to the Under-secretary of State for the Colonies. While Archinard's dream of exterminating the Futanke of Karta never came to pass, his officers executed hundreds of Futanke leaders in the initial months of 1891. In April, 1891, Goannes Barbier witnessed the execution of several Futanke in Bakel and sent drawings to his sister who lived in France. Barbier's drawings and a condemnation of the executions eventually appeared in several journals in Paris and Bourdeaux. The Barbier drawings are discussed in several letters in ANF.SOM SOUDAN.II.2.

75. ANM 2N36: Nioro, 9 January 1891, Ct. Sup. to the Under-secretary of State for the Colonies.

76. Archinard gave any Futanke who wanted to leave Karta a pass to allow free passage to the Senegal valley. He did not allow anyone to head to the east. ANS 1D114: Nioro, 18 January 1891, entry in Archinard's journal des marches.

77. ANM 2N36: Nioro, 9 January 1891, Ct. Sup. to the Under-secretary of State of the Colonies. Archinard did approve the return of some Fulbe herders who had submitted to him prior to the conquest of Kingi. Despite Archinard's orders, many Futanke tried to return to Jomboxo, and came into conflict with Demba Yamadu of Konyakary. The Futanke attempts to return are described in the Rapport politiques from Nioro for May-July, 1891, in ANM 1E60. See, for Archinard's concern about Demba Yamadu's ability to consolidate power, ANS 15G88: summaries of Archinard's discussions with Demba Yamadu in Konyakary on 8, 10 and 11 June 1891. ANS 15G89: summaries of Archinard's discussions with Demba Yamadu in Konyakary on 27 October 1892.

78. ANS 1D114: Nioro, 15 and 19 January 1891, entries in Archinard's journal des marches. Many also left Kingi in early 1893. ANS 1D143: Nioro, 11 January, 13 and 14 February 1893, entries in Archinard's journal des marches.

79. ANS 15G92: Nioro, 1 August 1894, Ct. Nioro to Ct. Sup.

80. See my discussion in Chapter Three.

81. The French assumed that all of Malik Samba's subjects were "Bundunke", or former residents of Bundu. While a few villages in Malik Samba's area had been established by former residents of Bundu in the late 1850s, most subjects in the region south of Nioro were not originally from Bundu. The French distinction between the "Futanke" of the west and the "Bundunke" of the south was a "working misunderstanding" which persisted throughout the colonial era.

