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**HISTORY FROM THE MUSADU EPIC:
THE FORMATION OF MANDING POWER ON THE
SOUTHERN FRONTIER OF THE MALI EMPIRE**

VOLUME I

By

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A DISSERTATION

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of History

2002

ABSTRACT

HISTORY FROM THE MUSADU EPIC: THE FORMATION OF MANDING POWER ON THE SOUTHERN FRONTIER OF THE MALI EMPIRE

By

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This dissertation chronicles how oral traditions describe the early history of the town of Musadu in Guinea-Conakry, and discusses how these traditions broaden our understanding of Musadu and West Africa's past. From the mid-nineteenth century to the late-twentieth century, more than one hundred oral traditions were collected from the Manding, Kpelle and several other of today's ethnic groups which claim that some of their ancestors immigrated from Musadu in the distant past.

These oral narratives that were collected in today's Guinea and Liberia tell how Musa Kromah founded Musadu or 'Musa's town.' A later Kromah named Zo Musa became a leader in Musadu. The traditions then relate how the warrior Foningama Kamara went to Musadu and drove Zo Musa south. Foningama is said to have been the descendant of a well-known chief who fled from the Mali empire. Foningama's move to Musadu is tentatively dated to the second half of the fifteenth century during a period of out-migration as Mali began to weaken and some of its outlying provinces started to break away. Musadu would have been founded before the mid-fifteenth century according to this schema, perhaps one or two centuries earlier.

Musadu is centrally located in the savannah between the Manden and the ocean, and is an important link between both regions. The Manden is situated along the Middle Niger River, and formed the nucleus of the Mali empire that Sunjata Keita founded in the early-to-mid thirteenth century. Many Manding who left Mali claimed the prestige of the empire. The name Mani or Konya-Mani where Musadu is located indicates that its people were culturally and economically connected to the Mali empire. Mani is a variant of Mali, Mandi, Mande, Mane and Manden.

Musadu also seems to have been associated with events that occurred off the Atlantic coast of today's Liberia and Sierra Leone in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Portuguese and Dutch traders reported that Mane warriors embarked from an area in the interior called Mandi and invaded the coast. This dissertation argues that these invaders were led by Kamara warriors who traveled from Mani. Musadu's location in Mani and some of the oral traditions support the notion that the Mani of Musadu is the same as Mandi, and that some of the Mane invaders came from Mani.

The supplementary appendix comprises English translations of several English and French sources that provide most of the source material for this study.

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To my wife, Tami, and my sons Jamie, Ryan and Adam

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would first like to thank my committee for guiding me through years of readings, course work and papers. Each member is a leader in his field, and I am fortunate to have such a strong committee. Dr. Alan Fisher and Dr. Alford T. Welch taught me a wealth of information about Islam and Ottoman History, and helped me view the many types of Islam that I have encountered in West Africa in a much wider perspective. I took my first class at Michigan State University with Dr. Harold Marcus who introduced me to the rigors of the historian's craft. He was the first to encourage me to enter this program, noting on one of my papers that "even missionaries need Ph.Ds." Dr. David Robinson is my major advisor who led me through many seminars and papers. He is a constructive critic who has always given timely advice and thoughtful feedback, faithfully encouraged me to finish this project, and established a record of excellence in teaching and scholarship that all of his students aspire to attain. Dr. David Conrad is a patient but firm examiner of my work, and I thank him for spending much more time reading and commenting on these chapters than one would expect for someone who has asked to be a member of a committee who teaches at another university. I am lastly grateful that Dr. Raymond Silverman agreed to serve as the outside reader. I attribute many of the strengths of this dissertation to my committee members, and regret that I was not able to take all of the points into consideration that they suggested. I alone am responsible for all of the weaknesses of this work.

There are several other persons who I would like to thank for helping me at different stages of my academic career. My linguistics-anthropology professor, Dr. David

Dwyer, taught me many things that were valuable when I started to learn Maniyakā, and when I later worked with my assistants to translate the oral traditions that have been collected. Dr. James Fairhead, Dr. Martin Ford, Dr. Svend Holsoe, Dr. Christian Højbjerg, Dr. Lansine Kaba, Dr. Melissa Leach, Dr. Robert Leopold, Dr. Donald Wright and Dr. Andreas Massing have shared many ideas and/or resources at various stages of my graduate experience. Dr. Valentin Vydrine has answered many translation questions. Dr. George Brooks and Dr. Joseph Lauer have always been valuable supporters and good sources of information. None of these individuals, likewise, are responsible for the shortcomings of this work. Two of my first mentors who demonstrated how historians analyze sources and write history were Mr. Mel Clark of Kenowa Hills High school and Dr. Edwin Van Kley at Calvin College.

I would also especially like to thank Dr. Mamadou Koudiougou Diallo, Vice-Recteur de la Recherche of the Université of Conakry for granting me permission to conduct fieldwork. Dr. Diallo had has done much to encourage research in Guinea in the last several years, and his efforts in this regard are worthy of special mention.

I of course could not have done the fieldwork for this dissertation without the able help of many friends. I first thank Makula Mammadi Kromah and Mohammed Chèjan Kromah for taking me from Liberia to Guinea in the mid-1980s. Djobba K. Kamara, Jomah Kamara and Boakai Yamah rank with them as having been interested in the history of their own peoples and having been willing to help me in any way that was possible. Persons who rendered invaluable assistance when I returned to Guinea and Liberia in the early-to-mid 1990s were Djobba Kamara, Mammadi Kromah, Boakai Yamah, Mohammed Chèjan Kromah and Mohammed Oppong Sanoe. I particularly thank

Tènu Kamã Kamara, Kèwulèn Kamara, Mammadi Kènè, Kabine Kromah and the late Vase Kamala, Fata Bakari Kromah, Yaya Dole and Alafã Konè for providing especially good interviews. When I set about translating all of the oral traditions in 1992, the persons largely responsible for doing this work and helping me understand some of the finer points of history and culture were Djobba Kamara, Boakai Yamah, Bangali Kromah, Mohammed Chèjan Kromah, Mammadi Kromah, Faliku Sanoe, Adama Talawole, Ali Kromah, Kèlèti Fofana, Ansumana Cissé and Amara Dole.

Some of my missionary colleagues were helpful. My third grade teacher, Mrs. Naff (SIM), was the first person who piqued my interest in African history. Jeff and Debbie Morton (SIM), Dave and Faith Jaeger (SIM), Bob and Dianne Harner (Christian Missionary and Alliance) and Eric and Renate Mayeur-Maeder (CMA) kindly hosted me at different times and places in Guinea. Mark Wilson (SIM) was of particular assistance when I went to Kankan in 1992. Dr. Hannes Wiher and his family of Mission Philafricaine were especially welcoming when I went to Macenta.

I would finally like to thank God for giving me the opportunity to grow up in Liberia and Nigeria, attend MSU, and teach in Liberia and Nigeria. My wife Tami and my sons Jamie, Ryan and Adam kindly let me periodically go to Guinea for weeks at a time, and then patiently let me spend hundreds of hours during the next several years working on this dissertation in the basement of our home. Special thanks to Tami for reading the manuscript and indicating several errors in the final stage of its preparation. Tami's parents Wallace and Alice Smith, and my parents Larry and Karen Geysbeek have been valuable sources of physical and spiritual encouragement; I owe them special thanks. The inordinate amount of time that I have been absent from the lives of my family to complete

this program is tantamount to the blacksmith who makes extreme sacrifices so he can expand his knowledge and power. In the end, I trust that the sacrifices that have made are justified, and that something good will come of this work.

PREFACE

In this dissertation, I am writing about the early history of the ancient town of Musadu located in southeast Guinea. Musadu probably became an important commercial link between the forest region of West Africa and the Mali empire by the fifteenth century, and very likely emerged as the capital of a powerful state known as Mani in the sixteenth century. I conducted most of my research while I was teaching as a missionary with SIM in Monrovia, Liberia. I lived in Monrovia with my family for four and one-half years from the mid-1980s and the early to mid-1990s. I went to Guinea six times for a total of about four months, and conducted forty-five interviews.

Musadu continues to be an important town in Guinea because so much has happened there in the past. According to oral traditions, Musadu is the place where many of today's ethnic groups in Guinea and Liberia claim their origins, the pivotal town in southeastern Guinea where the Manding established a power base and started to expand toward the coast, the site where the Manding and their neighbors cultivated strong traditional religious and Islamic institutions, and an important "sacred space" where people still go to augment their power. The sub-region of Konya or Mani or Konya-Mani where Musadu is located is probably also the same as the powerful interior "kingdom" of Mandi that Europeans wrote about in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The oral traditions explain how Musadu's early heroes, Zo Musa and Foningama, supposedly made Musadu into the town of renown and spiritual power that remains to today.

My connection to Africa that led to this study of Musadu started early on because I was raised in Liberia as the son of missionary parents. My parents worked at Radio

Station ELWA and ELWA Hospital that SIM (formerly the Sudan Interior Mission) operated near Monrovia.¹ I started to become interested in African history during my junior year of college when I took a course that used Alex Haley's "Roots" to connect black American and African history. I became more serious about studying African history when I traveled to West Africa during the Christmas break of 1978. I first went to Galmi, Niger, where I visited my parents who had been transferred to work at a hospital. From Galmi, I traveled to Jos, Nigeria to visit the place where I attended Hillcrest Highschool. (In the 1970s, many missionaries in West Africa sent their children to boarding school at Hillcrest). En route to Jos, I stayed at the SIM guesthouse in Kano. While at the guesthouse, I started to read a copy of Joseph E. Harris's *Africans and Their History* that I found on one of the bookshelves. Harris's book left me with the impression that Africa had a lively and interesting history, and that I wanted to learn more about Africa's past.

After I graduated from college I looked for a place to do graduate work in African history. I learned that Michigan State University offered this course of study, so I applied to their M.A. program. At the time, I did not know that MSU had one of the best Africa related programs and libraries in the country, and was not aware that my mentors-to-be, David Robinson and Harold Marcus, were respective leaders in West African and East African history.

My experience at MSU changed the way that I looked at missions and Africa. When I walked into my first class, I had probably spent more time in Africa than all of the other students in class combined. Yet to my chagrin, I quickly learned that I knew less

¹A radio station, academy, hospital, and several residences are located on the ELWA compound (Reed /Grant 1970). ELWA is an acronym for Eternal Love Winning Africa.

about Africa than anyone else. While I was not surprised to learn that the two six-week periods of Liberian history that I took in third grade at ELWA Academy would not get me very far, I nonetheless had the misguided feeling that I learned some substantial things about the continent's history simply because I had grown up there.

During my early years as a graduate student, I started to collect materials about Liberia. I learned that many of the books and articles about Liberia were written from the perspective of the Americo-Liberian elite who colonized the land in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The historiography of Liberia resembled my own experience; I, like many scholars of Liberia, largely examined the history and culture of the country from the view of outsiders. I was physically and socially isolated from the daily lives of Liberians when I grew up at ELWA. I lived on a mission compound, interacted with Liberians on my own piece of America in Africa, and was schooled in a tradition that was almost exclusively American. Liberian history, likewise, was largely written by the minority Americo-Liberian elite and like-minded foreigners who reflected the interests of the social elite. Paramount in their writings were works about the American Colonization Society, independence, Liberia's presidents and Americo-Liberian "heroes."

I reacted to my experience in Liberia and the research trend that dominated Liberian studies. Even though I appreciated many efforts of the missionaries who went to Liberia to introduce the people to Christianity, I came to believe that it was counter-productive for missionaries to live on compounds, and felt that Africans should have increased leadership voices in the missionary enterprise. While most of the continent went through the formal stage of decolonization in the early-1960s, many missionaries in Liberia still operated with a colonial mind set. These missionaries, like the political and

military colonizers of old, viewed themselves as elite who were sent to Africa to paternalistically enlighten the dark continent. Were there no Africans to whom missionaries could divest real power and authority? Missionaries in some other SIM fields were learning how to transfer power to Africans. In Liberia, however, many missionaries (there were some noted exceptions) only started to think about granting real autonomy to Africans after Liberia's civil war literally came crashing down on the ELWA compound in 1990.² After the last missionaries fled during the harried days of July 1990, leaving only a few Liberians and most of the buildings to stand, what other choice did the missionaries have?

As I developed more African approaches to Africa in graduate school, I started to ferret out materials that examined the multiple histories of the indigenous Africans whom the Americo-Liberians had conquered. Fortunately, S. Jangaba M. Johnson, Bai T. Moore, Warren d'Azevedo, Svend Holsoe and others started to develop a solid strand of such material in the 1950s and 1960s. Holsoe, in particular, compiled the single largest collection of primary source materials on Liberia, and became the first editor of the *Liberian Studies Journal*. Following the lead of these men, I started to ask questions like: who were the Africans who lived in today's Liberia before the first American and black settlers of African descent docked off the coast in 1821? How did relations develop between the settlers and indigenous peoples over time as colonists established outposts along the coast and started to expand into the interior? Before I returned to Liberia to teach at ELWA Academy, David Robinson suggested that I examine the history of the Manding people because he understood that a study of the Manding would help me bridge

²O'Brien 1991; Ardill 1997.

coastal Liberia and the hinterland.

When I went to Liberia with my wife and our first son in December 1983, I went armed with books and articles that Johnson, Moore, d'Azevedo, Holsoe and others had written. Included in this material was Holsoe's 1976-77 article "The Manding in Western Liberia: An Overview." Holsoe surveyed the history of the Manding presence in Liberia and southeast Guinea from the nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century, and included information about a fabled town called Musadu that the famous Liberia explorer Benjamin Anderson visited in 1868 and 1874. In 1971, Humphrey Fisher worked with Frank Cass publishers to reprint Anderson's journeys. Although Fisher's book was out of print when I learned of it in 1980, I took a photocopy of the book to Liberia. Fisher wrote that he tried to go to Musadu in 1967 when he started preparing to republish Anderson's two accounts, but explained that the Guinean authorities expelled him shortly after he arrived in the capital city of Conakry. Fisher later went to Liberia where he collected some oral traditions about "Zo Musakoma" and "Fangamma" which allegedly explained how Musadu was founded. When I taught seventh grade social studies at ELWA Academy, I turned the experience into an African history class. There, I devoted several weeks to Liberian history, and taught some of the material that Holsoe and d'Azevedo had published.

My interest in African history coincided with the new work that SIM had started to do among the "Mandingo" in Liberia. In the late-1970s, Radio ELWA started to broadcast in Maniyakā. Maniyakā is the name of the language that the Manding speak in Liberia, southeast Guinea, and the fringe southwestern border of Côte d'Ivoire. The Manding who live more to the north toward Kankan speak Maninkakā. SIM also started

to work among the Manding who lived in Lofa county in the late-1970s. When we arrived in 1983, SIM was thinking about sending missionaries to Beyla province in southeast Guinea. SIM agreed with our suggestion that we assist in its efforts by studying the culture, history, and language of the Maniyaka Manding. So, during the first eight months that we lived in the suburb of Sinkor near central Monrovia, I use the language materials that Sue Cutler, Abu Talawole and David Dwyer published for the Peace Corps in 1981 to start to learn Maniyakã.

Guinea's president Seku Turé died in April 1984, only months after we arrived in Liberia. Seku Turé had only allowed a few westerners to remain in Guinea after Guinea gained her independence from France in 1958, so the outside world had little first hand knowledge about what was going on in the country. After President Turé died, all of my Manding friends told me that the new president of Guinea, Lassana Conté, was encouraging foreigners to visit Guinea. In May, some Manding elders took me to the Guinea embassy in Monrovia to help me get a visa. The embassy denied my first request, but granted me a two week visa when I reapplied in August.

Makula Mammadi Kromah, a cassette tape vendor and neighbor with whom I played soccer, took me to visit his family in Yomou and Macenta for my first trip to Guinea in August 1984. We traveled up through Liberia's central province of Bong, and crossed the border at the Guinean town of Lagbara (Lakpala) situated about twenty miles west of Ganta (see Figure 3). We first traveled to Yomou where we visited some of Mammadi's relatives, and then motored over the then treacherous rainy season road to Macenta where most of Mammadi's family lived. The clan head of the Kromah, Fata Bakari, welcomed and housed us. Curious about how the Kromah migrated to Macenta,

and desirous to learn if anyone remembered Benjamin Anderson, I asked Kromah if I could interview him. He deferred to the oldest man in the yard, Lanse Kromah, who consented to be interviewed. At the time, I did not realize that this interview would become part of a larger research project that would lead to this dissertation. I would like to have visited Musadu, but such a trip was out of the question at the time; I was just happy to visit Guinea. During the Christmas break of 1984 and into the early days of 1985, I took Tami and Jamie to Macenta for three weeks. While there, I finally interviewed Fata Bakari Kromah, and recorded the testimonies of Bolon Mori Kamara and Majòngbè Sako when we visited Lassaou. In Chapter 1, I discuss the approach that was used to conduct interviews, the problems of data collection, and information about the interview situations.

Sometime in 1985, Mammadi Kromah asked me if I wanted to buy a cassette tape that had some history. I purchased the tape and asked the ELWA Manding broadcaster Djobba Kamara to translate the tape. When I read the translation, I was amazed to read a long, coherent, and systematic story about Sunjata and the Mali empire, Zo Musa Kòma, Foningama and the town of Musadu, and the great nineteenth century Maniyaka warrior Samori Turé. The person who narrated the story was Vase Kamala, a teacher from Fombadu in southeast Guinea who had visited Monrovia in 1984. Apart from understanding the significant fact that Kamala was telling stories about Sunjata and Samori all the way down in Liberia, I wondered if the Musadu that Kamala spoke of was the same Musadu that Benjamin Anderson visited in the nineteenth century? If so, could his narrative about Zo Musa Kòma and Foningama be variations of the same stories about Zo Musakoma and Fangamma that Humphrey Fisher recorded in 1967?

When I compared Vase Kamala and Humphrey Fisher's accounts, I was surprised to learn that the Musadus and people in both accounts were the same; people in the 1980s were still narrating stories about Musadu that Humphrey Fisher recorded nearly twenty years later. Having learned that people still remembered that Musadu was an important town historically, I set out to find out more about this town. Musadu intrigued me because people were still talking about its ancient past, and because it was the town that Benjamin Anderson visited. Indeed, although most Liberian textbooks referenced at least one of the journeys that Anderson made to Musadu, they cast Musadu as a nearly mythical town that the French stole from Liberia. Liberian history also implied, by silence, that no Liberian had returned to Musadu since Anderson's second visit in 1874. In fact, Musadu's precise location was not even clear in some of the scholarly literature.³

I first visited Musadu in March 1986. The person who took me was Mohammed Chèjan Kromah, an artist, journalist and soccer team mate. Chèjan and I set out for Guinea on March 9, and returned to Monrovia twenty days later. We first went to N'Zerekore where we visited some of Chèjan's friends, and then headed north to the town of Watafélédu to find Chèjan's father Mustafa Kromah. Chèjan knew that his father had some friends in Musadu, so we wanted his father to take us there. On the way to Watafélédu, we stopped at Siatulò (Lansedu?) where we interviewed Fofin Sumawolo. We did not find Chèjan's father when we reached Watafélédu, but we did interview an ex-pawn, Sile Kromah, during our short stay there.

²See, for example, Duignan and Gann (1984:392), Thomasson (1987:15, fn. 16), and Bassett and Porter (1991:394, fn. 4). Of course, their doubts about whether Anderson ever went to Musadu or whether Musadu existed can be attributed to the fact that Guinea's borders had been closed to outside researchers for several years (see Fairhead et. al. 2003: Introduction, ch. 7). Scholars like Currans correctly identified Musadu's location in Beyla province (1974:12).

We then traveled north to Kerouane and over to Manabili where we visited Chèjan's in-laws. From Manabili, we walked to Damaro where we stayed for one week. Damaro is an old Kamara town that one of Foningama's sons allegedly founded. There we interviewed the chief, Amara Kamara. Damaro's youth association organized a soccer game in which we played. Chèjan and I had purchased a soccer ball and set of uniforms for Damaro's soccer team. The association called a bard from another town to perform with some of the musicians and dancers in Damaro, and later hosted a modern dance.

We then traveled back to Watafélédu. We interviewed Manju Kromah, and then walked across the Fon-Going range along a narrow pass to Mamolodu where Chèjan's father farmed. Thankfully, Chèjan's father arrived two days later. The three of us then walked from Mamolodu to Watafélédu, conducted a follow-up interview with Fofin Sumawolo in Lansedu, and went to Beyla. One woman in Beyla told us that nobody in Musadu would tell us anything about their history or show us any landmarks, but she did not deter us from at least trying to visit the town. For me, this was a pilgrimage of sorts, going to the very town that Benjamin Anderson visited over a century earlier.