82. ANM 1E60: Nioro, 1 October 1891, "Rapport politique".

83. ANM 1E60: Nioro, 1 January 1892, "Rapport politique".

84. ANM 1E60: Nioro, 1 April 1892, "Rapport politique".

73. Some groups sent written submissions to Archambault, 200-201, 202-203, 204-205, 206-207, 208-209, 210-211, 212-213, 214-215, 216-217, 218-219, 220-221, 222-223, 224-225, 226-227, 228-229, 230-231, 232-233, 234-235, 236-237, 238-239, 240-241, 242-243, 244-245, 246-247, 248-249, 250-251, 252-253, 254-255, 256-257, 258-259, 260-261, 262-263, 264-265, 266-267, 268-269, 270-271, 272-273, 274-275, 276-277, 278-279, 280-281, 282-283, 284-285, 286-287, 288-289, 290-291, 292-293, 294-295, 296-297, 298-299, 300-301, 302-303, 304-305, 306-307, 308-309, 310-311, 312-313, 314-315, 316-317, 318-319, 320-321, 322-323, 324-325, 326-327, 328-329, 330-331, 332-333, 334-335, 336-337, 338-339, 340-341, 342-343, 344-345, 346-347, 348-349, 350-351, 352-353, 354-355, 356-357, 358-359, 360-361, 362-363, 364-365, 366-367, 368-369, 370-371, 372-373, 374-375, 376-377, 378-379, 380-381, 382-383, 384-385, 386-387, 388-389, 390-391, 392-393, 394-395, 396-397, 398-399, 400-401, 402-403, 404-405, 406-407, 408-409, 410-411, 412-413, 414-415, 416-417, 418-419, 420-421, 422-423, 424-425, 426-427, 428-429, 430-431, 432-433, 434-435, 436-437, 438-439, 440-441, 442-443, 444-445, 446-447, 448-449, 450-451, 452-453, 454-455, 456-457, 458-459, 460-461, 462-463, 464-465, 466-467, 468-469, 470-471, 472-473, 474-475, 476-477, 478-479, 480-481, 482-483, 484-485, 486-487, 488-489, 490-491, 492-493, 494-495, 496-497, 498-499, 500-501, 502-503, 504-505, 506-507, 508-509, 510-511, 512-513, 514-515, 516-517, 518-519, 520-521, 522-523, 524-525, 526-527, 528-529, 530-531, 532-533, 534-535, 536-537, 538-539, 540-541, 542-543, 544-545, 546-547, 548-549, 550-551, 552-553, 554-555, 556-557, 558-559, 560-561, 562-563, 564-565, 566-567, 568-569, 570-571, 572-573, 574-575, 576-577, 578-579, 580-581, 582-583, 584-585, 586-587, 588-589, 590-591, 592-593, 594-595, 596-597, 598-599, 600-601, 602-603, 604-605, 606-607, 608-609, 610-611, 612-613, 614-615, 616-617, 618-619, 620-621, 622-623, 624-625, 626-627, 628-629, 630-631, 632-633, 634-635, 636-637, 638-639, 640-641, 642-643, 644-645, 646-647, 648-649, 650-651, 652-653, 654-655, 656-657, 658-659, 660-661, 662-663, 664-665, 666-667, 668-669, 670-671, 672-673, 674-675, 676-677, 678-679, 680-681, 682-683, 684-685, 686-687, 688-689, 690-691, 692-693, 694-695, 696-697, 698-699, 700-701, 702-703, 704-705, 706-707, 708-709, 710-711, 712-713, 714-715, 716-717, 718-719, 720-721, 722-723, 724-725, 726-727, 728-729, 730-731, 732-733, 734-735, 736-737, 738-739, 740-741, 742-743, 744-745, 746-747, 748-749, 750-751, 752-753, 754-755, 756-757, 758-759, 760-761, 762-763, 764-765, 766-767, 768-769, 770-771, 772-773, 774-775, 776-777, 778-779, 780-781, 782-783, 784-785, 786-787, 788-789, 790-791, 792-793, 794-795, 796-797, 798-799, 800-801, 802-803, 804-805, 806-807, 808-809, 810-811, 812-813, 814-815, 816-817, 818-819, 820-821, 822-823, 824-825, 826-827, 828-829, 830-831, 832-833, 834-835, 836-837, 838-839, 840-841, 842-843, 844-845, 846-847, 848-849, 850-851, 852-853, 854-855, 856-857, 858-859, 860-861, 862-863, 864-865, 866-867, 868-869, 870-871, 872-873, 874-875, 876-877, 878-879, 880-881, 882-883, 884-885, 886-887, 888-889, 890-891, 892-893, 894-895, 896-897, 898-899, 900-901, 902-903, 904-905, 906-907, 908-909, 910-911, 912-913, 914-915, 916-917, 918-919, 920-921, 922-923, 924-925, 926-927, 928-929, 930-931, 932-933, 934-935, 936-937, 938-939, 940-941, 942-943, 944-945, 946-947, 948-949, 950-951, 952-953, 954-955, 956-957, 958-959, 960-961, 962-963, 964-965, 966-967, 968-969, 970-971, 972-973, 974-975, 976-977, 978-979, 980-981, 982-983, 984-985, 986-987, 988-989, 990-991, 992-993, 994-995, 996-997, 998-999, 1000-1001, 1002-1003, 1004-1005, 1006-1007, 1008-1009, 1010-1011, 1012-1013, 1014-1015, 1016-1017, 1018-1019, 1020-1021, 1022-1023, 1024-1025, 1026-1027, 1028-1029, 1030-1031, 1032-1033, 1034-1035, 1036-1037, 1038-1039, 1040-1041, 1042-1043, 1044-1045, 1046-1047, 1048-1049, 1050-1051, 1052-1053, 1054-1055, 1056-1057, 1058-1059, 1060-1061, 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1244-1245, 1246-1247, 1248-1249, 1250-1251, 1252-1253, 1254-1255, 1256-1257, 1258-1259, 1260-1261, 1262-1263, 1264-1265, 1266-1267, 1268-1269, 1270-1271, 1272-1273, 1274-1275, 1276-1277, 1278-1279, 1280-1281, 1282-1283, 1284-1285, 1286-1287, 1288-1289, 1290-1291, 1292-1293, 1294-1295, 1296-1297, 1298-1299, 1300-1301, 1302-1303, 1304-1305, 1306-1307, 1308-1309, 1310-1311, 1312-1313, 1314-1315, 1316-1317, 1318-1319, 1320-1321, 1322-1323, 1324-1325, 1326-1327, 1328-1329, 1330-1331, 1332-1333, 1334-1335, 1336-1337, 1338-1339, 1340-1341, 1342-1343, 1344-1345, 1346-1347, 1348-1349, 1350-1351, 