On March 24, 1986, we chartered a pickup truck to transport us to Musadu. At about 11:30 a.m we drove across the French-made iron bridge that covers the Dion River, passed the cotton tree that the residents associate with Benjamin Anderson, and proceeded to the large white mosque that is located in the center of town. This road overlay the same path that Benjamin Anderson traversed in 1868. We waited at the mosque while Chèjan's father went to find someone. He returned and took us to Alhaji Yaya Dole's house in Dolela quarter (Figure 31). Yaya Dole was a grandson of chief Vafin Dole whom Benjamin Anderson had met. While we were exchanging introductions

and explaining the purpose of our visit, the Sous-Prefect burst into our room and asked what we were doing. We explained our mission and satisfied his curiosity. He took us to his office where he gave us an official welcome, and then allowed us to proceed on our way.

We then returned to Dolela quarter where Yaya Dole gave us a one hour interview. He explained how Musadu was founded, told about Musadu's turbulent nineteenth century history, and talked about the American (Benjamin Anderson) who visited Musadu. Yaya Dole said that he gave us a good interview because he knew Mustafa Kromah. Dole recalled how he had met Chèjan's father during the 1970s when someone from Musadu almost died. When the person was taken to a nearby hospital and did not get better, the person was transported to Chèjan's father who healed the person. Mustafa Kromah was a well-known herbalist and hunter in Konya-Mani.

Dole then gave us a tour of Musadu. He showed us the rock in Donzola quarter that the oral traditions say Zo Musa stood on to look for wild game (Figure 33), the rock near the mosque where Foningama allegedly made a sacrifice, the execution grounds behind the mosque, the famous cotton tree, and many other sites. We then boarded the pickup and drove out to a rocky formation called Doofatini that is in a wooded area near Musadu (Figure 41). Yaya told us that this was the site where Zo Musa and other early inhabitants made important sacrifices, and claimed that all of the secret societies in West Africa originated from this location. Four hours later, we returned to Beyla.

When our family returned to the States in June 1986, we planned to go back to Liberia the following year. In February 1987, however, we learned that our son Ryan who had been born in Liberia was deaf. We decided to remain in the States for at least three

years so Tami could return to college and needed to add a hearing impaired endorsement to her elementary education teaching certificate so she could teach Ryan when we returned to Africa. I subsequently enrolled in the Ph.D. program in History at MSU.

We planned to move back to Liberia in June 1990, but it was clear by then that missionaries were leaving Liberia - not going there. The border raid that Charles Taylor and his National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) led from Côte d'Ivoire on Christmas Eve of 1989 resulted in a full scale civil war that led to President Samuel Doe's execution in September 1990. One month later, I went with two other missionaries to Guinea to learn how SIM could help the Liberian refugees who had streamed across the border. I even tried to visit Musadu on this trip, but failed. I went to Macenta and met up with Djjobba Kamara who had fled from Monrovia. While in Macenta, I made a side trip to Douama-Sobala to visit my friend Mammadi Kromah. Djjobba and I then traveled to N'Zerekore, proceeded to Diakolidu and Beyla, and continued on up to Kankan by way of public transport where most of SIM's missionaries eventually settled. We conducted at least one interview in each of these towns.

On our way through Beyla, Djjobba and I decided to go to Musadu to visit Yaya Dole and his family. We stopped at a checkpoint on the outskirts of Beyla, but were not permitted to proceed because one of the persons in the taxi got into an argument with one of the policemen. From Beyla, we boarded a taxi and went to Kankan. Although I did not conduct any interviews in Kankan, I scoured many of the cassette tape vendors in Kankan and purchased over fifty tapes. Most of these tapes contained oral traditions about Sunjata and Samori that were more relevant to David Conrad's research than mine, so I passed the tapes to him.

In December 1991, my family went to Nigeria where we taught for one semester at Kent Academy in Miango near Jos. In Jos, I met a Maniyaka whom I had known from Liberia named Boakai Yamah. Yamah went to Jos to attend a seminary after he fled from Monrovia in 1990. In June 1992, I went to Monrovia for one week, flew to Abidjan, traveled up to Odienne with Yamah to visit missionary friends, and then went overland to Macenta by way of Danane and N'Zerekore. I was going to Macenta to work with David Conrad to translate interviews that we had recorded or purchased. Conrad and I had been awarded a National Endowment of Humanities grant to publish oral traditions that we had acquired in Guinea. My major advisor, David Robinson, had written up this grant through the auspices of the Association for the Publication of African Historical Sources. I stopped in N'Zerekore on my way to Macenta where I found Mohammed Chèjan Kromah painting in an art shop. When I explained the nature of my visit, and told him that we needed his help to translate, he agreed to go to Macenta. Chèjan did translate, but we soon decided to have him illustrate some of the scenes that we were translating. David Conrad published several of Chèjan's illustrations in his recent book on Sunjata, and I have included some of Chèjan's illustrations in this work. Boakai Yamah, meanwhile, had flown from Jos to work with us in Macenta and learn about his family who was still in Liberia.

Jeff and Debbie Morton and their family graciously housed Conrad, Yamah and myself in Macenta. Every morning we walked to Fata Bakari's house in the center of town to translate with Boakai Yamah, Mohammed Chèjan Kromah, Djjobba Kamara and three other assistants. While in Macenta, I also met Mammadi Kromah again. He had fled from Monrovia and was farming in a nearby town. Mammadi took me to Douama-Sobala

and Lassaou, two towns that we had visited in 1985 and 1990. One day, one of my assistants, Adama Talawole, took me to the town of Daro which is near the Liberian border. Even though we were translating several hours a day, I needed to take as many opportunities as possible to conduct research for my own dissertation. I therefore conducted fourteen total interviews in Macenta, Douama-Sobala, Lassaou and Daro during that month.

In mid-July, I left Macenta and returned to N'Zerekore. I fortuitously met Oppong Sanoe, the brother of Faliku Sanoe who was Martin Ford's assistant when Ford conducted his dissertation research among the Dã (Gio) and Maniyaka in Liberia during the mid-1980s. Sanoe and I traveled to Beyla and Diakolidu where we interviewed Alhaji Kabine Kromah and Alafã Konè. Although I contracted malaria while we were in Beyla, we proceeded to Musadu on July 28. When we arrived, I sadly learned that Yaya Dole had died one year earlier. Yaya's family, however, still welcomed me as if I was a long lost friend. It was on this occasion that I met Yaya Dole's son Baba who had fled from Monrovia in 1990. Baba took me through town and introduced me to several people. I told a group of old men sitting under a veranda along the main road that I wanted to revisit Musadu to conduct some research, but that I was sick and was returning to Nigeria. I did ask Baba and others some questions in Musadu, and recorded three interviews in Diakolidu and Beyla.

I returned to Nigeria a few days later, and took my family to Monrovia at the end of August where I taught at ELWA Academy and at a Bible institute. In Monrovia I started to assemble a team of assistants with Boakai Yamah to help me translate the tapes that I had collected over the years. Yamah kindly agreed to forgo his studies in Jos for

one year to help me translate. On October 15, the NPFL launched “Operation Octopus.” Six days later, when the fighting got to within three miles of ELWA, we regrettably left Yamah and the rest of our friends and evacuated to Côte d’Ivoire. We gave Yamah enough money to leave Monrovia on the next available flight. By the time he could fly out ten weeks later, when the Nigerian led ECOMOG army had pushed most of the NPFL beyond metropolitan Monrovia, we returned.

Amazingly, but not surprising knowing Yamah, he used the ticket money to translate some of the tapes that I had left with him. Yamah had arranged to use a front porch and a room near central Monrovia that one of his relatives owned. Amara Cissé and Faliku Sanoe joined our translation team in September, and Yamah picked up Ansumana Cissé during our absence. With bombs dropping less than three miles away, and other forms of fighting going on throughout the end of the year, Yamah, Sanoe and the Cissés translated during the heat of Octopus. I will always remain grateful to Boakai Yamah who kept the work going, and to these men who continued to translate during this difficult time. By the end of January 1993, we hired Ali Kromah and Kèlèti Fofana to join the translation team. I only got involved in the translation process after the men listened to the tapes and produced the first transcription and translation because I could not spend very much time with them (see Appendix 7.1).

When we moved back to Monrovia in 1992, we decided to live at the ELWA compound for security reasons. While there were security problems at ELWA, we felt that it was safer to live there than in any of the other places in the city that we scouted when we returned to Monrovia that August. For the first half of 1993 until Boakai Yamah returned to Jos, the men translated in the house where Yamah resided near central

Monrovia. This house was about eight miles away from ELWA. Liberia's interim government instituted a 6 a.m.-6 p.m. curfew in Monrovia after the NPFL attacked. The curfew severely limited the movement of people who used public transportation. For instance, one would have to flag down a taxi by 4:30 p.m. from Sinkor to return to ELWA. This would barely give the driver enough time to negotiate all of the checkpoints, drop his passengers and park before 6:00 p.m.

Because I taught in the morning when we returned to Monrovia in 1993, I only got to Yah's house a couple of times during the week and on Saturday. Occasionally, one or more of the men would come to ELWA to work with me. When I was with the men I compared the transcripts with translations, and asked questions that helped me better understand what the speakers said. I then typed the translations and asked follow-up questions. I checked most of the interviews two or three times. I typed in the second floor of our mission headquarters building in Congotown, located about two miles from ELWA. This site was conducive because a generator ran during the day to aircondition and supply power to the computer room. We used a downstairs room as an alternative place to translate. Kèlèti Fofana, Ali Kromah and Amara Cissé only worked until March 1993, but we hired Bangali (Amigo) Kamara in April. Bangali was one of Djobba Kamara's half-brothers and a team mate with whom I had played soccer in the mid-1980s. After Boakai Yah returned to Nigeria in June 1993, Amara Dole joined us the following February.

We lost the use of the house in Sinkor when Yah went back to Nigeria. Faliku Sanoë, Bangali Kamara and Amara Cissé lived fairly close together in another part of Monrovia, so they sometimes translated together. At other times, they worked by

themselves at home. We often also worked at the mission headquarters in Congotown.

I returned to Guinea for one last trip in 1993 from late-November to mid-December. I flew from Monrovia to Abidjan, and then to Kankan. I stayed at the missionary guesthouse in Kankan, conducted some research there for a week, and went north for a couple of days to visit Dave and Faith Jaeger who lived in Siguiri. Key to my research in Kankan was Mark Wilson who led me to University of Kankan history professors Moliké Sidibé and Joel Maxime Millimono. My Maniyakā was not good enough to converse freely with Professors Sidibé and Millimono in their Sumandukā and Maninkakā, and I do not pretend to speak French (I passed the requisite university courses to read French), so Wilson graciously offered to translate for me. Both professors allowed me to copy papers and theses that they possessed in their personal libraries, and I conducted two separate interviews with Sidibé and three other persons.

Sidibé's mother was a Kamara from Damaro, and her father was the Jiba Kamara whom I interviewed in Damaro in 1986. In fact, Sidibé and the other Kankan Kamara knew about the white man and his Maniyaka friend who went to Damaro, and were surprised to learn that I was that white man. They told me that Jiba Kamara had just died.

On the morning of December 3 I boarded a truck and headed south. We passed Kerouane at mid-day and reached Diakolidu after nightfall. I stayed in Diakolidu for three days where I met Oppong Sanoe again. I stayed in his parents' yard and conducted a follow-up interview with Alhaji Kabine Kromah. I also walked to Beyla where I delivered some messages from Monrovia and met one of the men whom Martin Ford had visited in 1985. Ford had traveled to Conakry by way of Beyla and Musadu after he completed his research in Liberia.

I went to Musadu on December 7 and stayed for two days. Baba Dole was still there, and his family hosted me again. Dole took me to the Sous-Prefect, gave me a tour of the town, and introduced me to some of the men whom he felt would be good for me to interview. Early next morning after the first prayer, the third imam of the town, Alhaji Ibrahim Béété, led a group of men from the mosque to greet me after the early morning prayer. That afternoon we walked to Wanino with several other people to watch Musadu's soccer team play Wanino's team. Some oral traditions claim that Wanino is older than Musadu, so I welcomed the opportunity to visit the town. We returned to Musadu that evening, much against the wishes of our host who insisted that we spend the night there. The next day, we interviewed Alhaji Béété, Mammadi Donzo and Morifin Dole. Alhaji Béété was the imam who greeted me the previous morning, and was one of the men who was sitting under the veranda when I visited Musadu the preceding year.

I originally planned to stay in Musadu and environs for one and one-half weeks, go near the Ivorian border to Fombadu to meet Vase Kamala, and return to Liberia before Christmas. Instead, I went back to Monrovia early because of concerns about what might transpire in the upcoming elections. I went to Guinea just when the Guinean government announced the final date for its upcoming national elections. After I flew to Kankan, the government closed its land borders. Then, just before I went to Musadu, the government announced on the radio that it was going to close its air borders. Having seen evidence of political party vandalism in Siguiri, heard machine gun fire in downtown Kankan, seen armored personnel carriers roll out to quell student protests at the University of Kankan, and witnessed a build up of military presence in Beyla, I decided to return to Liberia before the Guinean government halted all air traffic. Following the Liberian dictum "It is

better to live with the trouble that you know than to live with the trouble that you don't know," I opted to face the ongoing uncertainty of life in Monrovia with my family rather than bunker down in Guinea during the elections.

The summer after we returned from Africa, I listened to all of the tapes and reviewed all of the translations. In doing this, I was able to check the translations more closely and make changes where needed. In 1999, I deposited most of the interview tapes at the Archives of Traditional Music at Indiana University. Now that I have finally finished my dissertation, one of my projects is to publish an English translation of most of the tapes.

Someday, I hope to return to southeast Guinea to conduct the kind of intensive fieldwork that is needed to better understand the cultural and historical context in which the people of Musadu and Konya-Mani narrate their history. In the meantime, though, this dissertation represents the current state of my work.

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ORTHOGRAPHY

The orthography that Sue A. Cutler and David J. Dwyer established in *Māniyakā: A Reference Handbook of Phonetics, Grammar, Lexicon and Learning Procedures* is used for this dissertation. Cutler and Dwyer based their work on the Konyakā dialect of Maniyakā that the Manding speak in Konya-Mani.⁴

The sound system of Konyakā vowels is:

- /a/ = pot (e.g., *masa* - ‘chief’)⁵
- /e/ (“closed e” or /é/) = day (e.g., *mue* - ‘cleric’)
- /è/ (“open e” or /ɛ/) = béd (e.g., *saafèlè* - ‘sheep horn’)
- /i/ = bee (e.g., *lisimu* - ‘talisman’)
- /o/ (“closed o” or /ô/) = go (e.g., Konya - region name)
- /ò/ (“open o;” /ö/ or /ɔ/) = awful (e.g., *kaamòò* - ‘scholar’)
- /u/ = school (e.g., Musadu - town in Konya-Mani)

Linguists say that the vowel /ɪ/ (as in *it*) does not exist in the Konyakā. Their analysis is accepted on academic grounds, although the theoretical /i/ in words like *tile* (‘day’) and Bility are far closer to /ɪ/ than /i/ to my untrained ear. Nasalized vowels are marked with an /̃/ instead of /n/ (e.g., Konyakā instead of Konyakan) to stress the nasal aspect of the sound rather than the hard /n/ that speakers often say when the difference is not marked.

Konyakā consonants are:

- /b/ = beat (e.g., *buku* - ‘book’)
- /c/ = car (e.g., *cama* - ‘between’)
- /ch/ = chime (e.g., *chè* - ‘man’)
- /d/ = dig (e.g., *duu* - ‘land, earth, ground’)

²Cutler, with Talawoley 1981:4.

³Single quotation marks (‘’) are used for translations of Manding words and phrases. Double quotation marks (“”) are put around direct quotations from English. When authors put double quotations around words or phrases in languages other than English, and the terms are translated into English, the single quotation marks are put around the double quotations. Thus, ‘les fameuses “coutumes de Fèren-Kamā”’ appears as ‘the famous “customs of Foningama”’ (Person 1968b:184).

/f/ = fish (e.g., *fa* - 'father')
 /gb/ = no English equivalent (e.g., *gbangban* - 'dust')
 /h/ = hope (e.g., *hakili* - 'knowledge')
 /j/ = judge (e.g., *jòn* - 'slave')
 /k/ = kite (e.g., *kalo* - 'month, moon')
 /l/ = light (e.g., *lulu* - 'star')
 /m/ = meat (e.g., *malo* - 'rice')
 /n/ = near (e.g., *nènè* - 'cold')
 /ny/ = onion (e.g., *nyi* - 'good')
 /ng/ = sing (e.g., Foningama)
 /p/ = pop (e.g., *pitiki* - 'shop')
 /r/ = sometimes sounds like an English /d/ (e.g., *rumu* - 'room')
 /s/ = see (e.g., *sènè* - 'farm')
 /t/ = taunt (e.g., *tama* - 'spear')
 /w/ = win (e.g., *wuse* - 'potato')
 /y/ = yearn (e.g., *yano* - 'here')
 /z/ = zip (e.g., *zepò* - 'shirt')

There are different spelling conventions that complicate the writing of words. The French, for instance, write /dj/, /di/ or /dy/ for /j/, so *jina* ('spirit') becomes *djinna* and *Jakolidu* becomes *Diakolidu*. The French also write /ou/ for /w/, or combine /o/ and /u/ as *Ouanino* (*Wanino*) and *Moussadou* (*Musadu*) respectively. In this work, the phonetic rather than the French system is used, so the preferences in the above examples are *jina*, *Wanino* and *Musadu*. Some exceptions are place names where French spellings are more well known. Common examples are the *Dion* river and the town of *Diakolidu* instead of *Jon* and *Jakolidu*. Also, in keeping with mapping conventions, /è/ and /ò/ are used instead of /ε/ and /ɔ/. French forms for proper names are also used when citing authors who use French orthography to spell names, as in the case of D. T. Niane who spells *Djeliba Koro*'s last name *Kouyaté*. *Kouyaté* can also be spelled *Kuyatè* or *Kuyateh*.

Another problem concerns the issue of transliterating names and places from Arabic into English. No universal convention standardizes the different ways that translators convert Arabic characters into Roman script. In short, for letters that appear in

the pages that follow, a line over a vowel marks a long vowel (ā), /h/ and /s/ are simply read as /h/ and /s/, and /ç/ is pronounced /s/.⁶

Names can also be pronounced many ways. This has to do with regional variants and the preferences of individual speakers. The Maniyaka, for instance, say “Musadu” and “Misadu,” and pronounce “Diakolidu” and “Konya” several different ways. Diakolidu or Jakolidu is said Jakodu, Jakudu, Jakuòdu, Jiakolidu and Jakolodu, with some speakers sometimes substituting the initial consonant /Y/ for /J/. Konya is also pronounced Kòniya, Koniye, Koiye, Koinye, Konia, Koniya and Konyā (Konyan) (Appendix C). As for clan names, the Manding speakers in northeast Guinea and Mali generally say Bèrètè, Traoré or Tarawélé, Koroma or Kuruma, and Sumaworo or Sumaworo (Appendix D). In the south they more often say Béété or Bility, Talawole, Kromah and Sumawolo. The northern forms are used to keep with the more standard spellings; the southern Maniyakā equivalents are put in parentheses when necessary. The pronunciations that the speakers say are used in the translations that appear in the supplemental appendices and in places where translations are excerpted in the text. In addition, while I usually only spell a name one way in my own discourse, the spellings that the speakers used for their own names are retained. “Kamala” is therefore used when referring to the informant Vase Kamala, but Kamara is used elsewhere.

The following are common suffixes in Maniyakā that are used in the dissertation:⁷

- *ba* for ‘big’: Koniya**ba** means ‘big Koniya’

- *du* is usually appended to an individual’s name as in Musadu when the town is named after a person’s first name

⁶See Hopkins/Levtzion 1981:xi-xiii; Bacharach 1984:1-3.

⁷Adapted from Charry (2000:xxi-xxvi).

- *ka* for ‘people from’ or ‘person from’ (point of origin reference); Maniyaka means ‘people/person from Mani place’
- *kã* for ‘language’ or ‘voice’: Maniyakã means ‘language of Mani place’
- *la* is added to the name of a clan as in Baayola when a town is named after a clan
- *lu*, *nu* or *wu* form plurals, as in *morilu* or *moriwu* or ‘clerics’ (*lu* becomes *nu* when preceded by a nasal)
- *muso* for ‘female’: *subamusu* means ‘female sorcerer’
- *ni* for ‘little’: *kòni* means ‘little river’ or ‘creek’
- *si* for ‘descendants of’: as in Foningamasi which means ‘descendants of Foningama’
- *ti* for ‘owner’: *duuti* means ‘land owner’
- *ya* for ‘the condition of’: *mansaya* means ‘the condition of chieftaincy’

The Maniyaka often interchange vowels when saying the same word: /i/ for /u/ (e.g., Misadu-Musadu); and /ò/ for /o/ (e.g., Fòningama-Foningama). The Manding also alternate the laterals /l/ and /r/ (e.g., Koloma-Kromah); the Maniyaka usually prefer /r/. Some consonants change when they are preceded by nasalized consonants or vowels; /f/ can become /v/ (*fã* [‘father’] - *n ɣa* [‘my father’]); /n/ usually becomes /ŋ/ (/ng/) when it is followed by a /k/ (Foni Kama to Foningama); /s/ can become /nz/ (Nyasa^umolidu to Nyanzamolidu); and /t/ can become /d/ (*kun-ti* to *kun-di*) or /s/ (Tina, Sina).

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this dissertation is to chronicle how oral traditions describe the early history of the town of Musadu, and discuss how these traditions broaden our understanding of Musadu and West Africa's past. Musadu is located in the region of Konya-Mani in the province of Beyla in southeast Guinea-Conakry, and is centrally located about 225 miles in either direction between the Atlantic ocean and the Manden.¹ The Manden is a region along the Middle Niger River that formed the nucleus of the Mali empire that the hunter-warrior Sunjata Keita founded in the early-to-mid thirteenth century.

Oral narratives collected in today's Guinea and Liberia tell how Musa Kromah founded Musadu or 'Musa's town.' A later Kromah named Zo Musa who lived in Musadu became a celebrated sorcerer. The traditions then relate how the warrior Foningama Kamara went to Musadu and drove Zo Musa south. Foningama is said to have been the descendant of a chief who fled from the Mali empire during Sunjata's time. Foningama's move to Musadu is tentatively dated to the second half of the fifteenth century during a period of out-migration as Mali began to weaken and some of its outlying provinces started to break away. Musadu would have been founded before the mid-fifteenth century according to this schema, perhaps one or two centuries earlier.

The Kamara and Kromah were Maninka, one of several MANDING peoples who live in West Africa. The other important MANDING for this dissertation are the Maniyaka

¹Konya derives from Kpelle, and Mani is Maniyakā. Konya is the older and more well-known of the two terms, thus explaining why it appears before Mani.

who live in Musadu and elsewhere farther south. Many Maninka who left Mali claimed the prestige of the empire. The name Mani where Musadu is located indicates that its people were culturally and economically connected to the Mali empire. Mani could have also been a fringe state that paid tribute to the Mali empire, but the oral traditions do not link Mani to the empire in this way.

Musadu was an important tie not only between the forest edge and the savannah, but also to events that were recorded off the Atlantic coast of today's Liberia and Sierra Leone in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Portuguese and Dutch traders who lived along the coast reported that Mane warriors embarked from an area in the interior called Mandi and invaded the coast. Mandi and Mane are variants of Mani, Mali, Mande and Manden. Some historians argue that these invaders were led by Kamara warriors who descended from an area a few miles south of Konya-Mani. Musadu's location in Konya-Mani and some of the information in the epic support the notion that the Mani (or Konya-Mani) of Musadu is the same as Mandi, and that some of the Mane invaders came from Mani.

The people who narrate Musadu's story are the Maniyaka, Kpelle, Konor, Mano, Dã, Loma, Gola and Vai who now live in Upper Guinea, in parts of today's southeast Guinea, westcentral Côte d'Ivoire and westcentral Liberia.² Oral traditions within the repertoire of these ethnic groups claim that Musa was one of their own people or that some of their ancestors originated from Musadu. A discussion about these sources appears in Chapter 1. Chapters 2-8 survey the Musadu story, and the Supplemental

²Upper Guinea is used here in this limited sense. Europeans employed the term Upper Guinea to denote the upper half of West Africa's coastland and its adjacent interior, from Senegal to Liberia (Fage 1980: 293, 295).

Appendix contains English translations of many of the Maniyakā oral traditions and the French reports and publications that form the basis for this study.

In the first two volumes I catalogue the variations of the traditions, interpret some of the material, and suggest the extent to which some of the oral traditions are credible. In many instances, further fieldwork needs to be conducted because so little information is available. This is the first in-depth compilation and analysis of the way that the Maniyaka and other people view the early past of Musadu, and I certainly do not claim to have written the last word about anything on this topic. Paradigms shift, historians and scholars from other disciplines view the same material differently, and new sources will surely become available to researchers. I look forward to having others make their own comments, clarifications and corrections to provide more diverse and better perspectives on the history and culture of Musadu and Upper Guinea. I did fieldwork mainly among the Maniyaka, so persons who conduct research among the Kpelle, Loma, Konor, Dā, Mano and other ethnic groups should be able to make especially valuable contributions.

The outside world first started to learn about Musadu from North American blacks who settled along the coast of Liberia in the mid-nineteenth century. Traders from the interior told the settlers about “the capital of the Mandingo Country, Moosá-doo.” They said that Musadu was “a very large and populous town,” and that its residents were “great itinerants, as well as intelligent, having a literature of their own.”³ A Liberian entrepreneur named James Sims trekked deep into the interior in 1858 and learned that Musadu was the “capital” of the “Manni kingdom.”⁴ Ten years later the famous Liberian explorer Benjamin Anderson actually reached Musadu. He called Musadu the “capital of

³Benson 1858:131.

⁴Sims 1859-1860/2003.

the Western Mandingoes” and proved that the town had been important as the traders claimed.⁵ During the same time period, Liberians and researchers in the United States combined efforts to collect, translate, and publish some Arabic manuscripts that African scholars in Upper Guinea had written. One of these documents was written in Musadu; others identified Musadu as being a key Muslim town in the interior.⁶ The French destroyed part of Musadu in the late-1890s, and tried to discredit Anderson’s claim that he went to Musadu so they could legitimate their conquest of that portion of West Africa.⁷ Even though the French relegated Musadu to a minor status politically when they established colonial rule, many continued to regard Musadu as a sacred town where sorcerers and *morilu* helped people such as Zo Musa and Foningama perform miraculous deeds, and a place where people continue to go to get help from the towns’ spiritual leaders.

All of the information that is available about Musadu’s early history derives from a stable version of oral traditions that were first recorded in 1905, which people probably formulated more than two centuries ago. The epic is a social charter for the Maniyaka that serves much the same function as the Sunjata epic does for the Maninka and many other peoples who reside farther north. The Musadu epic is more important to the Maniyaka than the Sunjata epic with regards to their cultural identity, their ancient heroes, and the social and political relations that exist between themselves and their neighbors.

⁵Anderson 1870/1971:5,92-93.

⁶“Beautiful Manuscripts” 1863; Post 1869; Doreh 1870/1974; Schieffelin 1870/1974:65,70-73,83,90,96ff,102,108,120-123,129-136,144,149-151,163-167; see “The Gospels” 1860; Blyden 1868; 1869; “Studying Arabic at Monrovia” 1868; “Work among the Mohammedans” 1868; “A Native Traveler” 1870; Viator 1870; “Arabic Language at Sierra Leone and Bathurst” 1871; “Arabic Letter from a Native African” 1873; Fairhead et. al. 2003. James Fairhead and Melissa Leach are conducting research on this material.

⁷Murdza 1979:138-156,347-350; Fairhead et. al. 2003: ch. 7.

Language, People, Geography

The earliest inhabitants of Musadu were West Atlantic and Mande speakers who belong to the Niger-Congo language family (Figures 1-2). The Fulbe (Fulani) who live throughout much of West Africa speak a West Atlantic language called Fulfulde. Another West Atlantic speaking ethnic group are the Gola who presently live in southwest Liberia. All of the other peoples who retain memories of Musadu in their ancient past speak a Mande language that linguists divide into the geographic regions of West Africa: Central Mande, North-West Mande, South-West Mande and South-East Mande.⁸ The Mande-speaking people who are the focus of considerable attention in the Musadu story are Central Mande speakers who converse in one of several Manding languages. Maninkakā of southcentral Mali and northeast Guinea and Maniyakā in Upper Guinea are the most predominate for this work.⁹

Maniyakā, like all of the other Manding languages, is comprised of several dialects. The dialects of Maniyakā correspond to geographic regions.¹⁰ Gbonigā, Koadukā, Waziamakā, Douamakā, Quegblamakā, Konokòlòkā and Busekā are spoken on the west side of the Fon-Going mountains in southeastern Guinea. Konyakā, Sumandukā, Gbanakā, Maukā and ‘Fula Mandingo’ are the Maniyakā dialects on the east side of the range (Figure 3).¹¹ The Maniyaka who respectively live on the west and east side of the

⁸The system of language classification is based on Vydrine (1999:7-11; “Mande language family genetic tree”). Vydrine’s “Central Mande” is equivalent to “Northern Mande” that other linguists use. Unless otherwise indicated, other information about language in these first paragraphs comes from Greenberg (1966:8), Dalby (1971:1-6), Cutler, with Dwyer (1981:4) and Derive (1983:2-14). See Dwyer (1989) for a good chart and discussion about the organization of the Mande languages.

⁹See Appendix A for a discussion of why Maniyakā is identified as one of the major Manding languages.

¹⁰Cutler, with Talawoley 1981:4. Gbonigā or Gbonikā, for instance, means ‘language of Gboni.’

¹¹I am not sure if Tronkā, Koningokā and Kalagbakā are Maninka or Maniyakā (Figure 3). I suspect that Gwanakā, Gbèkā, Guirilakā, Faranakā, Mandukā and Konyankokā are dialects given the information in Person’s map, but this needs to be reexamined. Much fieldwork needs to be conducted to

Figure 1 Niger-Congo languages relevant to the Musadu epic

WEST ATLANTIC

Northern

Fulfulde (dispersed throughout West Africa)

Southern

Gola

MANDE

Central

Manding (expanded list)

Mandinkakã (Senegambia)

Khasso (northwest Mali)

Bamanakã (central Mali)

Maninkakã (western Mali, northeast Guinea)

Maniyakã (southeast Guinea, westcentral Liberia)

Kuranko (southeast Guinea, northern Sierra Leone)

Jula (southeast Mali, southeast Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, southeast Guinea)

Marka-Dafin (Mali & Burkina Faso borderland)

Susu (western Guinea, northern Sierra Leone)

Vai (southwest Liberia)

Kono (eastern Sierra Leone)

North-West

Soninke (northern Mali)

South-West

Kpelle (southeast Guinea, central Liberia)

Loma (southeast Guinea, western Liberia)

Konor (southeast Guinea)

South-East

Dã/Gio (westcentral Côte d'Ivoire, northcentral Liberia)

Mano (northcentral Liberia)

Source: Adapted from Brooks 1993:31,33; Vydrine 1999:7-10.

Fon-Going mountains speak Toma Maniyakã ('Loma Mandingo') and Gbèsè Maniyakã

test this data, identify other dialects, locate their rough boundaries, and determine the extent of Maniyakã.

(‘Kpelle Mandingo’). These divisions reflect the social, cultural and linguistic impact that the Loma and Kpelle have on the Maniyaka. Historically, the Kamara or Jomande (Diomandé) and many other Maniyaka migrated in an east-west direction from Mau to Konya-Mani, and then into the Loma forest toward Bakedu (Chapter 8). This migration partly explains why there is broad linguistic unity among these speakers.

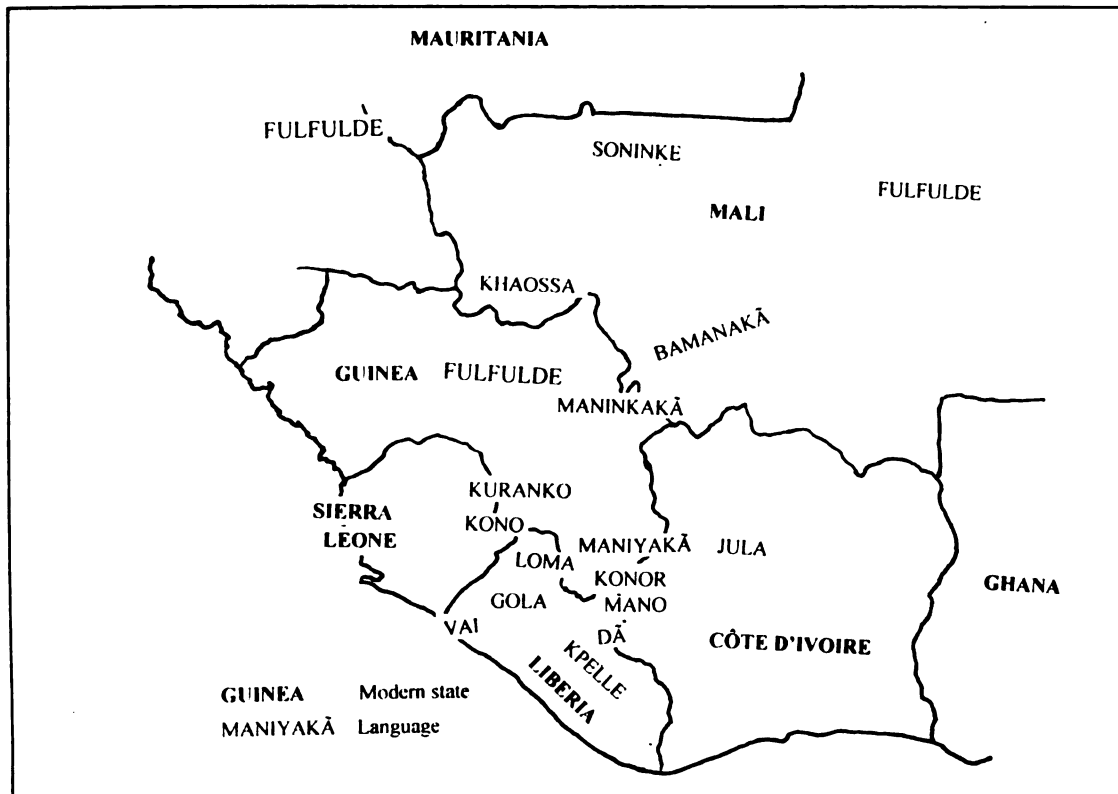


Figure 2: Map of Niger-Congo languages relevant to the Musadu epic

Musadu was the political center of Konya-Mani in pre-colonial times. The *Maniyaka* who live in Musadu speak the dialect of Maniyakā called Konyakā or ‘the *language* of Konya.’ During the period of this study, Konya-Mani only seems to have *included* the relatively small area that now encompasses the *Konya so luulu* or the ‘five

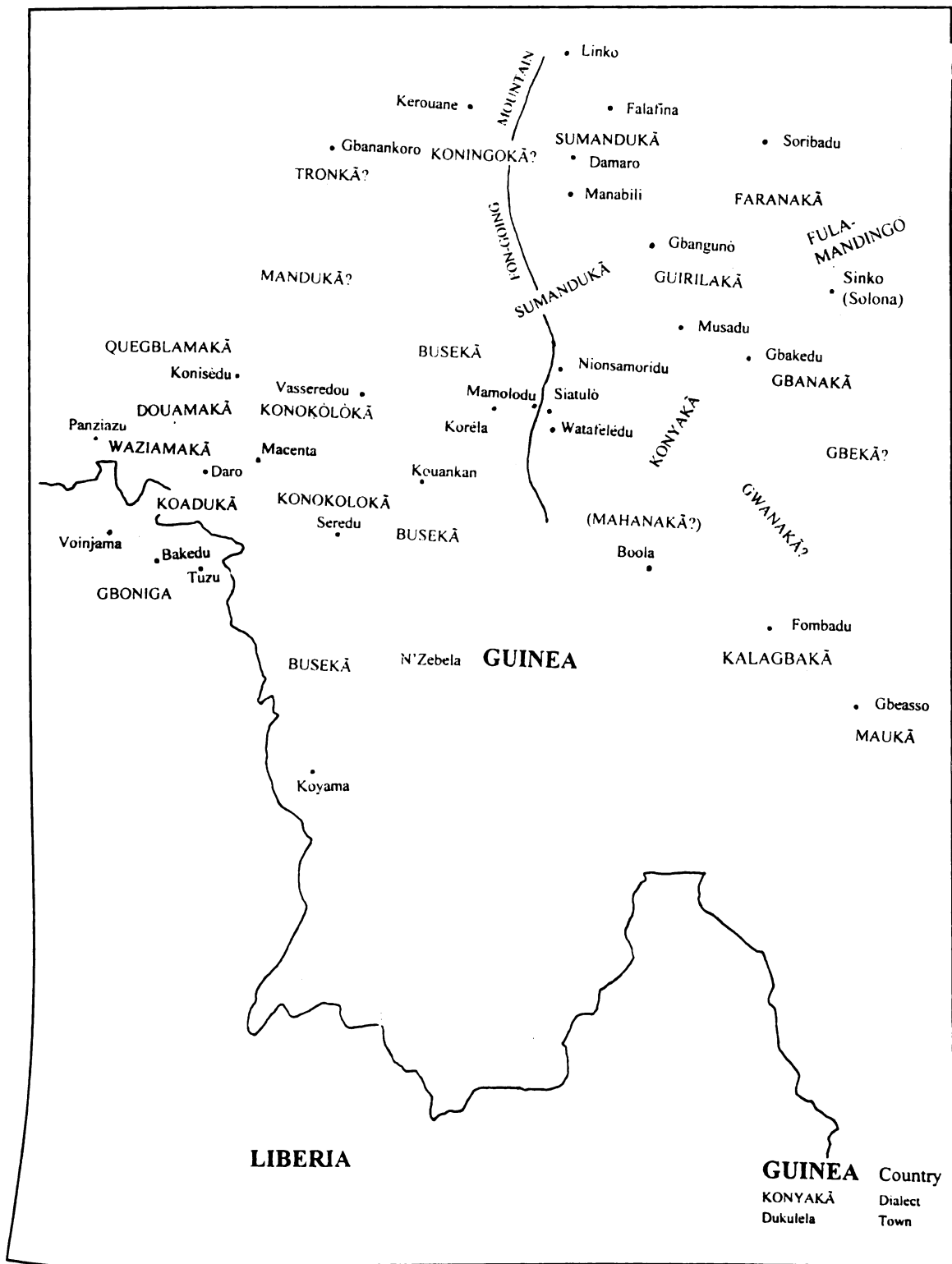


Figure 3: Map of the dialects of Maniyakā (Source: Person 1990, Map 3; Geysbeek fieldwork)

towns of Konya' and a few other towns such as Tabilala and Tulela. The *Konya so luulu* are Musadu, Dukulela, Beyla, Diakolidu and Nyèla. This is the restricted sense in which "Konya-Mani" is used in the dissertation. Konya-Mani's limits later expanded north to Damaro and Linko, south to Boola, and southwest to Macenta, Bakedu and Bopolu. This more expanded area is referred to as Greater Konya-Mani.¹² Mani is the name of the "kingdom" with Musadu as its capital that Liberians mentioned in the mid-nineteenth century.¹³ It is argued in Chapter 8 that Musadu's Mani is probably the same Mandi that Europeans discussed two and three centuries earlier.¹⁴ Mani thus minimally implies the existence of a political unit that was larger than the few towns that surround Musadu. Mani might have included, at its height, many parts of Greater Konya-Mani where most of the Konyaka now live.

The Mauka are the other Maniyaka who are important in the Musadu story. Most of the Mauka live in the Mau region of Côte d'Ivoire around Touba. Some Mauka live across the eastern-most part of Guinea's border toward Gbèsoba. The oral traditions claim that the Foningama who went to Mau became involved in a conflict with his 'brother' Kònsaba before he moved to Musadu. Maukā is also a dialect of Julakā, the name given to the large number of Manding dialects spoken throughout Côte d'Ivoire.¹⁵

Finally, there is much discussion about the terms Mande, Manden and Manding; what they mean and how they should be used.¹⁶ The definitions of these terms shift

¹²For a discussion of how Konya's boundaries seem to have shifted over time, see Appendix B. *Many Konyaka* or 'people of Konya' live in scattered communities throughout central and western Liberia. *The core Konyaka* who inhabit Konya-Mani do not consider the more outlying Konyaka to be "pure Konyaka" as Liberian English speakers say.

¹³Benson 1858; Sims 1859-1860/2003; Anderson 1870/1971:5.

¹⁴E.g., Almada c.1594/1984:16/1-16/7,17/2.