1352-1353, 1354-1355, 1356-1357, 1358-1359, 1360-1361, 1362-1363, 1364-1365, 1366-1367, 1368-1369, 1370-1371, 1372-1373, 1374-1375, 1376-1377, 1378-1379, 1380-1381, 1382-1383, 1384-1385, 1386-1387, 1388-1389, 1390-1391, 1392-1393, 1394-1395, 1396-1397, 1398-1399, 1400-1401, 1402-1403, 1404-1405, 1406-1407, 1408-1409, 1410-1411, 1412-1413, 1414-1415, 1416-1417, 1418-1419, 1420-1421, 1422-1423, 1424-1425, 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1790-1791, 1792-1793, 1794-1795, 1796-1797, 1798-1799, 1800-1801, 1802-1803, 1804-1805, 1806-1807, 1808-1809, 1810-1811, 1812-1813, 1814-1815, 1816-1817, 1818-1819, 1820-1821, 1822-1823, 1824-1825, 1826-1827, 1828-1829, 1830-1831, 1832-1833, 1834-1835, 1836-1837, 1838-1839, 1840-1841, 1842-1843, 1844-1845, 1846-1847, 1848-1849, 1850-1851, 1852-1853, 1854-1855, 1856-1857, 1858-1859, 1860-1861, 1862-1863, 1864-1865, 1866-1867, 1868-1869, 1870-1871, 1872-1873, 1874-1875, 1876-1877, 1878-1879, 1880-1881, 1882-1883, 1884-1885, 1886-1887, 1888-1889, 1890-1891, 1892-1893, 1894-1895, 1896-1897, 1898-1899, 1900-1901, 1902-1903, 1904-1905, 1906-1907, 1908-1909, 1910-1911, 1912-1913, 1914-1915, 1916-1917, 1918-1919, 1920-1921, 1922-1923, 1924-1925, 1926-1927, 1928-1929, 1930-1931, 1932-1933, 1934-1935, 1936-1937, 1938-1939, 1940-1941, 1942-1943, 1944-1945, 1946-1947, 1948-1949, 1950-1951, 1952-1953, 1954-1955, 1956-1957, 1958-1959, 1960-1961, 1962-1963, 1964-1965, 1966-1967, 1968-1969, 1970-1971, 1972-1973, 1974-1975, 1976-1977, 1978-1979, 1980-1981, 1982-1983, 1984-1985, 1986-1987, 1988-1989, 1990-1991, 1992-1993, 1994-1995, 1996-1997, 1998-1999, 2000-2001, 2002-2003, 2004-2005, 2006-2007, 2008-2009, 2010-2011, 2012-2013, 2014-2015, 2016-2017, 2018-2019, 2020-2021, 2022-2023, 2024-2025, 2026-2027, 2028-2029, 2030-2031, 2032-2033, 2034-2035, 2036-2037, 2038-2039, 2040-2041, 2042-2043, 2044-2045, 2046-2047, 2048-2049, 2050-2051, 2052-2053, 2054-2055, 2056-2057, 2058-2059, 2060-2061, 2062-2063, 2064-2065, 2066-2067, 2068-2069, 2070-2071, 2072-2073, 2074-2075, 2076-2077, 2078-2079, 2080-2081, 2082-2083, 2084-2085, 2086-2087, 2088-2089, 2090-2091, 2092-2093, 2094-2095, 2096-2097, 2098-2099, 2100-2101, 2102-2103, 2104-2105, 2106-2107, 2108-2109, 2110-2111, 2112-2113, 2114-2115, 2116-2117, 2118-2119, 2120-2121, 2122-2123, 2124-2125, 2126-2127, 2128-2129, 2130-2131, 2132-2133, 2134-2135, 2136-2137, 2138-2139, 2140-2141, 2142-2143, 2144-2145, 2146-2147, 2148-2149, 2150-2151, 2152-2153, 2154-2155, 2156-2157, 2158-2159, 2160-2161, 2162-2163, 2164-2165, 2166-2167, 2168-2169, 2170-2171, 2172-2173, 2174-2175, 2176-2177, 2178-2179, 2180-2181, 2182-2183, 2184-2185, 2186-2187, 2188-2189, 2190-2191, 2192-2193, 2194-2195, 2196-2197, 2198-2199, 2200-2201, 2202-2203, 2204-2205, 2206-2207, 2208-2209, 2210-2211, 2212-2213, 2214-2215, 2216-2217, 2218-2219, 2220-2221, 2222-2223, 2224-2225, 2226-2227, 2228-2229, 2230-2231, 2232-2233, 2234-2235, 2236-2237, 2238-2239, 2240-2241, 2242-2243, 2244-2245, 2246-2247, 2248-2249, 2250-2251, 2252-2253, 2254-2255, 2256-2257, 2258-2259, 2260-2261, 2262-2263, 2264-2265, 2266-2267, 2268-2269, 2270-2271, 2272-2273, 2274-2275, 2276-2277, 2278-2279, 2280-2281, 2282-2283, 2284-2285, 2286-2287, 2288-2289, 2290-2291, 2292-2293, 2294-2295, 2296-2297, 2298-2299, 2300-2301, 2302-2303, 2304-2305, 2306-2307, 2308-2309, 2310-2311, 2312-2313, 2314-2315, 2316-2317, 2318-2319, 2320-2321, 2322-2323, 2324-2325, 2326-2327, 2328-2329, 2330-2331, 2332-2333, 2334-2335, 2336-2337, 2338-2339, 2340-2341, 2342-2343, 2344-2345, 2346-2347, 2348-2349, 2350-2351, 2352-2353, 2354-2355, 2356-2357, 2358-2359, 2360-2361, 2362-2363, 2364-2365, 2366-2367, 2368-2369, 2370-2371, 2372-2373, 2374-2375, 2376-2377, 2378-2379, 2380-2381, 2382-2383, 2384-2385, 2386-2387, 2388-2389, 2390-2391, 2392-2393, 2394-2395, 2396-2397, 2398-2399, 2400-2401, 2402-2403, 2404-2405, 2406-2407, 2408-2409, 2410-2411, 2412-2413, 2414-2415, 2416-2417, 2418-2419, 2420-2421, 2422-2423, 2424-2425, 2426-2427, 2428-2429, 2430-2431, 2432-2433, 2434-2435, 2436-2437, 2438-2439, 2440-2441, 2442-2443, 2444-2445, 2446-2447, 2448-2449, 2450-2451, 2452-2453, 2454-2455, 2456-2457, 2458-2459, 2460-2461, 2462-2463, 2464-2465, 2466-2467, 2468-2469, 2470-2471, 2472-2473, 2474-2475, 2476-2477, 2478-2479, 2480-2481, 2482-2483, 2484-2485, 2486-2487, 2488-2489, 2490-2491, 2492-2493, 2494-2495, 2496-2497, 2498-2499, 2500-2501, 2502-2503, 2504-2505, 2506-2507, 2508-2509, 2510-2511, 2512-2513, 2514-2515, 2516-2517, 2518-2519, 2520-2521, 2522-2523, 2524-2525, 2526-2527, 2528-2529, 2530-2531, 2532-2533, 2534-2535, 2536-2537, 2538-2539, 2540-2541, 2542-2543, 2544-2545, 2546-2547, 2548-2549, 2550-2551, 2552-2553, 2554-2555, 2556-2557, 2558-2559, 2560-2561, 2562-2563, 2564-2565, 2566-2567, 2568-2569, 2570-2571, 2572-2573, 2574-2575, 2576-2577, 2578-2579, 2580-25

85. ANM 1E60: Nioro, 1 June and 30 August 1892, "Rapport politique".
86. ANS 1D143: Nioro, 13 and 14 February 1893, entries in Archinard's journal des marches; ANM 1E109: Nioro, 15 April 1893, "Renseignements politiques".
87. Many of the applicants may have been herders who were not in their villages at the time of the expulsion. ANM 1E60: Nioro, 1 March, 1 April and 1 May 1893, "Rapport politique".
88. ANM 5D15: Nioro, 8 April 1893, Cpt. Sensarric to Ct. Sup.; ANM 1E109: Nioro, 23 September 1893, Ct. Nioro to Ct. Sup.
89. ANM 1E211: Nioro, 4 November 1893, Ct. Nioro to the Acting Ct. Sup.

85. ANM 1E00: Niamey, 1 June and 30 August 1993, "Rapport politique".

86. ANS 1D143: Niamey, 13 and 14 February 1994, "Journal des mandats: ANM 1E100: Niamey, 12 June 1993, "Rapport politique".

87. Many of the applicants may have been based in villages at the time of the explosion. ANS 1E100: 1 May 1993, "Rapport politique".

88. ANM 3D13: Niamey, 8 April 1993, "Journal des mandats: ANM 1E100: Niamey, 12 June 1993, "Rapport politique".

89. ANM 1E211: Niamey, 4 September 1993, "Rapport politique".

## CONCLUSION

### Dissent, Revolt and the Umarian Era in Karta

According to the standard historical literature, the French conquest of Karta in 1891 ended over thirty years of imperial Umarian control as the "Tukulor Empire" crumbled in the face of the French advance. The rise and decline of the "Tukulor Empire" is convenient way to summarize the events of the late nineteenth century while simultaneously equating the imperial nature of both the Umarian and French regimes. In this study, however, I make the case for the autonomy of Umarian Karta within a constellation of Umarian successor states in the Western Sudan. The continuities which link the Massassi and Umarian regimes - the Futanke occupation of Karta, the alliances made with local groups and the military policies of the state - suggest that the Umarian leadership in Nioro established a successor to the Massassi state in Karta. Economically, Karta remained outside the cowrie zone which defined the economies of Segou and Masina. Most importantly, the dissent and revolt which dominated the political history of the Umarian era in Karta shows that the Futanke settlers resisted Amadu Sheku's attempts to assert his imperial authority over their affairs.

# CONCLUSION

Distance, Revolt and the Revolution

According to the standard historical interpretation, the Russian conquest of Karakum in 1881 ended over three centuries of Turkic rule in the region. The rise and fall of the "Turkic Empire" in the late nineteenth century was a consequence of the decline of the "Turkic Empire" in the late nineteenth century while simultaneously marking the imperial nature of both the Ottoman and French regimes. In this study, however, I make the case for the autonomy of Ottoman Karakum within a constellation of Ottoman successor states in the Western Desert. The conclusion which I find the Ottoman and Ottoman regimes - the Russian occupation of Karakum, the alliance made with local groups and the military policies of the state - suggest that the Ottoman leadership in Niara established a successor to the Ottoman state in Karakum. Economically, Karakum remained outside the economic zone which defined the economies of Suez and Mersin. Most importantly, the decline and revolt which dominated the political history of the Ottoman era in Karakum shows that the Russian settlers resisted Amara Shokri's attempt to assert his imperial authority over their affairs.



Late nineteenth century descriptions of a "Tukulor Empire" express the coincidence of interest among the French in the Senegal valley and Amadu Sheku. The French aspired to add the riches of the Western Sudan to their sphere of influence and negotiated several treaties with Amadu Sheku, whom they described as the imperial ruler of the region. Amadu wanted access to Saharan salt and European weapons which passed through Karta, and hoped to recruit the Futanke of the region into his army. Beginning in the late 1860s, Amadu tried to assert control over the leaders of Karta. Historians of the Umarian past embrace French assessment of Amadu's imperial status instead of an internal view of the political struggle because they rely solely on French-mediated materials. This study breaks from this limited data base by examining Arabic documents and oral traditions as well as French sources.