¹⁵Vydrine 1999:9.

¹⁶E.g., Delafosse 1899:144; 1901:215,267; Austin 1999a:5-6; Vydrine 1999:9-11.

according to the topics and issues being discussed, the regions where the words are used, the persons who speak, and the personal preferences of writers.¹⁷ I agree with Valentin Vydrine who argues that scholars should employ the European usage of these terms because they are clear and well established.¹⁸

Mande is only used for the larger West, Central, South-West and East-Mande language groups. It is technically correct to identify all of the peoples who speak these languages as Mande, and to call their homeland Mande. Mande, however, is used here in its more restrictive sense as a linguistic term so readers will not be confused about which peoples are being discussed. For instance, there are significant differences among the Kpelle, Maniyaka and Mano, who have developed different languages, cultures and histories. Since ancestors of these people are said to have interacted with one another in Musadu in early times, it is important that these distinctions be kept clear.

Manding refers to the group of Central Mande languages whose speakers understand each other: Bamanakã, Mandinkakã, Maninkakã, Maniyakã, Jula and Maraka-Dafin. Manding is also the name of the peoples who speak these languages. Excluded from this category are the Vai and Kono whose languages, though part of the Central Mande language family, are no longer intelligible with any Manding language.

Manden is used in the limited sense as a place name to refer to the largely Maninka chiefdoms along the Niger River that Sunjata united in the early-to-mid thirteenth century. This land stretched from modern Segou in the north toward Kouroussa

¹⁷Perinbam 1996:260; Belcher 1999a:89.

¹⁸Vydrine 1999:9-11.

in the south.¹⁹ Although one can equate Manden and Mali empire, references to the Mali empire here represent the large swath of land that Sunjata's warriors and his successors conquered from the Middle Niger to the Atlantic ocean (Figure 5).

Historical Introduction

A brief summary of the Musadu epic is given to acquaint the reader with its most important narrative features; this does no justice to the complex way that individual narrators told their versions of the story. The oral traditions claim that some so-called "pygmies" and the ancestors of today's Kpelle, Loma, Mano, Dā and Gola were Konya-Mani's earliest inhabitants. Several Soninke and Maninka clans migrated from the Manden to Konya-Mani, and a Kromah named Musa allegedly founded Musadu. The sources also indicate that some Dole, Donzo, Kamara, Konè, Sanoe and Traoré also went to Konya-Mani with the Kromah at this early stage (Chapter 4).

At a somewhat later period, narrators indicate that Tumaningèmè Kromah and Zo Musa Kromah were in Musadu when Foningama moved there with some *jèlilu* ('bards,' 'griots') and *morilu* ('clerics'). Foningama's *jèlilu* are collectively said to have been Masaré (Masale), Kromah, Kuyateh and Jabateh (Diabate); his *morilu* were Bèrètè (Bility), Dole, Sumaworo, Kanè, Kaba, Jabateh, Sherif, Kuyateh, Dukule and Fofana. Foningama's ancestor had supposedly fled from the Manden to escape the wrath of his kinsmen and possibly Manden's *mansa* ('chief,' 'king,' 'emperor') Sunjata Keita. Before

¹⁹Bird 1971:15; Levzion 1973:101; Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:85, n. 3; Moraes Farias 1989:169, n. 3; Jansen 1996b:87-88,109, fn. 70; Conrad 1996:iv; 1999a:1; Austin 1999a:5. Mande is the most common word that the Musadu related sources use to describe the Manden or the original home of the Maninka people. Some spoken or written alternatives are Mandé, Màni, Mani, Mandi, Mandy, Mandin, Mali, Malistan, Malian and Mendi (App. C).

Foningama reached Musadu, one of Tumaningèmè's brothers helped Foningama flee from his 'older brother' Kònsaba who lived in Gbè situated west of Musadu. Kònsaba had gained power in Gbè with the help of Kanè and Baayo *morilu* who migrated from the north to help him (Chapters 2-3). By the time Foningama arrived in Musadu, another Kromah named Zo Musa lived there. This Zo Musa had a potent *saafè* or 'sheep horn' which enabled him to become a powerful sorcerer and destroy many things (Chapter 4). After Foningama reached Musadu, a *mori* gave him an amulet that made Zo Musa's sheep horn burst when it ate the amulet (Chapter 5). Numerous sources claim that Zo Musa left Musadu with many of his followers, including individuals from some of the earlier arriving Maninka and Soninke clans who did not support Foningama (Chapter 6).

After Foningama became the *mansa* of Musadu, he is said to have become powerful after he offered a *wakèlèn salaka* or 'sacrifice of one thousand' to a Sware or Kanè *mori*. Others said to have participated in this sacrifice were a Jabateh bard, and Sanoe, Sware, Dukule, Dole, Sherif, Kièlè (Kuyateh), Fofana, Cissé and Silla *morilu*. Foningama also supposedly established some laws to secure the Kamara's position in the region and to maintain security (Chapter 7). The Kamara began to lose strength when Foningama's sons broke some important laws and abused their power. Although a person named Fofana or Donzo made a sacrifice to redeem some of his sons after they broke another law, the people of Musadu eventually forced the Kamara to leave. Even though the Kamara lost political power in Musadu, many people in Upper Guinea continue to respect the memory of Foningama and view Musadu as the "spiritual capital" of the Kamara (Chapter 8). Zo Musa and Foningama gradually augmented their supernatural and physical power and became "heroes." The oral traditions show how Zo Musa and

Foningama transformed Musadu into a “sacred place,” and restructured the social relations of Konya-Mani. Musadu is still sacred, and many people continue to go there to make sacrifices and acquire blessings to amplify their power.

In the pages that follow, some key movements that shaped West African history up until the end of the eighteenth century are summarized that offer some historical context about the people and movements that helped fashion Musadu’s history. Many of Musadu’s early residents, whom the sources usually identify by what we know today as clans or ethnic groups, came from the regions that encompass the Middle and Upper Niger River that are now located in the modern countries of Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea. These northern peoples fulfilled many important social, economic, religious and political positions that affected what they did when they migrated south. In some cases, the links in the oral traditions between Konya-Mani’s early settlers and their ancestors are clear. In other instances, the oral traditionists make few or no connections. In this introduction and in the remaining chapters, many of the connections that are made are identified and discussed.

Identity in the Past and Present

Examining clan names and ethnic groups in oral traditions can be difficult. The cumulative sources identify nearly three dozen Manding and Soninke clans in the Musadu epic. The origins of most of these clans are evident. Some, however, are assigned multiple origins that are so complex that it is impossible to identify a clear origin. The sources generally concur that the Bama, Jala (Jara), Kamara, Keita, Konè, Kromah, Kuyateh and Mansare are Manding, and that the Bèrèté, Cissé, Dole, Dukule, Kaba, Kanè

(Kanté, Kande), Sanoe, Sherif, Silla, Sware, Turé and Traoré are Soninke. The Sidibé are Fulbe. The origins of the Bamba, Donzo, Fofana, Jabateh, Jalamo, Koesia and Nyèn are less certain.

Many Soninke clans started to become “Mandingized” a half-millennium or more ago; they kept their surnames and remembered their heritage, but replaced Soninke for Maniyakã.²⁰ While the Dukule today do not seem to be different from the Manding clans like the Kromah, their culture and language may have been much more Soninke than Maninka when they first went to Konya-Mani. Many of the Soninke clans, for instance, were early converts to Islam who became important Muslim figures in the formation of the Mali empire. The Sanoe and Sware, especially, did much to propagate Islam along the southern fringes of the forest. It is therefore not surprising that they appear as important *morilu* in the Musadu epic. Malinke clans like the Kromah and Kamara were smiths and warriors in the Manden. They continued in this capacity when they migrated to Konya-Mani.

Current references to ethnic groups that project back several generations or hundreds of years are problematic because the notion of ethnicity among many people like today’s Kpelle and Loma developed during the era of western colonialism. Most of these peoples started to become ethnic groups with some sense of unity only in the last century. During the colonial era, administrators divided Africans into “tribes” and “clans” to control, govern and tax the land and people more efficiently. Africans themselves, over time, adapted to and often manipulated these new constructs.²¹ In the era that concerns the

²⁰Person 1968a:96-97; Curtin 1975:69; Frank 1998:9. It is not clear if clans of Soninke background in Konya-Mani consider themselves to be Soninke or Maniyaka, or if this perception of their Mandingness is more the view of outsiders. This is an additional topic for fieldwork.

²¹d’Azevedo 1989; Conrad/Frank 1995:11; Fairhead/Leach 1996:114.

Musadu epic, most of the people probably did not view themselves as being part of an ethnic group. Individuals and small groups recognized cultural and linguistic similarities that made them different from others, but for the most part they did not use these factors as the basis to politically organize themselves into larger groups.²² There were some linguistic differences in early Konya-Mani. The Gola are West Atlantic speakers, so their language was different from all the others who spoke Mande languages. Soninke and Kpelle might have become distinct languages by the eleventh century, and Central Mande languages such as Bamanakā and Mandinkakā were probably differentiated by the fifteenth century. The initial Maniyaka who settled in Konya-Mani spoke Manikakā, but they eventually became Maniyaka and developed their own language of Maniyakā as they adapted to their new situation. Many Maninka immigrants and local Maniyaka might have also viewed themselves as separate ethnic groups to the extent that each group had a common language, culture, social organization and heritage that differed significantly from the other Mande speaking peoples who lived along the forest edge. These differences diminished over time for many who moved away from the towns and assimilated with the local peoples. The other Mande languages such as Vai, Loma, Konor, Dã and Mano started to become differentiated only after the mid-sixteenth century. Thus, for the period of Musadu's past being studied here, these Mande speakers who are said to have been involved in Musadu's early history should be thought of as proto groups or as the ancestors of the people who carry these labels today.²³

Clans and ethnic groups were only two of several flexible categories that people

²²Fairhead et. al. 2003: ch. 7; Højbjerg forthcoming.

²³For discussions about language differentiation mentioned in this chapter, see Greenberg (1966), *Hair* (1968a:47-53), Dwyer (1973; 1989:50) and Perinbam (1980:457).

used to identify themselves. Social structure, language, culture, taboos, joking relationships, heritage, professions, shared values, religion, secret societies, ideology, and politics were examples also of “negotiable aspects of one’s identity” that people employed to define their roles and the roles of others in society.²⁴ Examining how notions of identity emerge and develop over time is important for historical reconstruction and for deciphering how people express and manipulate their past when they negotiate their positions in the present.²⁵ In the Musadu story, there are telling instances where taboos, joking relationships and other social institutions superseded today’s notion of clan and ethnic identity as the primary criterion that people used when they made important decisions. People continue to use factors other than ethnicity to identify who they are or shift (or try to shift) between ethnic labels when they find it expedient to do so.

Several of the clans that appear in the Musadu epic had important roles in the Wagadu or Ghana empire that existed from the seventh to the twelfth centuries, the Soninke states that started to succeed from Wagadu in the mid-eleventh century, the Soso Soninke who conquered several Maninka chiefdoms in the Manden in the early-thirteenth century, and the Mali empire itself which started to emerge in the early-to-mid-thirteenth century. We now summarize the salient parts of these histories that provide background information about the clans and movements that contributed to Musadu’s early history.

The Soninke Empire of Wagadu (Ghana)

The Soninke founded the empire of Wagadu. Wagadu was situated in today’s

²⁴Frank 1998:1-10; see Sayers 1927:27; Schaffer/Copper 1980:45-49; Launay 1982:27; 1995a:162-165; Conrad/Frank 1995:11.

²⁵Buhnen 1994:22; Frank 1995:144.

western Mali, southern Mauritania and eastern Senegal (Figure 4). Arabic geographers and historians documented the existence of “Ghana” from the late-eighth to the mid-twelfth centuries.²⁶ One of the most important historians was Al-Bakrī, the Spanish Arab geographer who culled much of his information from the extinct writings of a Spaniard of the previous century. The Arabic writings documented Ghana’s cavalry and the gold that Berber merchants and others traded across the sahara desert for salt, cloth and other wares. Al-Bakrī wrote the famous description of the capital of Ghana that was divided between the Muslim town with its mosques, and the walled royal town where the king lived.²⁷ The Arabic sources state that Ghana reached its peak during the mid-eleventh century. The empire weakened later that century and then revived, but never achieved its initial level of power and influence.²⁸

We learn more about Ghana from African scholars who lived in Timbuktu. A Soninke scholar named al-Mukhtār (1468-1593) wrote the *Tarikh al-Fettash*, and the Berber historian al-Sa’di (1594-c.1655-56) wrote the *Tarikh al-Sudan*. Al-Sa’di used African oral traditions and a few Arabic sources in his book. According to al-Mukhtār, a man named Kaya-Magha ruled a kingdom of the same name that preceded the Mali empire. Kaya Magha’s capital was Qunbi. Al-Sa’di reported that Kaya Magha’s capital was Ghana, and that Ghana was located in Bāghana. Bāghana is the Manding equivalent of Wagadu which translates as ‘the land of the great herds.’ Al-Sa’di also suggested that Kaya Magha in the Soninke traditions was the same as the Ghana about of which the Arabic geographers wrote.²⁹

²⁶Levtzion 1973:1-28; Hopkins/Levtzion 1981; Conrad/Fisher 1982.

²⁷Al-Bakrī 1068, in Hopkins/Levtzion 1981:79-80.

²⁸Levtzion 1973: Ch. 2; Conrad/Fisher 1982; Hunwick 1994:260; Masonen/Fisher 1996.

²⁹Levtzion 1973:18-29; 2; Conrad/Fisher 1982:54; see Levtzion 2000:490-492.

The last sources of information about Ghana derive from oral traditions that the French, Americans and Africans have recorded since the 1890s. These accounts tell about an empire named Wagadu, and explain the origins of several Soninke clans.³⁰ Usually, the accounts that tell about Wagadu's rise and fall are set in the legendary story about the

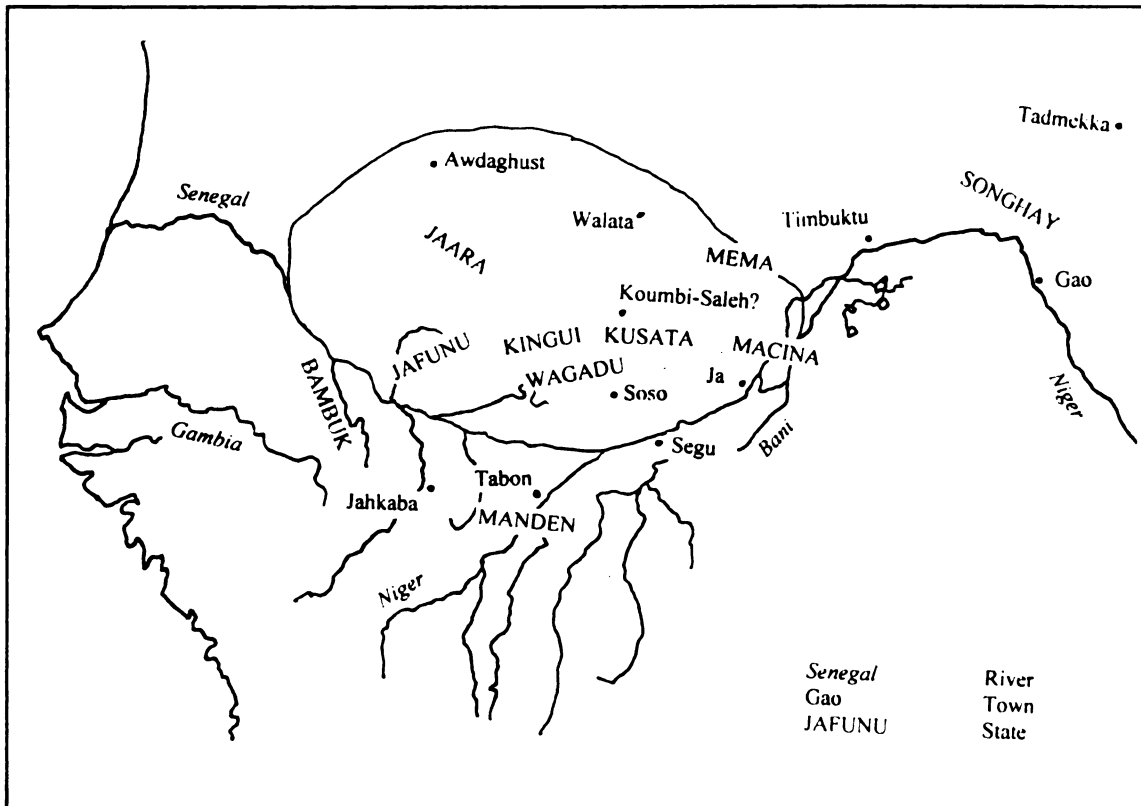


Figure 4: Soninke empire of Wagadu and successor states (Main Source:Levtzion 1973:2)

guardian snake Bida. The Wagadu legend tells how the collective ancestor of the Soninke, Dinga, migrated from the Middle East to the Middle Niger. Dinga traveled west where he settled in the town of Ja (Dia) in Macina on the Niger River.³¹ Dinga married in Ja and had two children who became Sware. These and Dinga's other sons allegedly

³⁰Levtzion 1973:19-20; Conrad/Fisher 1982:53-54; Dieterlen/Sylla 1992; McIntosh 1998:256.

³¹This summary of the Wagadu legend is from Levtzion (1973:16-18), Conrad/Fisher (1983:55-56) and Belcher (1999a:79-81).

became the ancestors of all the Soninke. A later man named Jabe formed Wagadu and divided the kingdom into four sections. Four royal Soninke clans ruled Wagadu; they are often listed as the Cissé, Traoré, Konè and Turé.³² Descendants of these clans migrated south and became important in Musadu.

When Jabe went to Kumbi, the town that became one of the capitals of Wagadu, the black guardian snake of the land gave him permission to settle there. The snake, Bida, promised to supply rain and gold if Jabe annually gave him a horse and a royal virgin. One year, when representatives of Wagadu's four provinces met to observe the sacrifice of the woman to Bida, the fiance of the girl beheaded Bida and fled with her. As Bida died, he cursed Wagadu, declaring that the land would dry up and cease to provide more gold, and that its inhabitants would disperse. Bida's head (or heads) fell south toward Bure where the a source of gold would be found.

Soninke Successor States

The Cissé were one of the leading clans of Wagadu, and were in power when Wagadu started to decline.³³ The Kaba, Koesia, Sware, Dukule, Fofana, Sanoe, Silla, Traoré and Turé became more important in Soninke history as they dispersed from Wagadu and established their own successor states from the mid-eleventh to the early-thirteenth centuries. These Soninke established states in Jafunu, Jaara, Kusata, Mema, Jambuk, Jahkaba-Bafing and Soso (Figure 4); their descendants migrated to Mau, Konya-Mani and other places in the south. The best informants of Soninke origin in Upper Guinea still retain fragmented memories of their ancestors who lived in the states.

³²Frobenius/Cox 1938:130-143; Dieterlen/Sylla 1992:86-92.

³³Lewicki 1971; Levtzion 1973; Conrad/Fisher 1982:60; McIntosh 1998.

Sumaworo Kanté and Soso

Soso or Susu emerged as the last and ultimately most powerful Soninke successor state. Although Soso is not mentioned in the Arabic records that pre-date the fourteenth century, the famous Arab historian from Tunis, Ibn Khaldūn, heard in the 1390s that the Soso people ‘subjugated and absorbed’ Ghana as Ghana’s power ‘dwindled away.’ Ibn Khaldūn attributed Ghana’s decline to Berbers from the north who ‘pillaged, imposed tribute and poll-tax, and converted many of them to Islam.’³⁴ Modern oral traditions abound with stories about Soso and its most famous leader, Sumaworo (Sumawolo).³⁵

The Jariso (Diariso), a southern Soninke clan from Kaniaga, broke away from Wagadu and established the first dynasty in Soso. In the eleventh century, Kanté (Kanè) blacksmiths overthrew the Jariso.³⁶ According to oral traditions, Sumaworo emerged as the most powerful Kanté. He conquered most of ancient Wagadu and all of the Maninka chiefdoms that had formed along the Middle Niger, but was later defeated by Sunjata Keita. Sumaworo and Sunjata foreshadowed some of the people and themes that the Musadu traditions mention, so the key points of their lives are discussed.

The narratives state that Sumaworo’s father was a Kanté warrior-smith who became the leader of Soso. Some say that Sumaworo’s father’s name was Soso Bala, or that he was a descendant of the Kromah.³⁷ Most oral traditions claim that Sumaworo had two or three mothers. One informant explained that the pre-born Sumaworo was

³⁴Ibn Khaldūn 1393/94, in Hopkins/Levtzion 1981:333.