The picture of Umarian rule in Karta which emerges from this broad canvassing of data is one of economic vitality and political competition. In the first regard, the Umarian era in Karta did not lead to the disruption of exchanges of goods across the ecological zones of the region as occurred in Umarian Segou and Masina. The Umarian state in Karta also encouraged the expansion of the gum trade and other exchanges at the Senegal valley post of Medine. These economic dimensions of Umarian rule reinforced the multi-ethnic character of the Umarian coalition in the 1860s. Soninke and Moorish merchants saw the Umarian successor to the Massassi state as one which shared their goal of greater integration with the commercial networks of the Senegal valley and the Western Sudan. While the Massassi tried to promote regional exchanges during the early nineteenth century, the actions of the Umarian, Soninke and Moorish groups linked Karta more intimately to regional commercial networks during the late nineteenth century.



The economic vitality of Karta encouraged some Futanke groups to invest in productive activities in Karta. The Futanke who led the conquest of Karta and remained behind as Umar's forces headed to Segu in 1859 were poised to involve themselves in grain production for the market since their booty included large slave-holdings. Many moved into the economy and supervised plantations around several Umarian centers. Commercial grain production in the hands of Futanke landlords emerged most clearly in the area near Konyakary, but a similar process of embourgeoisement occurred in the region near Nioro. As the gum and grain trades continued to expand in the late nineteenth century, these activities became more and more lucrative. In time, Futanke landlords came to oppose frequent demands for soldiers from the Umarian state.

As these Futanke withdrew from the military, others migrated from the Senegal valley and took their places in the army. The population influx from the Senegal valley reflected both push and pull forces. In the lower Senegal valley, where the French presence was strongest during the late nineteenth century, most migrants left because of French policies such as the liberation of captives and the halting of raids by the Fulbe herders of the region. In the middle valley, the migrants often left because of resistance to taxes imposed by the regime in Futa Toro. In both regions, the actions of Umarian recruiters who arrived with letters from relatives and promises of booty in the "holy lands" of Karta convinced those who were considering migration to join their caravans. The arrival of Futanke recruits with desires for material booty filled the ranks of the Umarian army in Karta. The arrival of large numbers of Futanke migrants also influenced the course of political events in Karta.

As the Umarian state in Karta emerged as a multi-ethnic coalition under the leadership of Mustafa Keita, Umar's appointee as the leader of Umarian

The economic vitality of Karta encouraged some Futsank groups to migrate in productive activities in Karta. The Futsank who left the mountains of Futa and remained behind as Umar's forces headed to Karta in 1818 were forced to involve themselves in grain production for the nearest urban demand, with the large slave-holdings. Many moved into the valleys and the mountainsides around several Umanian centers. Commercial grain production in the valleys of Futsank lands was changed most clearly in the mid-18th century, as the similar process of encroachment was going on in the mountain areas. The gum and grain trades continued to expand in the low-land areas, where these activities became more and more important. In the Futa, the trade came to oppose frequent demands for soldiers from the towns and villages.

As these Futsank withdrew from the valleys, they migrated from the Senegal valley and took their places in the mountains. The population influx from the Senegal valley reflected both grain and gum trade in the lower Senegal valley, where the French presence was strongest during the late nineteenth century; most migrants left because of French policies such as the liberation of captives and the halting of trade by the Fula herders of the region. In the middle valley, the migrants often left because of resistance to taxes imposed by the regime in Futa-Toro. In both regions, the actions of Umanian soldiers who arrived with letters from relatives and promises of booty in the "holy lands" of Karta convinced those who were considering migration to join their caravans. The arrival of Futsank recruits with desires for mutual booty filled the ranks of the Umanian army in Karta. The arrival of large numbers of Futsank migrants also influenced the course of political events in Karta.

As the Umanian state in Karta emerged as a multi-ethnic coalition under the leadership of Mustafa Karta, Umar's appointee as the leader of Umanian

Karta, the Futanke community in Karta pressed for representation in the offices of the state and greater influence over policy. The arrival of migrants added additional voices to the initial Futanke settlers, and strengthened the resolve of the Futanke community in Karta. This political activity coincided with the initiative of Shaykh Umar's sons - Amadu Sheku, Habib, Moktar and others-who yearned for greater political power in the conquered territories. Habib and Moktar's leadership was attractive to some Futanke, and many rallied behind them when they arrived in Karta. Amadu Sheku responded to the challenge by marching to Nioro, and he defeated his brothers. Amadu's political success was due to the incorporation of new Senegal valley recruits into his army and the support of Muntaga, who joined Amadu at a crucial moment in the revolt.

After defeating Moktar and Habib, Amadu Sheku hoped to seize the political initiative and establish the basis for an imperial Umarian state in Karta. He appointed agents to collect taxes on the gum and salt trades, and ordered the Futanke of Karta to accompany him back to Segou. Amadu wanted to weaken the influence of the Futanke community in the west and to increase his capital's attraction to Senegal valley migrants, who usually settled in Konyakary or Nioro. The local interests of the Futanke in Karta, however, led them to reject Amadu's invitation and chastise the Commander of the Faithful for his imperial ambitions. Most Senegal valley migrants also refused to obey Amadu's order. His treatment of Habib and Moktar became a reason for and a symbol of their resistance to Amadu. In response, Amadu Sheku appointed six brothers to rule Karta in hopes that their oaths of allegiance to him would lead eventually to Futanke acceptance of Amadu's authority over Karta.