³⁵The Maninka and Maniyaka respectively say Sumaworo and Sumawolo (Austin 1999a:6, fn. 9). The Maniyaka often convert the /r/ to /l/, as in this case.

³⁶Delafosse 1931:55-56; Levtzion 1973:51.

³⁷Jèli Mori Kouyaté 1988, in Conrad 1999a:71, ln. 123; Conrad 1992:167.

supernaturally transferred from the wombs of his first and second mothers to his third mother who ultimately delivered him.³⁸ Sumaworo's sister was Kosiya Kanté, who married a Maniyaka chief. They had a son named Fakoli who is said to have become the Manden's most powerful smith and sorcerer.

According to oral traditions, Sumaworo was a renowned smith, sorcerer and hunter who had direct access to the spirit world and has become known as the Blacksmith King or Sorcerer King.³⁹ He allegedly accumulated considerable occult power, and used this power to rule Soso and conquer other lands. Sumaworo formed a special alliance with smith clans who helped him increase his occult power. He also gained control over iron-producing regions, iron production and the manufacture of weapons such as swords and spears to fight in the physical realm.⁴⁰

Sumaworo's sister Kosia allowed herself to be sacrificed to the spirits so he could acquire a balafon or xylophone sometimes called the Soso Bala.⁴¹ Sumaworo kept his balafon in his secret room. One day, the bard Jankuma Dua (Nyankuman Duga) snuck into his room and started to play his balafon. Although Sumaworo intended to kill Jankuma Dua when he caught him, he was so enchanted by the music that he cut the bard's tendons so he would not flee. Jankuma Dua not only played for Sumaworo, but sang his praises, gave advice, and did a host of other tasks that characterize the role of griots to their masters. By taking Jankuma Dua as his bard, Sumaworo symbolically formed a noble-bard relationship that does not seem to have existed in Soninke and

³⁸Demba Kouyaté 1987, in Conrad 1999a:174, 199, ln. 1196; see Bulman 1990:320,329.

³⁹E.g., Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:38; Frank 1998:127; McIntosh 1998:261; Belcher 1999a:101; Bird 1999:290.

⁴⁰Tamari 1991:238; Brooks 1993:100; Frank 1998:128; Bird 1999:290-291.

⁴¹Conrad 1999b:206-207.

Manding society prior to that time. Jankuma Dua acquired considerable power, and Sumaworo changed his name to Bala Fasseke Kuyateh.⁴²

As Sumaworo rose to power, he also formed alliances with several clans, some being the Kromah, Baayo, Turé and possibly the Kamara of Tabon.⁴³ Although the Blacksmith King largely operated in the world of the occult, some say that he consulted Cissé, Jane and Komma Muslim diviners.⁴⁴ His mother was a Turé, a member of one of the leading Soninke *mori* clans.⁴⁵

The oral accounts maintain that after Sumaworo succeeded his father as the leader of Soso, he expanded Soso's power. He went north and conquered most of the regions that once comprised Wagadu, and traveled west where he subjugated the numerous Soninke, Bamana and Maninka chiefdoms and petty states that were situated along both sides of the Upper Niger.⁴⁶ Sumaworo was thus the first person to unite the small Maninka chiefdoms into one state.⁴⁷ One bard even said that Sumaworo was the second *mansa* of Manden: Tabon Wana Faran Kamara of Tabon was the first *mansa*, and Sunjata Keita, by implication, was the third.⁴⁸

Sumaworo partly failed because he developed so much "absolute power" as a sorcerer and warrior that he was "corrupted by the awesome powers at his command."⁴⁹ He used excessive military force and coercion to control his subjects, and neglected to

⁴²Belcher 1999a:101; Jèli Mori Kouyaté 1988, in Conrad 1999a:55,58; Demba Kouyaté 1987, in Conrad 1999a:186-187; Robinson 1999.

⁴³ Humblot 1918:512, fn. 2; Buhnen 1994:13.

⁴⁴Innes 1974:245, ln. 265, 251, ln. 833; see Conrad 1992:150. Here and below, ln. = line note, and l. = line or lines (this is where a narrative has been set in linear form).

⁴⁵Bulman 1990:329.

⁴⁶Levtzion 1973:51; McIntosh 1998:261; Jèli Mori Kouyaté 1988, in Conrad 1999a:59.

⁴⁷E.g., Bulman 1990:466.

⁴⁸Jèli Fanyala Kouyaté 1992, in Conrad 1999a:45-46.

⁴⁹McIntosh 1998:285.

sustain meaningful alliances between kingroups and institutions that included people from all clans who would support him.⁵⁰

The excessiveness of Sumaworo's tyranny and arrogance is personalized in the way that he treated his nephew Fakoli. Oral traditions often depict Fakoli as having been the ancestor of the Kromah and other clans. Fakoli was divided between whom to support: the people of his Maninka father or those of his Soso mother. Fakoli was a valuable ally of Sumaworo because he led all of the blacksmiths and sorcerers in the Manden, and organized smiths and others to form initiation societies like the Komo.⁵¹ Early in the Soso-Manden war, Fakoli supported his maternal uncle. Oral traditions claim that Sumaworo took Fakoli's sorcerer-wife Keleya Konkon after she cooked more food than Sumaworo's ninety-nine wives. Incensed, Fakoli defected and joined Sunjata, who had returned from exile and was organizing the Maninka to fight Sumaworo.⁵² The Musa who is said to have founded Musadu was a Kromah like Fakoli. Zo Musa, whom Foningama supposedly later defeated in Musadu, is depicted in all of the oral traditions as having been a powerful sorcerer; many essentially characterize Zo Musa as having been a southern variant of Fakoli.

Sunjata and the Manden

The oral traditions claim that Sunjata defeated Sumaworo in the early-to-mid-thirteenth century, and unified the Maninka chiefdoms that were situated along both sides of the Niger River. These small chiefdom-states ranged from Do and Kri in the north, to

⁵⁰Bulman 1990:465; Belcher 1999a:111-112.

⁵¹Moraes Farias 1989:159-160; Conrad 1992:181-184; Mori Kouyaté 1988, in Conrad 1999a:58.

⁵²E.g., Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:42,45; Conrad 1992:167-168; Mamadi Diabate of Kankan c. late-1970s, in Conrad 1999a:76,86-88; Demba Kouyaté 1987, in Conrad 1999a:190.

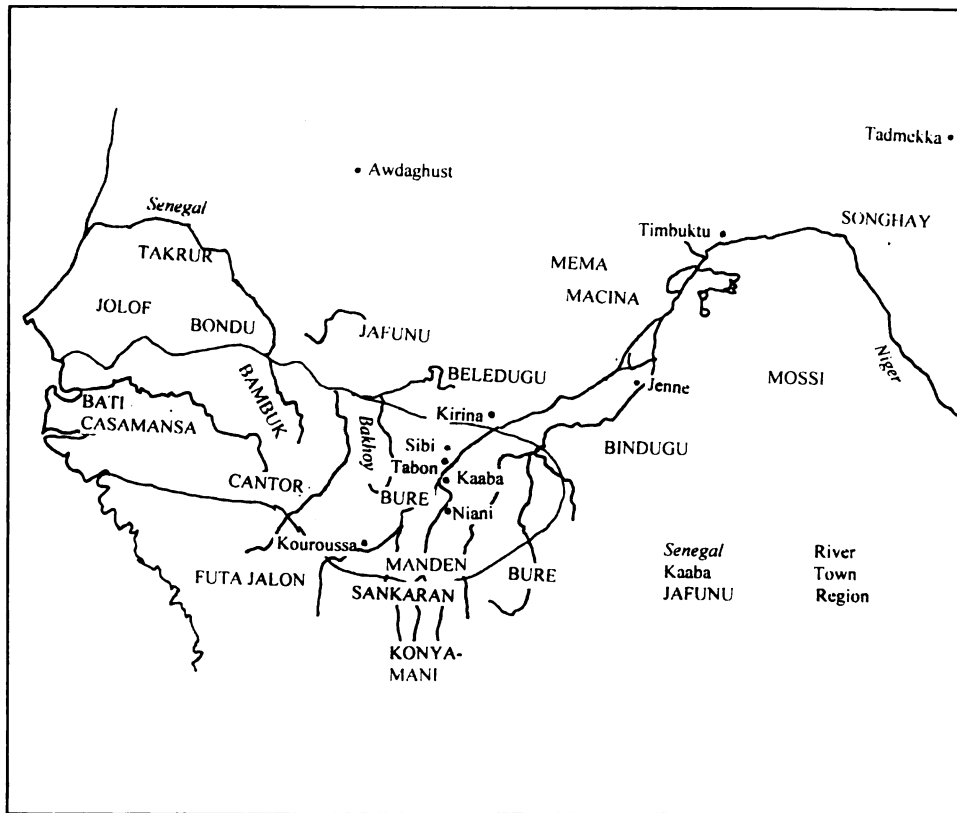


Figure 5: The Mali empire in c. 1500 (Source: Levtzion 1973:2)⁵³

Kaaba, Sibi, Tabon, Niani and Norasoba in the south. The Kamara, Konè, Traoré, Konaté, Kuyateh and Kromah were the most predominant chiefly clans in the Manden before the Keita rose to power.⁵⁴ The descendants of these clans later migrated to Konya-Mani; today, their offspring still recall some of the feats that their ancestors are said to have performed in the Manden during Sunjata's time.

In the late-eleventh century, al-Bakrī wrote that a king who had the title of Daw or

⁵³At its height in the fourteenth century, the Mali empire went as far west, north and east respectively as the Senegal River, Awdaghust and Songhay.

⁵⁴Conrad 1992:172-174.

Do ruled a ‘great kingdom’ on the bank of the Nīl (Niger) River. This king’s warriors fought with arrows. Beyond Do was the ‘country’ of Malal. A *mori* convinced Malal’s ‘king’ to convert to Islam after rain supposedly fell because a *mori* prayed. The king expelled the sorcerers from the land, and all of the nobles became Muslim.⁵⁵ One century later, al-Idrīsī claimed that there was a land called Lamlam that had two towns, Malal and Do. Al-Idrīsī was a famous twelfth century Arab geographer of Moroccan descent who became well known in Europe. Four days travel separated the towns. Their inhabitants were not Muslims, and their faces were scarified when they reached puberty. Malal was a ‘small town’ with a wall that protected against slavers.⁵⁶ Do was a separate chiefdom that included several towns.⁵⁷ Malal, whose name only appears in these Arabic sources, might have been any Maninka chiefdom or region except Do.⁵⁸

Al-Bakrī and al-Idrīsī’s Do might be a reference to the land of Do of Dodu (‘secret land’) that oral traditions often mention.⁵⁹ “‘Do’ is a term of wide-ranging significance loaded with arcane spiritual meaning.” Do means ‘secret,’ is the name of an esoteric association, and was an important region situated southeast of the Niger below Segou.⁶⁰ Do was closely associated with neighboring Kri (Kiri). Both towns were in the core Manden that Sunjata later united.⁶¹ People went to the “sacred sites” and “genie spirit guides” of Do to acquire power. The Jara or Konè (Konde) ruled the land, and the renown Traoré hunters of the Manden came from Do and Kri. Do was supposedly the

⁵⁵Levtzion 1973:53; Hopkins/Levtzion 1981:82-83.

⁵⁶Levtzion 1973:53; Hopkins/Levtzion 1981:108-109,390, fn. 6.

⁵⁷Demba Kouyaté 1987, in Conrad 1999a:162.

⁵⁸Levtzion 1973:54; see Lange 1994:285-288.

⁵⁹Levtzion 1973:54.

⁶⁰Conrad 1997d.

⁶¹Bulman 1990:1; Demba Kouyaté 1987, in Conrad 1999a:162.

birthplace of Sunjata's mother Sogolon Konè. Sogolon's sorcerer-sister Kamissa had enough power to shape-shift into a buffalo.⁶² Kri was a chiefdom that had four towns by one account. The first rulers of Kri were the Konè, but Traoré hunters later succeeded the Konè.⁶³

According to oral traditions, the Kamara were the strongest southern Maninka clan. The Kamara were warriors, nobles, sorcerers and smiths who ruled Sibi, Tabon, Kaaba, Niane and other chiefdoms. The Kromah were another important Maninka clan in the south; Fakoli's paternal ancestors reportedly ruled Negeboria and Norasoba.⁶⁴

The Manden

Sunjata Keita's formation of the Manden in the early-to-mid thirteenth century marked the ascendancy of the Maninka in the Middle Niger. Sunjata's rise also symbolized the shift of political power from the savannah to the sahara as Wagadu declined. Historians attribute the Maninka expansion to the political vacuum that emerged in the sahel as the Soninke dispersed from Wagadu, Bure emerged as the main source of West African gold, and trade routes developed towards the forest.⁶⁵ Background information about Sunjata is important because several of the key players in the Musadu epic trace their descent from the Manden. Some of the themes that traditionists of Musadu address also partly derive from the Sunjata legend.

The earliest information about Sunjata comes from two fourteenth century Arabic

⁶²Levtzion 1973:57; Conrad 1997d:140-141.

⁶³Bulman 1990:186,201-202; Demba Kouyaté 1987, in Conrad 1999a:162.

⁶⁴Innes 1974:243, ln. 133; Camara 1980:82; Moraes Farias 1989:160; Mammadi Conde of Fadama c. 1981b, in Conrad 1999a:129.

⁶⁵Levtzion 1973:53; McIntosh 1998:261-262.

sources. The first vague reference is from the great Moroccan traveler Ibn Battūta who visited Mali and the court of Mansa Sulayman in 1352/53. In one sentence, Ibn Battūta mentioned that Mansa Sulayman's 'grandfather [great uncle] Sariq Jata embraced Islam at the hands of the grandfather of this Mudrik.'⁶⁶ A half-century later, Ibn Khaldūn wrote that Mali's 'greatest king, he who overcame the Susu, conquered their country, and seized the power from their hands, was named Mari Jata. *Mari*, in their language, means "ruler of the blood royal," and *jāta* "lion"... I have not heard the genealogy of this king. He ruled for 25 years...' ⁶⁷ Most historians link Sunjata with Ibn Battūta's Sāriq Jāta and Ibn Khaldūn's Mārī Jāta.⁶⁸ None of the other Arabic writers or African historians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries mention Sunjata. The earliest in a long series of references to Sunjata after Ibn Khaldūn are found in oral traditions that the French started to record at the end of the nineteenth century. The Sunjata legend uses stories about Sunjata's idealized establishment of the Mali empire to demonstrate how Sunjata reorganized the social, political, cultural and religious landscape of the Maninka.

Nearly seventy versions of the Sunjata epic have been collected. Several have been published or included in dissertations; others are awaiting publication.⁶⁹ Lieutenant de Vaisseau Horst of the French navy recorded the first tradition in Mali in 1889 or 1895. The French administrator Charles Monteil and the German explorer Leo Frobenius published some of the first substantial oral traditions in the early-twentieth century. The French administrator-ethnographer Maurice Delafosse published Arabic and Bamana

⁶⁶Ibn Battūta 1356, in Hopkins/Levtzion 1981:295.

⁶⁷In Hopkins/Levtzion 1981:333.

⁶⁸Levtzion 1973:63,230, fn. 1; Hopkins/Levtzion 1981:417, fn. 44; Wilks 1999:47.

⁶⁹Bulman 1990; 1997; see Conrad 1981; Belcher 1985; 1999; Austin 1990.

manuscripts that African scholars penned.⁷⁰ Africans, Europeans and Americans have collected most versions of the Sunjata epic in the last forty years.⁷¹

Speakers sometime begin narrating the epic by tracing Sunjata's genealogy to Muhammad's seventh century African servant Bilali. Some even go all the way back to the Qur'anic Adam. One of Bilali's descendants allegedly founded the first Maninka residence in Kiri Koroni.⁷²

The story then shifts to the land of Do, where Do Kamissa Condé (Konè, Diara), the sister of Do's ruler Mogo Condé, transformed herself into a buffalo. Mogo did not give Do Kamissa a share in an inheritance after their father died, so she retaliated by terrorizing the countryside so Do's residents would not be able to farm and hunt in peace. Two Traoré hunters named Dã Mansa Wulani and Dã Mansa Wulanba went to Do to kill the buffalo after several others had failed. At the edge of town, they met an old woman who turned out to be Do Kamissa. Do Kamissa promised to let the hunters kill her if they agreed to take her ugly-humpbacked sister Sogolon Wulèn as the reward that would be given after they killed her. The younger brother killed the buffalo, and his older brother praised him. Because Dã Mansa Wulanba praised his younger brother, he became a bard and the founder of the Jabateh clan. The two brothers then took Sogolon and escorted her to Narena or another town in the Manden where they gave her to the chief, Famaghan Konaté.

Sogolon became another one of Famaghan Konaté's wives, and she gave birth to Sunjata. After Konaté died, Sunjata's older step-brother Dankaran Touman became the

⁷⁰Bulman 1997.

⁷¹E.g., Niane 1960; 1980; Cissé/Kamissoko 1975; Camara 1980; Johnson 1985; Jansen 1995; Conrad 1999a.

⁷²Most of this summary of the Sunjata epic is from Bulman (1990:6-8) and Belcher (1999a: ch. 5).

ruler. Dankaran Touman's mother was Sassouma Bèrèté. Sunjata was born a cripple because Bèrèté had commissioned some sorcery against him. Sunjata was jeered by his step-family, and was unable to help his mother do simple things like pick leaves from baobab trees to make food. When he was in his teens, he used an iron rod or a cane as a support to help him stand upright. In a great display of strength, Sunjata walked to a giant baobab tree, shook its trunk, and took a basket of leaves to his mother.

Sunjata and his mother eventually left town after Famaghan Konaté died because Dankaran Touman and his mother viewed him as a threat. Most of the accounts state that he traveled to Mema where Musa Tunkara was the ruler. Some say that Sunjata visited Tabon where Faran Kamara's father ruled, or that he went to Soso where Sumaworo trained him to become a hunter.

The leaders of the Manden sent a delegation to find Sunjata, and located him in Mema. Sogolon died prematurely of her own volition so Sunjata could return to the Manden. Some say that Musa Tunkara gave Sunjata part of his army, which included cavalry. Sunjata returned to the Manden and formed an alliance with Kamanjan Kamara of Sibi, Faran Kamara of Tabon, Siara Kouman Konaté of Toron, Tira Makhan Traoré, and Madiba Konté of Sankaran from his mother's side of the family. Fakoli later joined the alliance after Sumaworo took his wife.

Sunjata and Sumaworo clashed many times. Although the armies fought physical battles, the decisive factor about who won took place in the sphere of the occult. Sumaworo controlled more occult power at the beginning so he always won. Sunjata would win only if he found the source of Sumaworo's power. Sunjata's sister Kolonkan went to Sumaworo. She intimately offered herself to him and persuaded him to divulge

his secret. Kolonkan then fled back to the Manden where she revealed his secret to Sunjata. Tipping an arrow with the spur of a cock, which some say was Sumaworo's secret, Sunjata or Fakoli grazed him with the arrow during the famous battle that took place near Krina. Narrators say that Sumaworo disappeared into a cave or turned into stone before he could be captured.⁷³

After Sunjata defeated Sumaworo, Sunjata met with his leading warriors at Kaaba or Dakajalan and 'divided the world.' Each of Sunjata's warriors gave his spear or other accoutrements to Sunjata. Sunjata returned each item and respective chiefdom to each warrior-chief. Sunjata also established relationships between certain clans, and assigned special identities for some. For instance, one bard mentioned that the Konaté became the uncles of the Keita, the Tounkara and Cissé became 'joking partners' of the Keita, the Cissé, Bèrèté and Turé became the great *morilu*, the Kromah became the smiths, the Kuyateh became the griots, Toron Konaté became the juniors of the Keita, and the Kamara remained the 'masters of the soil.'⁷⁴

Ibn Khaldūn published a dynastic history of Mali that covered the period from Sunjata to the time that he himself wrote in about 1393/94.⁷⁵ According to Ibn Khaldūn's sources, Mari Jata 'ruled for twenty-five years' and sixteen men succeeded him. Historians use Ibn Khaldūn's chronology to date Sunjata's rule from 1230-1255 or 1235-1360. Sunjata initially formed the core of the Manden from Maninka chiefdoms like Do, Kri, Malal, Tabon and Sibi. By the end of his life, Sunjata started to expand his holdings

⁷³Camara 1980:204; Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:53,63-67; Bulman 1990:328,371-372; Belcher 1999a:103; Jèli Mori Kouyaté 1988, in Conrad 1999a:63-64; Mamadi Diabate of Kankan c. late 1970s, in Conrad 1999a:89.