In the years after the first revolt and Amadu's return to Segou in 1873, further divisions emerged within the Futanke community in Karta. Differences



in material interests among those who invested in production and those who fought in the military became quite pronounced. Resistance to military recruitment among the former group forced Muntaga, Bassiru and the other Tal brothers to recruit in the Senegal valley. The arrival of recruits exacerbated political tensions within the Futanke community, and two factions emerged, identified internally as the "war" and "peace" camps. The Futanke factions disagreed on the military policies of the Umarian state and on the appropriate response to the French, but they agreed on the issue of autonomy from Segu and Amadu Sheku. Most Futanke in Kingi encouraged Muntaga to resist Amadu Sheku's demands and thereby forced Amadu either to concede Karta's autonomy or to force them into submission.

Amadu Sheku decided that he needed to meet Muntaga's challenge and rally the Futanke under the banner of the Commander of the Faithful. This decision expressed his desire for Umarian solidarity vis-à-vis the French advance into the interior. Nevertheless, the events surrounding the lengthy siege of Nioro suggest that, in the minds of most Futanke in Karta, the external threat was subordinate to the question of Kartan autonomy from Segu. As the political drama unfolded, Futanke resistance stiffened and Amadu lost any chance of emerging as an imperial ruler. Amadu was able once again to bolster his army with recent Senegal valley migrants, and he stayed the tide of resistance in Karta. His inability to orchestrate a peaceful conclusion to the political drama, however, left him to deal with other internal challenges without a firm base of support in Karta. Amadu never returned to Segu, and the Umarian era concluded without Amadu's army mounting an offensive against the French. His resistance to the French was expressed in the hijra to the east after the fall of Nioro in 1891.





The two revolts reveal interconnections among social, economic, political and ideological processes. Amadu Sheku's brothers mounted their succession challenges in Karta because the continuing influx of Senegal valley migrants allowed them to recruit soldiers for their armies. Amadu Sheku responded to the challenges because the Futanke community had created a successful economy in the west, but their success equally made them rebuff Amadu's requests that they move to Segou. The history of the political dissent and revolt shows that most Futanke in Karta chose to defend their interests in an autonomous state over their loyalty to Umar's designated successor. While they did not dispute Amadu's claim to the title of Commander of the Faithful, they disagreed as to the responsibilities associated with it.

Differing understandings of the proper Umarian mission defined the major political differences which divided the followers of Shaykh Umar after their leader's death. Amadu Sheku represented the perspective that Segou was the focus of Umar's holy war and that the obligation to wage jihad had never ended. He spent his life calling for campaigns against the Bambara and the French, and sought to weave the conquered territories into one imperial Muslim domain under his leadership as Commander of the Faithful. He rallied the migrants who continued to leave the Senegal valley for military exploits in Karta, but never was able to convince these Futanke to move to Segou. Karta remained the focus of interest for the migrants. Most Futanke who had settled in Karta during the 1850s, too, felt that Karta was their home. They had no sense of obligation to wage holy war with Amadu Sheku, and resisted his demands for assistance as they tried to consolidate power in Karta. They understood their mission as the colonization of a "holy land" where their sons, daughters and grandchildren could live as Pulaar-speaking Muslims. They



divided into factions on questions of local military policy, but remained united on the question of autonomy from Segou and moving residences to the middle Niger valley.

Karta was the first major Umanian victory and the conquered territory closest to the Senegal valley. These historical circumstances combined with Umar's initial policy of encouraging Futanke settlement in Karta to make this successor state the most attractive Umanian territory to Futanke migrants and may have been the most viable successor state of the late nineteenth century. It clearly was not a province of an imperial state. The accomplishments of the late nineteenth century are not forgotten by the descendants of the initial colonists and subsequent migrants. The dissident traditions of Muntaga's heroic actions during the siege of Nioro remain an important historical account in the region.

Through the tradition of Muntaga's revolt, the current Futanke community recognizes the stubborn resolve of their ancestors to remain in Karta against all challenges. Cerno Hadi, Muntaga's grandson and religious leader of the Futanke in western Mali, influences current understandings of past events so that Muntaga's death has been transformed into an act which, according to current understandings of the Muslim tradition, does not deny him a place in paradise. As events recede further into the past, Muntaga's actions may undergo further transformations. The number of days of the siege may be reduced further, and Muntaga's death may merge with that of Cerno Mamadu Khayar's defiance. My point is not to criticize the transmission of oral traditions but to assert that dissent and revolt forever will be enshrined in the history of the Umanian community of the Western Sudan.

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Niger valley.

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community of the Western Sahel.

## SOURCES

### UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS

**DOCUMENTATION IN ARABIC.** This section lists the collections of Arabic source materials consulted for this study. I discuss individual documents in the text and notes of the dissertation.