⁷⁴Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:77-78.

⁷⁵Ibn Khaldūn 1393/94, in Hopkins/Levtzion 1981:333-336; see Levtzion 1973: chs. 6-9.

into an empire. Tira Makhan Traoré, for instance, went to the Senegambia and conquered the state of Jolof. The empire became a “hierarchy of dependencies” with the Manden in the center, “nominally autonomous” tribute-paying states like Mema and Wagadu in the periphery, and states like Jolof and Songhay on the frontier. The empire maintained a political and military presence in the lands that it ruled. The most outlying polities were indignant of Mali’s presence and were the first to resist when the empire’s leadership started to weaken in the late-fourteenth century. The states that comprised the Mali empire were more politically, socially and culturally integrated with each other than those of the Wagadu empire, which mostly consisted of “the alliance of quasi-independent chiefdoms.”⁷⁶ Mali was not a tightly bounded centralized state with well defined borders, a notion that reflects a more Western view of political organization. Instead, the leaders of Mali were more concerned about controlling people than land. Thus, Sunjata was ultimately interested in establishing relations between clans, and in receiving homage from key subordinates like Fakoli and the Kamara. Sunjata and Mali’s best rulers expected leading families to pay tribute and recognize the leadership of the Mali *mansa*; Mali’s *mansalu*, in return, did not usually demand their total subjection. Claims to status were based on social relations and hierarchies of relationships among ancestors, chiefs and groups.⁷⁷

The oral traditions seem only to refer to one of Sunjata’s successors, and then in only a veiled way.⁷⁸ For these points, Ibn Khaldūn is the most important source. Sunjata’s son Mansa Uli probably expanded the empire east to Timbuktu, Walata and Gao. His

⁷⁶McIntosh 1998:263.

⁷⁷Jansen 1996a-c; see Mabogunje/Richards 1985:6; Diawara 1999:111, fn. 2.

⁷⁸Austin 1999b:70-72. The epic of Fa-Jigi seems to be at least based on the famous journey that one of Sunjata’s grand nephews, Mansa Musa, made to Mecca in 1324 (Seydou Camara, in Conrad 1997).

great-nephew Mansa Musa expanded it west. Mansa Musa reigned from 1312-1337 during the apogee Mali's glory, and went on a historic pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324. Ibn Battūta visited Mansa Musa's brother Mansa Sulayman in 1352/53, and described Mali and the court life that he witnessed.⁷⁹

If it were not for writers like Ibn Khaldūn and Ibn Battūta, much less would be known about Sunjata's successors and the next three centuries of the Mali empire's history. The Maniyaka, like the Maninka, tell an epic about a hero who made a powerful state. The Maniyaka of Konya-Mani, like the Maninka of the Manden, however recall little of what happened after Foningama and Sunjata died.⁸⁰ Arabic sources help historians reconstruct many of the important events that occurred in the Mali empire after Sunjata died. Unfortunately, however, the same kind of contemporary documentation does not exist in the south. No known travelers like Ibn Battūta or local scholars such as al-Mukhtār lived far enough south to catalogue the kind of information that would be helpful for forest-edge studies like this. Yet, nineteenth century Liberians learned that Musadu was the capital of a powerful "kingdom" named Mani or Manding.⁸¹ After Benjamin Anderson went to Musadu in 1868, he wrote: "I often heard the old men of the town regret [the loss of] its past power and wealth. They told me that what I then saw of Musadu was only the ruins of a former prosperity." Even then, Musadu had an impressive infantry and a cavalry of several hundred soldiers that Musadu's chief drew from nearby towns.⁸² In the period between Foningama's move to Musadu and the nineteenth century

⁷⁹Ibn Battūta 1356, in Hopkins/Levtzion 1356/1981:289-302; Hamdun/King 1356/1994.

⁸⁰The Maniyaka provide more information about the post-Foningama era than the Maninka do about the post-Sunjata era because Foningama lived at least two centuries later than Sunjata. This is helpful, but the narratives are still so compressed that it is hard to determine a reasonable chronology.

⁸¹Benson 1858:131; Sims 1859-1860/2003; Anderson 1870/1971:5.

⁸²Anderson 1870/1971:92-93.

Liberian reports, it is very possible, but not conclusively demonstrable given the information which is currently available, that many Kamara chiefs ruled Musadu after Foningama, and that one or more of his successors expanded Konya-Mani's political influence to Greater Konya-Mani where the outlying Konyaka now live. This makes it all the more important why historians must carefully study the strands of history that have been preserved in oral traditions to try and reconstruct a few of the events that happened in the past.

Mali started to decline in the late-fourteenth century when Songhay broke away in the east. The Tuareg started to chip away at Mali in the north when it took Timbuktu in 1433/34 and Walata in 1477. Songhay conquered Mema in the mid-1400s and kept pressuring Mali. In 1545/46, the Songhay sacked Mali's capital of Niani. Although the Songhay left after one week, this event symbolized how much the central rule of the Mali empire had decayed. Mali started to strengthen again in 1590/91 after Morocco conquered Songhay. In the late-1590s, however, Mali's *mansa* Niani Mansa Mahmūd unsuccessfully tried to raid Jenne three times. He was captured and released the third time. Thereafter, Mali "ceased to be a political factor in the Middle Niger," and is not mentioned again in the Arabic sources. After Mahmūd died, the nucleus of the Mali empire broke up, although some Maninka continued to recognize Mahmūd's sons as their leaders. In 1645, Bamana raiders revolted against their Maninka overlords in Kala and Binduku. They made the two Maninka chiefs flee and sacked their towns. The downfall of these chiefdoms "put an end to the territorial political organization bequeathed by Mali."⁸³

The Mali empire could have tangentially ruled Konya-Mani given its name and

⁸³Levtzion 1973:93,101.

the fact that its earliest leaders belonged to the same clans as two of Sunjata's most important generals - Fakoli Kromah and Kamājan Kamara. The traditions of southeast Guinea are silent about this matter, so nothing definitive can be said either way. If the Mali empire did not directly control Konya-Mani, it still influenced Konya-Mani socially, economically and culturally. Even after Mali's power began to diminish in the late-fourteenth century, Manding bards continued to recite its history. The rulers of the states of former Mali also often professed at least symbolic obeisance to the empire. Breakaway upstarts like the Kamara who went to Musadu used the prestige of the empire and their ancestor's links to Sunjata to claim ascendance, cooperation and credibility.⁸⁴

Two stages of Maninka and Soninke settlement in Konya-Mani

The Maninka and Soninke who migrated to Musadu were part of a greater "two-part Mande expansion" that has been described for Konya-Mani and other parts of West Africa.⁸⁵ This migration sequence is similar with what the oral traditions say happened in Konya-Mani, and provides a framework that puts the early history of Musadu in broader perspective.

In short, hunters such as the Donzo who went to Musadu were often the first peoples to trek to new lands and develop supernatural and political power. Smiths transformed the power and symbols of hunters, and become more important than them. Smiths started to expand from the Manden with traders in the first four centuries of the second millennium as the climate started to become more dry and smiths needed to find hardwoods to burn in their forges. Some of the first traders and smiths who went to

⁸⁴Brooks 1993:172-173; Buhnen 1996:115, Jansen 1996b:103.

⁸⁵Brooks 1993; see McIntosh 1998.

Konya-Mani were, according to oral traditions, Musa Kromah and some Konè and Baayo.

In the second phase, hunter-warriors recast the power and symbols that smiths developed to establish a new system of political and social order. These hunter-warriors traveled down the trade corridors with *morilu* and their bards in the late-fourteenth century as the Mali empire began to dissolve. The quintessential hunter-warrior in the Musadu epic was Foningama. Most of the *morilu* who helped Foningama become established in Musadu were Bèrètè, Dole, Kanè, Sherif, Sware and other Soninke. Hunter-warriors built new conquest states in many places where the smiths and traders had established residence. Warrior-chiefs eventually developed a symbiotic relationship with the older traders and smiths in many places. In some instances, though, as happened in Musadu, local smiths, traders and *morilu* forced the warriors to leave when the warriors became too ruthless.

These stages were not as well defined as this model suggests, but they do show the overall pattern of expansion and settlement that the Musadu traditions describe. In the earliest stage, for example, smiths and traders accompanied hunters on some occasions and preceded hunters at other times. Categories were also often fluid; there were hunter-traders, hunter-smiths, smith-traders, trader-*morilu* and the like who held multiple roles at the same time. Yet, hunters, smiths and traders in the first instance, and hunter-warriors and *morilu* in the second, seem to have dominated the overall social, political and cultural landscape of Konya-Mani and many other areas at their respective stages of expansion.

Mane invasions

The historical overview in this introduction has thus far only summarized events

that transpired in the deep interior of the Western Sudan. The changing nature of coastal trade that started to develop in the middle of the second millennium also impacted events that ensued in and around Konya-Mani. After the mid-fifteenth century, Europeans started to sail down the coast of West Africa to gain direct access to the spices, silk, sugar and other goods that people produced in the Far East. In doing so, they docked along the coast and established small forts. The men in these forts provisioned the ships and started to trade European cloth, iron, copper, brass, whisky and firearms for African gold, pepper and slaves. In the mid-sixteenth century and thereafter, Portuguese and Dutch traders recorded stories about a series of “Mane” invasions that occurred in present-day Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Most historians agree that these invasions took place during the mid-sixteenth century, and that they formed two simultaneous movements. The first were the Mane/Sumba invaders who traveled through central Sierra Leone and ended near the Scarcies Rivers. The second were Mane/Kquoja-Karou invaders who traversed through central Liberia to the coast, and then moved up the coast into Sierra Leone.⁸⁶ Some historians argue that the Mane invasions started in the southern portion of Greater Konya-Mani, and that the descendants of one of Foningama’s sons probably led the initial stages of the invasions.⁸⁷ It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to examine the Mane invasions at any substantive level. In Chapters 6 and 8, however, it is argued that some of the episodes that talk about the ouster of Zo Musa from Musadu and the exodus of Foningama’s sons from Musadu likely reflect some distorted but faint memories about

⁸⁶Rodney 1967; 1970; Person 1971a; 1984; Hair 1968a; 1975; Jones 1981; 1983b; Brooks 1993; cf. Massing 1985.

⁸⁷Person 1971a:675-79; Rodney 1970:51.

certain aspects of the invasions.

Social Formation

The basic unit of kinship in Manding culture is the nuclear family or 'household' (*lu*). Several households comprise a 'sub-lineage' (*babunda*), several sub-lineages form a 'lineage' (*kabila*), and several lineages constitute a 'clan' (*si, jamu/diamu*). People usually recognize one or more key ancestors as the heads of lineages and clans. Several clans make up an 'ethnic group' (*si*).⁸⁸ People sometimes refer to the Bamana, Maninka or Maniyaka as ethnic groups. For instance, if the Foningama who went to Musadu and became its chief Maninka, his descendants who grew up in Musadu became Maniyaka. His descendants are known as Foningamasi or 'descendants (*si*) of Foningama.' The offspring of Foningama's son Fasu are Foningamasi, but are also Fasusi as they further define their position within the Kamara.

By the fourteenth century, the Manding and Soninke were divided into three main groups: 'free people' (*horon*), 'artisans' (*nyamakalalu*) and 'slaves' (*jònlù*). 'Royal clans' (*mansalen*), nobles, and commoners were free; the royal clans and nobles were eligible to hold political office at the village level.⁸⁹

Artisans or 'craft status groups' (*nyamakalalu*) were 'blacksmiths' (*numu*), 'leatherworkers' (*garankelu*) and 'bards' (*jèlilu*). In pre-colonial times, royal clans and noble clans patronized the *nyamakalalu* who provided services in return. *Nyamakala* may mean 'handle (*kala*) of power (*nyama*).' Individuals and groups need to control power so

⁸⁸Hopkins 1971; Johnson 1986.

⁸⁹Hopkins 1971; Kaba 1972; 1973:333-36; Bazin 1974; Johnson 1986:8-21; McNaughton 1988; Tamari 1991; Launay 1992:149-50; Brooks 1993:47.

society can function normally. Therefore, the *nyamakalalu* who are the ‘handles of power’ play a vital role in controlling society. Although the *nyamakalalu* are free, the Manding and Soninke place them in a separate category. *Nyamakalalu* are not allowed access to traditional authority, and they do not normally marry free persons. The Manding often fear the *nyamakalalu* and consider them “unusual, mysterious and even strange” because of their proximity to occult power and knowledge of specialized technologies. Yet, people value the *nyamakalalu* because of the services they render to society. The artisan classes started to form by the early-thirteenth century after Sunjata defeated Sumaworo. Because Sumaworo used bards and smiths to augment his power, Sunjata restricted the ability of bards, smiths and other *nyamakalalu* to become chiefs.⁹⁰

Numulu (sing., *numu*) or ‘blacksmiths’ were trained to divine, make talismen and prepare medicine from plants. Smiths had to get permission from the land, water and forest spirits to dig iron ore and cut down trees to make the charcoal they needed to smelt ore and gold. Smiths also needed the cooperation of the spirits to smelt the ore and make tools, weapons, jewelry, sculptors, household items and masks for ‘initiation associations’ (*doow*, sing., *doo*). Smiths like Fakoli and Sumaworo respectively formed esoteric associations, and sometimes came to rule large states.⁹¹ Traders and smiths represented some of the first Soninke and Maninka to migrate south toward the forest edge.

‘Potters’ were *numumusolu* (sing., *numumuso*) or ‘smiths’s wives.’ Potters worked with earth spirits to fashion the soil into objects, and were respected, like their husbands, because they dealt with the occult. Potters made domestic pots and special

⁹⁰Launay 1972:2-4; Bird/Kendall 1980:16; McNaughton 1988:3,14-19; Conrad 1990:5; Tamari 1991; Brooks 1993:40; Conrad/Frank 1995.

⁹¹McNaughton 1988.

medicine pots to store plants and herbs, and might have also made terra cottas. Potters also circumcised, made community sacrifices, dressed hair, and participated in births, baptisms, and marriages. None of the ceramics that potters made were particularly Islamic in form and function, or served as long-distance trade goods. Historical traditions, therefore, about pottery, do go back in time, but are locally based and mainly confined to the Manden. Some potters accompanied their smith-husbands south. Smiths sometimes traveled to their new locations and married locally. Since some suggest that smiths did not take their potter-wives to Konya-Mani and nearby regions in present-day Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire.⁹² Further research is needed on the origins of potters in Konya-Mani to see if this thesis holds.

‘Leatherworkers’ or *garankelu* (sing., *garanke*) are Soninke in origin.

Leatherworkers played vital roles in society and probably traveled south with traders, *morilu* and warriors. In modern Guinea, leatherworkers are closely associated with Jakhanke *morilu*. Leatherworkers made saddles, bridles, harnesses, horse trappings, shot pouches, sheaths, quivers, shields and powder horns for warriors; crowns, staffs, fly whisks and other regalia for chiefs; amulets and book covers for *morilu*; and small pouches, wallets, bags, sandals and other useful items for everyone in general. Oral traditions involving pottery, by contrast, are not as far-reaching because ceramics were not as important. Leatherworkers used occult power to make their most potent products; they needed to control the *nyama* or ‘deadly occult power’ that was released when they transformed animal skin into beautiful and useful objects. A talisman, for instance, that a smith made without following the ritual prescriptions would lose its power. If a talisman

⁹²Frank 1998:17; see LaViolette 1995.

became unwrapped, spirits would take away or totally diminish its power.⁹³

‘Bards’ or ‘griots’ (*jèlilu*; sing., *jèli*) were skilled musicians who doubled as entertainers, praise singers and historians for chiefs and other important people. They praised their patrons, manipulated information to strengthen their position in society, and tried to ensure that their memory would continue long after they died. As skilled word users, bards motivated people to replicate the deeds of their heroic ancestors. Bards also preserved traditional beliefs and practices, served as mediators when problems arose or when rituals had to be performed, and helped impose Manding languages and social structures on the peoples whom the Manding conquered. Most bards were Maninka and Bamana. Bards often worked leather to help supplement their income, but were not *garanke*. Many *jèlilu* accompanied warriors like Foningama. A few *jèlilu* were *funé* who specialized in singing Islamic praise songs. Most *funé* were Kamara; some sources claim that Foningama’s ancestors were *funé* (Chapter 2).⁹⁴

Jònlù (sing., *jòn*) or ‘slaves’ were situated at the bottom of society. Most people became slaves by being captured in war. Others enslaved themselves to survive during times of famine or to pay debts. Some were forced into enslavement as a punishment for a crime, and a few were given to rulers when they were considered too undesirable in their own communities. People often marked slaves, gave them new names, and moved them well away from the areas of their capture. Newly captured persons were known as *jònlù*. Second generation slaves born in their master’s houses were called *wolosolu* or ‘slaves born at home.’ The lowest status slaves were first generation *jònlù*, persons who were enslaved by other slaves or the *nyamakalalu*, or slaves who farmed. Some became the

⁹³Frank 1998.

⁹⁴McNaughton 1988:6-7; Johnson 1986:22-25; Conrad 1995.

personal bodyguards of chiefs or attained key positions in the army. A few became chiefs. Household slaves usually adapted the clan name of their master.

Jònlú differed from chattel slaves who lived in the Americas. Individuals normally controlled chattel slaves, but individuals, groups or the state could own *jònlú* in Africa. *Jònlú* also had more social latitude than slaves in the Americas. The children of *jònlú* were usually freed after the third generation, and *jònlú* often became close to the families who enslaved them. Far more social and physical distance was usually maintained between slaves and owners in the Americas. While some stigma remained on the descendants of *jònlú* who became free, most freed *jònlú* became members of the families who enslaved them and assumed the rights and responsibilities of those families.⁹⁵

Political Order

Manding society is patrilineal; kin-group membership, descent and inheritance pass through the male line. Similarly, political order is vertical, and is normally based on gerontocracy. Oldest sons of royal kin-groups often succeed their fathers as chiefs. Society sanctions several horizontal cross-cutting institutions and individual types to check kin-based authority so chiefs do not abuse their power. Individuals sometimes emerge outside the vertical structure to establish political authority.⁹⁶

⁹⁵Bazin 1974; Holsoe 1977:287-91; Conrad 1981; Jones 1983:31-32.

⁹⁶Unless otherwise stated, the discussion that follows is based on Hopkins (1971) and Johnson (1986: ch. 1; 1999).

Vertical Authority

Each town or village has a ritual leader and a political *mansa* of ‘chief.’ The ritual leader can double as a chief, but the positions are usually separate. The ritual head of a town is the *duukoloti* (*dugukolotigi*) or ‘earth surface master.’ The ritual leader is so named because his ancestors were the first persons who allegedly placated the indigenous peoples of the area and forged special relationships with the earth spirits so they could use the land. The ritual leader distributes the land to town residents, intercedes with earth spirits, and makes sacrifices on behalf of farmers so their harvest will be productive.⁹⁷ The Kromah are the ritual chiefs of Musadu, and were also the political chiefs until the Kamara succeeded them in this role.

Manding political authority is patrilineal, based on the principle of *fasiya* or ‘father-lineage-ness.’ The oldest son of the core lineage that claims direct descent from the legendary ancestor who became chief was usually favored to be the leader, no matter the size of the political unit involved. Manding authority parallels the way the land is divided. Territorial organization theoretically extends in a concentric circle from the ‘household’ or ‘yard’ (*lu*) to a ‘ward,’ ‘village’ (*toda*, *duu*), ‘town’ (*so*, *duu*) and ‘chiefdom’ (*jamana*, *kafu*).⁹⁸ An extended family comprises a household, and the core lineage or *kabila* and its smaller households and temporary residents form a ward. Two or more wards make up a village. A village becomes a town when its population and land area increase. Several towns or villages consist of a chiefdom when organized under a single political authority.

⁹⁷Jansen 1996c:25-26.

⁹⁸See Imperato 1977:39; Conrad 1990:339-340. Kpelle and Loma authority is similar in some ways to that of the Maniyaka (Murphy/Bledsoe 1987:126-127; Højbjerg 1999:537-539).

The leader of each territorial unit is a *ti* or 'leader.' Thus, the *luti* is the 'household head,' the *duuti* is the 'village chief,' the *soti* is the 'town chief,' and the *jamanati* is the 'chiefdom ruler.' The leader of a clan is the *kabila kundi* (*kunti*) or 'lineage head.' The Manding use the titles *mansa* (*masa*) and *faama* to describe senior political positions. *Mansa* (pl., *mansalu*) means 'chief,' 'ruler,' 'lord,' or 'king,' and is typically conferred on those who gain their positions through heredity. *Faama* (pl., *faamalu*) means 'king' or 'person of power,' and usually refers to a person who uses force to become the leader. Although the oral traditions in southeast Guinea generally depict *faamalu* as having more power than *mansalu*, people from this area sometimes equate *mansa* and *faama*. The Maniyaka, for instance, usually call Foningama a *masa* or *mansa*.

Horizontal Power

Vertical authority structures "concentrate decision-making in the hands of a few." They can become coercive, especially during times of crisis or when rulers become too aggressive. Many cross-cutting lineage social institutions, thus, furnish an intricate set of checks and balances to hierarchal authority and provide legitimate ways for ambitious individuals to vie for top leadership posts.⁹⁹ Two such institutions are the caste artisans and slaves that have already been discussed. Other examples are age-sets and voluntary associations. The most important age-sets are youth associations that organize men from the time of circumcision to their mid-thirties, and women from the time of excision to the birth of their first children. Age-sets provide entertainment and can voice their concerns about political and social issues. Secular and religious voluntary associations can accept

⁹⁹McIntosh 1998:4-9.

persons from across the social landscape. Esoteric associations such as the Komo represent one type of voluntary association.

Sananguya and *lasiliya* are two more kinds of inter-clan relationships that expand along kinship lines. People usually base the formation of *sananguya* or 'joking relationships' on incidents that occur in the past when one ancestor betrayed, mislead or rescued the ancestral head of another group of people. A joking relationship is consequently formed to ensure cooperation and minimize conflicts between the said clans. Joking partners are free to publically insult each other, and are technically obliged to help each other when needs arise. Many of the *sananguya* in today's southeast Guinea derive from Sunjata's time, but some originated with events that are told in the Musadu epic.¹⁰⁰

Lasiliya is a relationship like *sananguya* that 'ties' two or more groups of people together. *Lasili* is the Maniyakā verb 'to tie' or 'to bind.'¹⁰¹ *Ya* means 'condition of,' so *lasiliya* can be translated 'the condition of binding' or 'binding relationship.' *Lasiliya* originated in the same way as *sananguya*, and have nearly the same function. The Donzo and Kamara, for instance, became *lasili* after the Donzo supposedly sacrificed a cow to save one of Foningama's children who had broken an important law (Chapter 8). The Maniyaka sometimes equate *lasiliya* and *sananguya*, but generally regard *lasiliya* as

¹⁰⁰Leynaud/Cissé 1978: 131-37; Niane 1984:134; McNaughton 1988:10-11; Tamari 1991:239-240.

¹⁰¹Delafosse 1931:230; Ellenberger n.d.: *sidi*; Spears 1973:236; Launay 1982:37; Wilks 1989:30. *Lasili* more broadly translates as 'beginning,' 'root' or 'bunch,' and can refer to or mean 'sex,' 'pregnancy,' 'ancestor,' divination, amulet ('tied' in a bundle), 'story of origin' (that explains how people are 'linked'), and 'bond' (that 'ties' the spirit and human worlds) (Zahan 1974:11-13; Skinner 1976:61; Cutler, with Dwyer 1981:47; Braconnier 1989, II:496,794-795; Wilks 1989:30; Brett-Smith 1996:28, fn. 8; Vydrine 1999:271). *Lasili* probably comes from the Arabic word *al-'aql* which means 'origin' or 'source,' 'root' or 'trunk,' and 'descent' or 'lineage' (David Robinson, personal communication, 21 Dec. 1997; Vydrine 1999:271; Alford T. Welch, personal communication, June 2002; cf. Fisher 1971:ix).

being more serious and binding than *sananguya*. Yaya Dole, the mid-twentieth century chief of Musadu who is an important source for this work, said that ‘the *lasili* business is hard because you have to help free that person from trouble. Otherwise, you will become the owner of the trouble. You must help the person who is in trouble if you are able, even if you are younger than that person.’¹⁰² The stories recorded in southeast Guinea state that *lasiliya* derive from incidents that relate to Foningama or the early history of Musadu. An elder in Musadu even claimed that all *lasiliya* originated in Musadu.¹⁰³ The nearly exclusive link between *lasiliya* and Foningama or Musadu suggests that *lasiliya* might be unique to the Maniyaka and be more recent than *sananguya* that date back to Sunjata.¹⁰⁴

Hunters, *morilu* and strangers are three important types of people who challenged Manding hierarchical authority. Unlike *morilu*, strangers and even semi-casted artisans, ‘hunters’ or *donzolu* (sing., *donzo*) did not blend well with lineages or live in towns. ‘Hunter associations’ (*donzo ton*) were “truly egalitarian,” for they accepted people from any level of society. *Donzo ton* demanded that their members swear their primary allegiance to their association; a member’s clan, artisan group or religion was secondary. *Donzo ton* might have also been the first initiation society that cross-cut kin group loyalties. Many hunters were warriors who had considerable access to occult power. Hunters used their knowledge of the occult to perform rituals, make sacrifices, and fashion special clothes and amulets to deal with the treacherous animals and control

¹⁰² App. 7.8, ll. 130-140.

¹⁰³ Ibrahim Bété 1993, App. 7.33.

¹⁰⁴ None of the literature that I consulted about the Maninka or the Sunjata epic identify *lasiliya* as an institution that links clans. Is *lasiliya* a social institution that is unique to Upper Guinea, or an element of greater Manding social structure that scholars have not addressed? Various authors do mention *lasili*, though in other contexts (e.g. Launay 1982:34-36; Wilks 1989:30,47; Brett-Smith 1996:28, fn. 8; supra. fn. 99).

wilderness spirits. While people feared hunters because of their power, they called on them when their societies were being threatened. Hunters were probably the first to develop power by manipulating *nyama*. Smiths later superseded them in the political sphere.¹⁰⁵ Some oral traditions state that Foningama was a hunter as well as a warrior.

Muslim *morilu* (sing., *mori*), often translated as ‘cleric,’ sometimes refers to less educated Muslim specialists who deal in the occult; the more educated ‘scholars’ are often called *karamogo* (*kaamòò*). *Morilu* divine, make ‘holy water,’ make sacrifices and talismen, and offer prayers for chiefs, warriors and commoners. Some *morilu* developed special relationships with chiefs; this occurred between Foningama and *morilu* clans in Musadu such as the Sherif, and later between the Bèrètè and the Konè *morilu* in Beyla. In some respects, the patron-client relationship that is established between nobles and *jèlilu* is similar to the ties that chiefs and other leaders develop with *morilu*.¹⁰⁶ *Morilu* intervened at key times throughout the Musadu epic to assist Foningama, but later worked with traders to oust Foningama’s sons who became despotic.

People often welcomed ‘strangers’ or *lonalu* because they had the potential to introduce new skills, settle disputes and bring prosperity. A ‘host’ (*jati*) or resident of the town would house the stranger and be his liaison. The stranger could augment the influence of his host, become a valuable ally of the host, and gain a say in local affairs. Land owners or hosts often gave one of their daughters or other women to newcomers. Local individuals feared that strangers might upset the balance of power in town, so they always felt more secure when strangers married locally. A firstcomer’s “dilemma” was to

¹⁰⁵Bird/Kendall 1980:16; Cashion 1982:81-82; McIntosh 1998:85-87.

¹⁰⁶Hopkins 1971:108-109; see Skinner 1978:44; Person 1979:261; Schaffer/Cooper 1980:5; Launay 1982:25-27; Levzion 1985:96; 1987b:21-23; Conrad 1999a:228; Johnson 1999:14.

appease the latecomer while maintaining control over him. Newcomers would, at the same time, also try to entice later newcomers to settle with them and become their hosts.¹⁰⁷ In Manding society, Africa and many other parts of the world, some chiefs are “stranger-kings” who have become integrated into societies by marrying local women. The greatest chief or king is often an

immigrant warrior prince whose father is a god or king of his native land. But, exiled by his own love of power or banished for a murder, the hero is unable to succeed there. Instead, he takes power in another place, through a woman: princess of the native people whom he gains by a miraculous exploit involving feats of strength, ruse, rape, athletic prowess, and/or the murder of his predecessor.¹⁰⁸

The chiefs of established villages or towns were often relative newcomers; the head of one of the firstcomer families was the ritual chief. Many sources state that there were ‘three hosts’ and ‘three strangers’ in Musadu; the oral traditions consistently claim that Musa and Foningama were a ‘host’ and a ‘stranger’ respectively. Foningama is even said to have married the Kromah chief’s daughter. Foningama and Sumaworo were quintessential stranger-chiefs because they respectively traveled from foreign lands to conquer the Manden and Musadu and became rulers. Sunjata was a stranger-chief to the extent that he was in exile before he returned home and fought Sumaworo.

Heroes and the acquisition of power

The oral traditions reveal how Foningama and Zo Musa became ‘heroes’ (*ngana*). Heroes in Mande speaking societies are persons who use their spiritual and physical powers to aggressively affect their own destinies. In the process, they disrupt the

¹⁰⁷Launay 1979.

¹⁰⁸Sahlins 1985:82.

conservative hierarchal elements that govern societies and disturb the way that most people live.¹⁰⁹ Foningama and Zo Musa are similar in many regards to their respective counterparts in the Sunjata epic, Sunjata and Sumaworo.¹¹⁰ Although Sunjata and Foningama emerged victorious, oral narrators still regard Sumaworo and Zo Musa as having been valiant foes and heroes. Sumaworo and Zo Musa are esteemed for the power and skills that they acquired, and are lauded for many of their accomplishments. The four men were sorcerers who converted their spiritual power into political authority and used their authority to establish strong political units. The source of Sumaworo and Zo Musa's power is said to have been based primarily on the traditional occult. Sunjata and Foningama allegedly received some of their power from Islam, although the narratives depict Foningama as having had a closer affinity with *morilu* than Sunjata. Sumaworo reportedly used his power to unite the Manden's numerous chiefdoms; Sunjata built on Sumaworo's achievement to form an empire. Zo Musa helped make Musadu important; Foningama or his descendants made Musadu the center of a powerful state. Although defeated in Musadu, traditionists say that Zo Musa went south and founded Zota.

The differences between Sunjata and Sumaworo, and Foningama and Zo Musa, were not whether one was good and the other was evil, or whether one was more closely associated to Islam than the other, or whether one was a hero and one was not a hero. Rather, the key difference was how the men used their power. Sumaworo used his strength to make himself supreme. Because he was so focused on how to empower himself, he disregarded the very people who could have helped him make a long lasting

¹⁰⁹Bird/Kendall 1980:13.

¹¹⁰For Sunjata and Sumaworo, see Conrad (1984:39), Moraes Farias (1989:27), Bulman (1990:326-330,466), Walinshi (1991:221-225), Van Hoven/Oosten (1994:105), Frank (1998:127) and Belcher (1999a:102-112,118).

empire. Sunjata did not try to amass personal power at all costs, but used his power to build an empire. After he defeated Sumaworo, he distributed his power among his key generals and several other groups to give the empire the leadership and social solidarity that it needed to survive and expand. Hints of Sumaworo's behavior are seen in accounts that describe how Zo Musa used his *saafê* to recklessly destroy many things that came in its way. Foningama does not appear as magnanimous as Sunjata, but he seems to have ultimately viewed the formation of a greater Musadu as being more important than his own personal acquisition of power.

Heroes evolve in a system that sanctions tensions between individuals and groups. These tensions are symbolized by the notions of *badènya* ('mother-child-ness') and *fadènya* ('father-child-ness').¹¹¹ The terms strictly refer to children respectively born from the same parents or from the same father but different mothers. *Badènya* and *fadènya*, however, have broader applications. *Badènya* represents society's call for stability, cooperation, social cohesion, group loyalty and the submission of personal interests to the will of the group. Individuals who seek to augment their own reputations at the expense of the group act on the principle of *fadènya*. Persons who follow the *fadènya* axis disregard their obligations toward their kin-group and the vertical authority structure. *Fadèn* break rules when authorities do not respond quickly enough to make society-saving decisions during times of crisis. Freed from the conservative constraints of society, *fadèn* actors can more easily make quick decisions to save society. Thus, while heroes temporarily cause disorder because they have to contravene certain social norms to

¹¹¹Unless otherwise indicated, this discussion about heroes is based on Bird and Kendall (1980:16-20) and Johnson (1999:16-19). Information is also taken from Belcher (1999a:103,111-113), Bird (1999:287), Brett-Smith (1996:36, fn. 36) and Bulman (1996:79).

succeed, they are the ones who ultimately save the very order that they seek to dominate. In time, *badènya* forces neutralize most of the anti-social energy that heroes release when they gain power, and ultimately prevail so society will remain in tact.

Complementing the notion that heroes cause disorder when they transgress normal customs to achieve their goals are “Stranger-Kings” who come to power by “draconic feats” which are “foreign to the conduct of ‘real people’... To be able to put the society in order, the king must first reproduce an original disorder. Having committed his monstrous acts against society, proving he is stronger than it, the ruler proceeds to bring the system out of chaos.”¹¹² Such a chief, however, must be wary. He who kills or plunders indiscriminately creates an unhealthy imbalance that jeopardizes his position and the well-being of society.¹¹³ If the chief “takes too much, his subjects will resist,” so his rule is “conditional and context-specific.”¹¹⁴

Sumaworo, Sunjata and Foningama were stranger-kings who individually challenged the status quo and created chaos before they reestablished order. Sumaworo was a Soso who went to the Manden and supposedly ransacked the land before he became *mansa*. Sunjata returned from exile to fight Sumaworo in many battles before he claimed victory and reorganized society. Foningama was a warrior-immigrant who went to Musadu and fought Zo Musa. He later supposedly established several laws that provided guidelines to maintain order. There were other times of troubles in Musadu when

¹¹²Sahlins 1985:78,80; see Spear 1981:172-174; Austin 1986:390. David Harris similarly observed that the Liberian president Charles Taylor “deliberately used the notion that, having destroyed Liberia, he should be able to apologize and then repair what was broken... A comment often heard [during the 1997 elections] went along the lines of ‘He who spoil it, let him fix it’” (1999:446,451-452; see Ellis 1999:109). The disorder that Sahlins describes is tantamount to important sacrifices that require the destruction of animals or human beings to acquire more power (Ellis 1999:231).

¹¹³Roberts 1983:96,103.

¹¹⁴Feerman 1996.

Foningama ousted Tumaningèmè from the chieftaincy, made the ‘sacrifice of one thousand,’ and executed some of his sons for breaking laws. Despite all of the distress that oral traditionists attribute to Foningama, they do not say that Foningama totally abused his power; he maintained enough balance to make order prevail when situations became bad. His descendants, conversely, abused their power so much by fighting among themselves and breaking laws which harmed people that they apparently could not bring Musadu and Konya-Mani out of the disorder that they created.

Prospective heroes need the support of important women to meet their goals. ‘Sorceresses’ (*basitigiwu*) give men the ‘medicine’ (*basi*) they need and thereby become the ‘sources’ or ‘providers’ (*sabuw*) of all that men do.¹¹⁵ Women guide men when they go astray, help them attain secret knowledge and supernatural power, and lead them toward their paths of destiny. Even though women are the catalysts who help men become great, men ultimately must be able to restrain their power and destroy them when pushed so they can fulfill their own destinies and give their children opportunities to become great. If a husband cannot manage his wife, or if his wife is not a good person, his children will not prosper. Still, men need to act prudently, for disaster can take place when they interfere with the *nyama* that women possess.

Several sorceresses are described in the Sunjata epic. Some of the more well known are Kosiya Kanté who voluntarily died so her brother Sumaworo could become the chief of Soso, Do Kamissa the ‘buffalo woman’ who allowed herself to be sacrificed so her sister Sogolon could become Sunjata’s mother, the nine ‘female sorcerers’ (*subamusow*) who frustrated Sunjata’s attempt to become powerful, Sogolon who defeated the

¹¹⁵Conrad 1999b; see Belcher 1999a:98; Bird 1999:287.

female sorcerers and empowered Sunjata to become the Manden's legendary hero, and Sunjata's sister Kolonkan who gave timely advice and information.

The Sunjata epic does a better job than the Musadu epic of developing the images of female power. Important women, however, do emerge at critical times in the Musadu epic to guide, assist and empower Foningama. Of particular note are Fakoli's alleged sorceress-daughters Maligbè Dama and Kawa Dama who are said in one account to have been Foningama's mothers; they provided him with medicine pots, an occult-laden piece of clay and a sheep horn that formed the basis of his supernatural power. Other oral traditions claim that some women warned Foningama at different times when his enemies were planning to kill him.

An ideal hero also has a good birthright and destiny. One's birthright is determined by his or her parentage. Potential heroes must not only meet the expectations that match their position of birth, but must earn better reputations than their ancestors. The most celebrated heroes performed deeds so great that their descendants deemed their achievements almost insurmountable. Linked with the concept of birthright is destiny. People can become a hero only if the spirits deem that they are destined to fulfill that role. Preordained heroes must act in order to attain their destiny.

Sumaworo, Sunjata and Foningama were born with good birthrights. Sumaworo's father was the chief of Soso, and Sunjata's father was a chief in the Manden. Foningama's ancestors were also important chiefs in the Manden. Some claim that one of Foningama's ancestors was an early convert to Islam named Abu Wagas, and that the Prophet Muhammed converted another one of his ancestors to Islam. Foningama's mother Dama was supposedly a Kromah sorceress who was a descendant of Fakoli. Some

oral traditions claim that Sunjata's fame was prophesied before he was born. Two narratives similarly claimed that Foningama would become a great ruler.

People can surpass their ancestors and meet their destiny only by accumulating considerable *nyama*. The Muslim equivalent of *nyama* is *baraka* or "blessing" that is "laced with power." Every person is born with a certain 'potential' or *nya*. Individuals who have good birthrights and are destined to become heroes have more potential than others. The power that people need to act out their potential is called *dalilu*. People's *dalilu* is proportional to the potential that they inherit. When people exercises *dalilu* or acts, they releases *nyama* into the atmosphere. The person must have accumulated enough power to control the *nyama* and/or *baraka* when it is released or else the power will harm or kill the individual. The *dalilu* that people inherit can provide protection. In time though, people must make sacrifices to procure additional "protective *dalilu*" so they can become more powerful. Individuals must accumulate power at incremental levels to successfully control the new power that they acquire. Persons can endanger themselves if they go too fast, and "risk missing the flow that controls their eventual destiny" if they go too slow.

The oral traditions imply that Sunjata and Foningama respectively inherited considerable potential in the occult and in Islam through their mothers and fathers. Some thus believe that the *baraka* that Sunjata and Foningama accumulated with their *nyama* was one of the reasons why they overpowered their enemies. Traditionists describe Sumaworo and Zo Musa as primarily having dealt with *nyama*. Foningama had so much defensive *dalilu* that he was able to absorb the power that was released into the air when Zo Musa's *saafé* was destroyed and when he bathed in Fakoli's sorcery pot and violated

his taboo. Foningama became even more powerful when he soaked up the extraordinary *baraka* that was discharged when he offered his famous sacrifice to the *morilu*.

Many Manding are said to believe that the earth is interspersed with “a network of power locations” that are intermittently charged with high concentrations of *nyama*. Persons travel to these sacred places to acquire more authority and *nyama*.¹¹⁶ Hunters and smiths, for instance, respectively augment their power by transforming the landscape through killing animals and reworking the land. Sacred spaces in the Musadu epic are the execution ground and black rock near Musadu’s mosque where some of Foningama’s sons are said to have been sacrificed or executed and buried. Many parts of the landscape also became inviolate for Zo Musa after he went to Zota and transplanted spirit-charged rocks, tree branches and water that he took from Musadu. As said before, Musadu itself seems to have become sacred. Musadu was the town where Foningama and Zo Musa met in a legendary duel and became heroes, the place where Foningama made the ‘sacrifice of one thousand’ and established the laws, and the town that became taboo to the Kamara because they broke Musadu’s laws. Even though the Kamara never ruled Musadu after they were forced to leave, people continue to acknowledge that Foningama helped make Musadu great and believe that Musadu is still the “sacred town of the Kamara.”¹¹⁷

Prospective heroes also use special “devices” to increase their personal store of *nyama* and *baraka*. They often hid their devices and endeavored to discover their adversaries’ secrets. The ultimate battle between two enemies is spiritual; many believe that the person who accumulates the most supernatural power gains the physical

¹¹⁶McIntosh 1998:27-30,139.