#### Archives Nationales du Sénégal.

##### Ancienne Série.

- 15G 62 Correspondance indigène, El Hadji et ses partisans, 1860.
- 15G 63 Correspondance indigène, Kaarta, 1840-83.
- 15G 64 Correspondance indigène, Khasso, 1860-83.
- 15G 68 Correspondance indigène, 1887-90.
- 15G 69 Correspondance indigène, maures et peulhs, 1888-91.
- 15G 70 Correspondance indigène, cercle de Nioro, 1890-91.
- 15G 71 Correspondance indigène, 1890-91.
- 15G 76 Correspondance avec les chefs indigènes, 1880-94.
- 15G 77 Correspondance avec les chefs indigènes, 1880-96.
- 15G 78 Correspondance avec les chefs indigènes, 1880-96.
- 15G 79 Lettres des chefs indigènes, 1880-96.
- 15G 80 Lettres arabes, 1880-96.
- 15G 81 Correspondance indigène, 1888-90.
- 15G 82 Correspondance indigène, 1888-90.

Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris. The relevant Arabic documents are located throughout this collection. I have noted in this section only those dossiers in which lengthy runs of documents occur.

##### Manuscrits Orientaux, Fonds Arabe.

- 5484
- 5559
- 5561
- 5640
- 5680
- 5689
- 5713
- 5716
- 5717
- 5721
- 5737
- 5740

#### Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire, Université de Dakar.

##### Fonds Brevié, Section Futa Toro.

- Cahier 10: Tarikh d'El Hadj Omar. Arabic text and French translation.
- Cahier 11: Récit sur El Hadj Omar. Arabic text and French translation.



**COLLECTIONS OF ORAL MATERIALS.** This section is organized by collector, and subsequently by name of informant or location of group interview.

Fonds Oudiary Makan Dantioko of Bamako, Mali. Collected in June 1980.  
Djammé Tounkara and Sadio Sakhone at Balle, Mali.

Fonds Abdoul Aziz Diallo of Bamako, Mali. Collected in September 1977.  
Oumar Aly Ba at Koriga, Mali.  
Amadou Dethié at Mayel, Mali.  
Bassirou Alfa Diallo at Gavinané, Mali.  
Mamadou Alfa Diallo at Gavinané, Mali.  
Demba Sow at Mayel, Mali.  
El Hadj Isma Sow at Gavinané, Mali.

Fonds Abdoul Aziz Diallo of Bamako, Mali. Collected in May and June 1979.  
Hadja Mandou Dia at Nioro, Mali.  
Amadou Boubou Koyel Diallo at Gumbayel, Mali.  
Mamadou Alfa Diallo at Gavinané, Mali.  
Mamadou Ngaye at Nioro Tougouné, Mali.  
Aliou Sow dit Tamake at Leyya, Mali.  
El Hadj Isma Sow at Gavinané, Mali.  
Mamadou Sow at Gavinané, Mali.  
Mamadou Lamine Sy at Gavinané, Mali.  
Group interview with village elders at Birou, Mali.  
Group interview with village elders at Kolomina, Mali.  
Group interview of village elders at Nioro Madina, Mali.

Fonds John Hanson. Collected from January to April 1986.  
Amadou Ba at Nioro, Mali.  
Bakary Diagouraga at Nioro, Mali.  
El Hadj Maeyel Diako at Konyakary, Mali.  
Baedel Diallo at Diamveli, Mali.  
Thierno Ibrahim Diallo at Nioro, Mali.  
El Hadj Amadou Djigué at Gadiaba Kadiel, Mali.  
El Hadj Omar Hatta Kaba Jakite at Nioro, Mali.  
El Hadj Sadiku Kaba Jakite at Nioro, Mali.  
El Hadj Ahmadou Kane at Gadiaba Kadiel, Mali.  
Hady Seck at Nioro, Mali.  
Yilé Sibey at Nioro, Mali.  
Abdoul Sy at Nioro Madina, Mali.  
Amadou Thierno Hadi Tall at Nioro, Mali.  
Bassirou Lamine Tall at Kayes, Mali.  
Cheikh Mamadou Tall at Konyakary, Mali.  
El Hadj Omar dit Karamokho Tall at Bamako, Mali.  
Thierno Hadi Tall at Nioro, Mali.  
Thierno Yahya Tall at Konyakary, Mali.

# COLLECTIONS OF ORAL MATERIALS. This section is arranged by collection and subsequently by name of informant or location of collection.

Fonds Ouhady Mafan Dando of Bamako, Mali. Collection of oral materials.  
Djamine Toure and Sadio Sadio in Bamako, Mali.

Fonds Abdou Aziz Diallo of Bamako, Mali. Collection of oral materials.  
Oumar Aly Ba at Bamako, Mali.  
Amadou Kourou at Bamako, Mali.  
Bassirou Ali Diallo at Bamako, Mali.  
Mamadou Ali Diallo at Bamako, Mali.  
Doudou Sow at Bamako, Mali.  
El Hadj Ibrahima Sow at Bamako, Mali.

Fonds Abdou Aziz Diallo of Bamako, Mali. Collection of oral materials.  
Hadj Mamadou Dia at Bamako, Mali.  
Amadou Boudou Diallo at Bamako, Mali.  
Mamadou Ali Diallo at Bamako, Mali.  
Mamadou Nigaye at Bamako, Mali.  
Aliou Sow at Bamako, Mali.  
El Hadj Ibrahima Sow at Bamako, Mali.  
Mamadou Sow at Bamako, Mali.  
Mamadou Lamine Sy at Bamako, Mali.  
Group interview with village chiefs at Bamako, Mali.  
Group interview with village chiefs at Bamako, Mali.  
Group interview of village chiefs at Bamako, Mali.

Fonds John Hanson. Collected from January to April 1950.

Amadou Ba at Niara, Mali.  
Bakary Diawara at Niara, Mali.  
El Hadj Mamey Diallo at Konyakary, Mali.  
Boudou Diallo at Diawara, Mali.  
Thierno Ibrahim Diallo at Niara, Mali.  
El Hadj Amadou Diallo at Gambia Kadiou, Mali.  
El Hadj Oumar Hans Kaba Jakita at Niara, Mali.  
El Hadj Sadio Kaba Jakita at Niara, Mali.  
El Hadj Amadou Kaba at Gambia Kadiou, Mali.  
Hadj Sack at Niara, Mali.  
Ylla Sily at Niara, Mali.  
Abdou Sy at Niara, Mali.  
Amadou Thierno Hadi Tall at Niara, Mali.  
Bassirou Lamine Tall at Konyakary, Mali.  
Cheikh Mamadou Tall at Konyakary, Mali.  
El Hadj Oumar die Karamoko Tall at Bamako, Mali.  
Thierno Hadi Tall at Niara, Mali.  
Thierno Yaya Tall at Konyakary, Mali.



Group interview with village elders at Batama, Mali.  
 Group interview with village elders at Gadiaba Diala, Mali.  
 Group interview with village elders at Korkodjo, Mali.  
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 Group interview with village elders at Segala, Mali.  
 Group interview with village elders at Youri, Mali.

Fonds David Robinson. Collected in August and September 1976  
 Demba Sadio Diallo at Konyakary, Mali.  
 Bougouboly Alfa Makki Tall at Bandiagara, Mali.  
 Lamine Bassirou Tall at Kayes, Mali.

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- 1D 40 Monographies du cercle de Goumbou.
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- 1D 74 Rapport du Cpt. Mazillier sur le Jomboxo, le Sero et les Maures d'Askeur.
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- 5D 15 Mouvements de la population, cercle de Nioro, 1893.
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- 5D 51 Statistiques de la population, Haut-Sénégal-Niger, 1905-13.

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- 1E 109 Renseignements politiques, Nioro.
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- 2E 12 Reclamations pour retourner au Sénégal, 1901-07.
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- 9G 9 Traités avec divers tribus Maures, 1829-1897.
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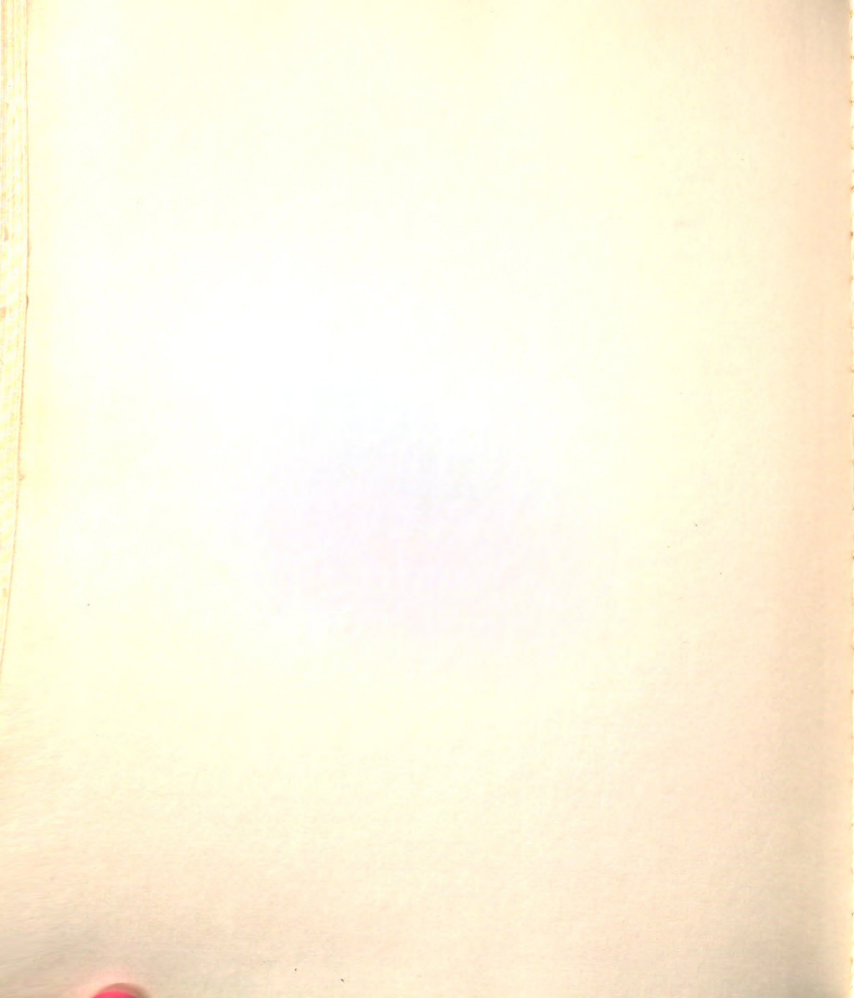
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