¹¹⁷Person 1970b:284.

victory.¹¹⁸ Sunjata only defeated Sumaworo after his sister informed him that Sumaworo's source of power was a cock's spur or some other object. Even though Zo Musa's power-laden instrument was a sheep horn that was visible for all to see, Foningama defeated him only after *morilu* made a talisman that was more potent than the sheep horn. Zo Musa's *dalilu* was not strong enough to protect him from the *nyama* that was released when his sheep horn ate the cleric's amulet. Other supernatural objects that Foningama supposedly possessed were the sorcery cap, sheep horn and/or bracelet that he inherited from his father, and that bow and arrow that Fakoli gave him.

Lastly, Manding heros must acquire wealth and followers. One can attain wealth through farming and trade, both of which are *badènya* activities. Warriors like Foningama were too impatient to depend solely on agriculture and commerce, so they followed their "antisocial" *fadènya* leanings and fought. Foningama did appropriate Konya-Mani's agriculture and commerce, and ended up with a large enough resource base to symbolically sacrifice one thousand of everything that existed. Potential heroes also need to influence public opinion. People typically begin with one's family, move to in-laws, and then on to other people who are not related to them. Sunjata gained support by forming alliances with his family, the Manden's hierarchy, and the *morilu*, strangers, hunters, smiths, leatherworkers, potters and others who cross-cut formal authority structures. Sumaworo did not develop any substantive support among the Maninka when he conquered them. His few Maninka supporters were eventually marginalized when Sunjata returned to the Manden, rallied support and challenged him. Zo Musa's support was from the indigenous peoples and the descendants of the first Soninke and Maninka

¹¹⁸See Ellis 1999:264-265,269.

who went to Konya-Mani. It seems, though, that he alienated some of his allies when he used his sheep horn and became too aggressive. According to the traditions, Foningama, like Sunjata, gradually developed a client base. His ancestor seemingly left the Manden only with the backing of some of his family and perhaps some other dissidents and refugees. Foningama picked up some support from his father who blessed him, and from the Kuyateh with whom he made a blood pact before he reached Musadu. He strengthened his ties with his Kromah in-laws when he married one of their daughters. Some Kanè, Sherif, Dole and Bèrèté *morilu* helped him defeat Zo Musa when he reached Musadu, and the Sware and other Jakhanke *morilu* supposedly blessed the well-known sacrifice he made after he became chief.

In conclusion, the Maniyaka believe that Foningama became the functional equivalent of Sunjata for many people in Upper Guinea. Nobody in the land that once occupied the Mali empire or Upper Guinea ever surpassed Sunjata or Foningama, even though many have tried and continue to try.

CHAPTER 1

SOURCES

Chapter One discusses the oral traditions that provide information about Musadu's early history. The first part explains where and when most of the Musadu related traditions were collected, and examines my fieldwork and approach to data collection. The second part explains the methodological approach that is used to analyze oral traditions.

Summary of the oral traditions

From 1849 to 1994, administrators, chiefs, diplomats, explorers, military personnel, missionaries, students and scholars collected one hundred and three known accounts that relate to the early history of Musadu. These researchers came from Guinea, Liberia, France, Great Britain, Germany and the United States, and conducted their research in Liberia, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire. Eighty-one of the versions derive from Maniyaka sources. The rest are Vai (ten), Loma (five), Kpelle (two), Mano (two), Konor (one), Dã (one) and Gola (one).

The earliest traditions come from reports that Sigismund Koelle and H. C. Creswick published about the Vai in 1849 and 1867 respectively. Benjamin Anderson published what turned out to be two episodes from Maniyaka sources after he went to Musadu in 1868. Captain Dauvillier of the French infantry produced the first full Maniyaka account in 1905. His report demonstrates that most of the major episode clusters of the Musadu epic were well established by the turn of the twentieth century.

Westerners and Liberians intermittently recorded Kpelle, Kono, Loma, Mano, Dã, and Gola accounts throughout the twentieth century.

People have transmitted information about Musadu's past in many forms. Most of the work published during the European colonial era was summarized in English or French prose.¹ Warren d'Azevedo and Martin Ford respectively translated individual testimonies from Gola and Maniyakã to English when they did their fieldwork in the 1960s and 1980s, and kindly sent me copies of their work.² More recently, my Maniyaka assistants and I produced several linear translations from Maniyakã to English. The earliest was an interview that Svend Holsoe conducted in Monrovia in 1965 and 1970, and thirty-eight interviews that my colleagues or I recorded or purchased in markets between 1984 and 1994.³

Episodes

Several figures that summarize key information about the sources. Figure 6 and Figure 7 respectively provide alphabetical and chronological lists of all the primary sources. Figure 8 lists all of the sources by the date and the ethnic group where it originated. Figure 9 identifies the number of episodes in each source, the length of each version, and the time when information was recorded. Figure 10 arranges the number of lines for each of the sources that appear in a linear format, and Figure 11 sequences the episodes by source in chronological order.

¹App. 3-4. These documents or translations in the Supplementary Appendix are numbered (e.g., App. 3). Appendices marked by letters (e.g., App. A) are situated in the regular Appendix beginning on page 541.

²App. 2.1; App. 6.1-2.

³App. 5; App 7.

Figure 6 Alphabetical List of Sources

<p>A= Anonymous 1985 [7.4d] AB = A.B.I. Béété 1993 [7.35] ABK = A.B. Kromah 1990 [7.14] AD1 = unpublished paper = n.d. AD2 = A.F.L. Donzo 1992 [7.28] AJ = A. Jabateh 1992 [7.22] AK = A. Kamara 1986 [7.9] AKD = A.K. Dole 1990 [7.13] AKK = A.K. Kromah 1992[7.29],1993 [7.34] ALK = A. Konè 1992 [7.31] AMK = A.M.M. Kamara 1993 [7.33a] ASM = Asmana Kpo 1967 [2.2] AUK = A.U. Komara 1992 [7.24] B = Buji 1911 BA = B. Anderson 1868 BD = B. Dole 1992 [7.30] BH = B. Holas 1952b [4.7] BK = B. Koesia 1985 [7.4a] BOA = Bouyssou & Aloys 1913/1949 [4.3] CB = "Connissance/Beyla" n.d. [4.11] CY = El Hadj Camara Yomba c. 1970 D = Dauvillier c. 1905 [3] DC = Daouda Camara 1979 [4.9] DK - Dyigiba Kamara n.d./1957? DS = D.P. Sakou 1983 E = Ellis 1913, 1914 ES = E. Smith 1893 FA = Fahnbulleh 1969 FBK = F.B. Kromah 1990 [7.10],1992 [7.25] FK = F.V.J. Kamara 1992 [7.27] FMK = F.M. Kièlè 1990 [7.12], 1992 [7.21] FO = Liberian Bureau of Folkways 1958?/94 FS = Fofin Sumawolo 1986 [7.7a-b] G = J. Germain 1946-47/1984 [4.5] H = Humblot 1918, 1951 [4.4] HC = H. Creswick 1867 HL = Linard 1948 [4.6] HLL = H. Lelong 1949 J = S.J.M. Johnson 1974 [8.1] JAK = J. Kamara 1985 [7.5] JIK - Jigbè Kamara 1970 [5.3] JK = J. Kamara 1992 [7.26] JT = J. Tulay 1967 KK = K.Kamara 1985[7.5] KRO = Kromah 1985 [7.3] KSK = K.S. Kromah 1961 (in Massing 1985) KS = K. Sanyo 1985 [7.4b] KV = "Krus & Veis" 1917</p>	<p>L = Lyon 1906 LK = L. Kamara 1990 [7.11] LKK = L.K. Kamara 1992 [7.16] LL = Lt. Lamole 1909 [4.2] LOF = "Lorma Folktale" 1969?/1994 MA = Massaquoi 1910 MAD = M. Dole 1985 [6.2] MAK = M. Kromah 1992 [7.20] MB = "Monographique/Beyla" n.d. [4.8] MCK = M.C. Kromah 1990 [8.2], 1992[7.17] MD = M. Donzo 1993 [7.36a] MMD = M.M. Dole 1993 [7.36b] MK = M.L.K. Kromah 1984 [7.2] MKE = M. Kènè 1992 [7.18] MKO = M. Konè 1992 [7.23] MKU = M. Kumala 1969 (in Weiss. 1976) ML = Liurette 1908 [4.1] MNTM = Fisher 1971 MS = M. Sidibé 1989 [4.15], 1993 [7.32] (pub. 1997), 1993 [7.33b] NB - Ngallima & Ballah 1936 [2.1] PK = P. Korvah c. early 1960s S = Sumawolo 1984 [6.1] SB = S. Beavogui 1973-74 SES - Seku Saiyòn 1970 [5.2] SWK = S. Koelle 1849, 1854 SK = S. Konneh (in Korvah) c. 1960s SKA = S. Kaba 1971 SKO = S. Konè 1992 [7.15] SKR = S. Kromah 1985 [7.4c] SS = Seku Salifu 1965 [5.1] T = I.K. Turé 1972-73 TBK = T.B. Kamara 1993 [7.33c] TKK = T.K. Kamara 1992 [7.19] VK1 = V. Kamala 1984?/1994 VK2 = V. Kamala 1985 [7.6] VK7 = V. Kamala n.d. [7.38] W = Weisswange 1976 WHM = "Who are the Massaquois" 1930 WMK = W.M. Kamara n.d. [7.37] Y = B.Yamah 1992[7.17], 1992 [7.15] YD = Y. Dole 1985 [7.4e], 1986 [7.8] YP = Y. Person 1968bff Z1 = Zetterstrom 1976 (first Mano account) Z2 = Zetterstrom 1976 (second Mano acct.) ZD = Zetterstrom 1976 (Dã account) ZK = Zonébhala Koivogui 1993? ZR = Z. Roberts 1969 (in Weisswange 1976)</p>
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Figure 7 Chronological List of Sources

<p>SWK = S. Koelle 1849, 1854 HC = H. Creswick 1867 BA = B. Anderson 1868 ES = E. Smith 1893 D = Dauvillier c. 1905 [3] L = Lyon 1906 ML = Liurette 1908 [4.1] LL = Lt. Lamole 1909 [4.2] MA = Massaquoi 1910 B = Buji 1911 BOA = Bouyssou & Aloys 1913/1949 [4.3] E = Ellis 1913, 1914 KV = "Krus & Veis" 1917 H = Humblot 1918, 1951 [4.4] WHM = "Who are the Massaquois" 1930 NB - Ngallima & Ballah 1936 [2.1] G = J. Germain 1946-47 (1984) [4.5] HL = Linard 1948 [4.6] HLL = H. Lelong 1949 BH = B. Holas 1952b [4.7] DK - Dyigiba Kamara n.d./1957? FO = Liberian Bureau of Folkways 1958?/94 MB = Monographie Beyla n.d. [4.8] PK = P. Korvah c. early 1960s SK = S. Konneh (in Korvah) c. 1960s J = .S.J.M. Johnson 1974 KSK = K.S. Kromah 1961, in Mass. (1985) SS = Seku Salifu 1965 [5.1] ASM = Asmana Kpo 1967 [2.2] JT = J. Tulay 1967 MNTM = Morlu, Nyi, Tulay, Malik 1967 YP = Y. Person 1968bff [4.10] FA = Fahnbulleh 1969 MKU = M. Kumala 1969/1976 ZR = Z. Roberts 1969/1976 LOF = "Lorma Folktale" 1969?/1994 CY = El Hadj Camara Yomba c. 1970 SES - Seku Saiyòn 1970 [5.2] JIK - Jigbè Kamara 1970 [5.3] SKA = S. Kaba 1971 T = I.K. Turé 1972-73 SB = S. Beavogui 1973-74 DS = D.P. Sakou 1983 W = Weisswange 1976 Z1 = Zetterstrom 1976 (first Mano account) Z2 = Zetterstrom 1976 (second Mano acct.) ZD = Zetterstrom 1976 (Dã account) DC = Daouda Camara 1979 [4.9]</p>	<p>S = Sumawolo 1984 [6.1] MK = M.L.K. Kromah 1984 [7.2] VK1 = V. Kamala 1984?/1994 VK2 = V. Kamala 1985 [7.6] VK7 = V. Kamala n.d. [7.38] MAD = M. Dole 1985 [6.2] KRO = Kromah 1985 [7.3] BK = B. Koesia 1985 [7.4a] KS = K. Sanyo 1985 [7.4b] SKR = S. Kromah 1985 [7.4c] A = Anonymous 1985 [7.4d] YD = Y. Dole 1985 [7.4e], 1986 [7.8] KK = K. Kamara 1985 [7.5] JAK = J. Kamara 1985 [7.5] FS = Fofin Sumawolo 1986 [7.7a-b] AK = A. Kamara 1986 [7.9] MS = M. Sidibé 1989 [4.15], 1993/1997 [7.32], 1993 [7.33b] FBK = 1990 [7.10], 1992 [7.25] LK = L. Kamara 1990 [7.11] FMK = F.M. Kièlè 1990 [7.12], 1992 [7.21] AKD = A.K. Dole 1990 [7.13] ABK = A.B. Kromah 1990 [7.14] MCK = M.C. Kromah 1990 [8.2], 1992 [7.17] SKO = S. Konè 1992 [7.15] Y = B. Yamah 1992 [7.17], 1992 [7.15] LKK = L.K. Kamara 1992 [7.16] MKE = M. Kènè 1992 [7.18] TKK = T.K. Kamara 1992 [7.19] MAK = M. Kromah 1992 [7.20] AJ = A. Jabateh 1992 [7.22] MKO = M. Konè 1992 [7.23] AUK = A.U. Komara 1992 [7.24] JK = J. Kamara 1992 [7.26] FK = F.V.J. Kamara 1992 [7.27] AD2 = A.F.L. Donzo 1992 [7.28] AKK = A.K. Kromah 1992 [7.29], 1993 [7.34] BD = B. Dole 1992 [7.30] ALK = A. Konè 1992 [7.31] AMK = A.M.M. Kamara 1993 [7.33a] TBK = T.B. Kamara 1993 [7.33c] AB = A.B.I. Béété 1993 [7.35] MD = M. Donzo 1993 [7.36a] MMD - M.M. Dole 1993 [7.36b] CB = "Connissance/Beyla" n.d. [4.11] ZK = Zonébhalà Koivogui 1993? AD1 = unpublished paper = n.d. WMK = W.M. Kamara n.d. [7.37]</p>
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Figure 8 Chronological List of Sources by Ethnic Origin⁴

1) MANIYAKA	2) VAI	3) KPELLE 4) KONO 5) LOMA	6) MANO 7) GIO 8) GOLA
	Koelle 1849, 1854a		
	Creswick 1867/1868		
Anderson 1868/1870			
	1893		
Dauvillier 1905			
	Lyon 1906		
Liurette 1908			
		3) Lamole 1909	
	Massaquoi 1910/1911 Buji 1911		
Bouyssou 1913/1949			
	Ellis 1913,1914		
	"Krus & Veis" 1917		
Humblot 1917-18/1918, 1919, 1951			
	"Who are the Massaquois" 1930		
		5) Ngallima & Ballah 1936	
		3) Germain 1946- 47/1984	
Linard 1948			
Lelong 1949			

⁴The first date is the date of recording when known. The date behind the backward slash is the date that the source was published. Abbreviations in the brackets are the original collectors: W.d'A. = Warren d'Azevedo, D.K. = Djjobba Kamara; H.F. = Humphrey Fisher; J.K. = Jomah Kamara, K.W. = Karin Weisswange; M.F. = Martin Ford; MT = market tape, T.G. = Tim Geysbeek; S.H. = Svend Holsoe.

1) MANIYAKA	2) VAI	3) KPELLE 4) KONO 5) LOMA	6) MANO 7) GIO 8) GOLA
		4) Holas 1952	
Djeke Kamara pre-1958			
		5) Folkways 1958?/1994	
Monograph Beyla c. 1958			
Konneh 1960ff (in Korvah)		5)Korvah 1960/94	
Kromah 1961/1985	Kromah 1961/85		
Salifu 1965 [S.H.]			
Morlu/Nyei/Tulay/ Malik 1967/1971 [H.F.] Tulay 1967/1971 [H.F.]			8) Kpo 1967 [W. d'A.]
Person 1950s-60s/1960, 1968ff			
“Lorma Folktale”1969?/1994			
Kumala 1969/1976 [K.W.]			
Roberts 1969/1971 [K.W.]		5) Fahnbulleh 1969	
Camara Yomba c. 1970			
Saiyòn 1970 [S.H.]			
Kamara 1970 [S.H.]			
Kaba 1971			
Johnson (pre-1972) 1974			
Turé 1972-73			
Beavogui 1973-74		5) Beavogui 1973-74	

1) MANIYAKA	2) VAI	3) KPELLE 4) KONO	6) MANO 7) GIO 8) GOLA
Weisswange 1976			6-7) Zetterström 1976
Camara 1979			
Sakou 1983		5) Sakou 1983	
Sumawolo 1984 [M.F.]			
Kromah 1984 [T.G.]			
Kamala 1984?/1994 [MT]			
Dole 1985 [M.F.]			
Kamala 1985 [D.K.]			
Kromah 1985 [J.K.]			
BK, ⁵ KS, SKR, A, YD 1985 [J.K.]			
KK & JAK in 1985 [D.K.]			
YD, FS, AK in 1986 [T.G.]			
Sidibé 1989			
Kromah 1990 (letter)			
Dole 1990 [D.K.]			
FBK, LK, FMK, ABK, MCK in 1990 [T.G.]			
“Connaissance/Beyla” n.d./?		5) Koivogui (“Quelques”n.d.)	
SKO, KK, Y, MCK, MKE, TKK, MAK, FMK, AJ, MKO, AUK, FBK, JK, FK, AD2, AKK, BD, ALK, LKK in 1992 [T.G.]			

⁵See Figure 7 to the key to these sources that are abbreviated in capital letters.

MS, AMK, AKK, TBK, AB, MD, MMD in 1993 [T.G.]			
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Figure 9 Story elements by length

+100 (2 total)	7-19 (38 total)	1-6 (32 total)
165 VK2 - c. 1984	19 SB - 1973	6 KSK - 1961
109 WMK - n.d.	19 FMK - 1990	6 LOF - 1969?
	19 MD - 1993	6 DS - 1973
50-99 (4 total)	18 DK - 1959?	6 JK - 1992
89 VK7 - 1993?	17 SK - 1960?	5 MA - 1910
65 MAK - 1992	17 YD - 1985, 1986	5 E - 1913, 1914
64 TKK - 1992	16 BA - 1913	5 KV - 1917
57 MS - 1989	16 ALK - 1992	5 SWK - 1849
	15 KRO - 1985	5 B - 1911
30-49 (6 total)	14 MB - 1959?	5 MUK - 1969
	13 S - 1984	5 W - 1976
42 AKK - 1992	12 ML - 1908	4 WHM - 1930
38 MKE - 1992	12 HL - 1948	4 NB - 1936
36 D - 1905	12 MNTM - 1967	4 T - 1972
34 JIK - 1970	12 AJ - 1992	4 A - 1985
33 AB - 1993	12 MKO - 1992	3 FO - 1958?
32 LKK - 1992	12 FK - 1992	3 PK - 1960
31 SS - 1965	11 FBK - 11	3 FA - 1969
	11 SES - 1970	3 ZR - 1969
20s (11 total)	10 ZD - 1976	3 MK - 1984
29 ABK - 1990	10 LK - 1990	3 AK - 1986
27 YP - 1968ff	2 TBK - 1992	2 BA - 1868
26 MCK - 1990	9 HC - 1867	2 L - 1906
24 FS - 1986	9 LL - 1909	2 HLL - 1949
24 BD - 1992	9 SKA - 1971	2 Z1 - 1976
24 TAD	9 BK - 1985	2 Z2 - 1976
22 G - 1946-47	2 KS - 1985	2 Y - 1992
22 AKD - 1990	9 SKR - 1985	2 AMK - 1993
22 AD - 1992	8 BH - 1952	2 DC - 1979
20 MAD - 1985	7 ES - 1893	2 ZBK - 1993?
20 KK - 1985	7 H - 1918	1 CB - 1993?
	7 J - 1958?	1 MM - 1993
	7 ASM - 1967	
	7 JT - 1967	
	7 SKO - 1992	
	7 AUK - 1992	

Figure 10 Text lengths by line

1992 TKK - 1474	1990 FBK - 194 (375)
1965 SS - 1035	1992 MS - 184
1992 LKK - 945	1992 FBK - 181
n.d. WMK - 920	1992 FK - 137
1990 MK - 910	1986 FS - 115 (218)
1992 FMK - 833	1990 AKD - 109
n.d. VK7 - 664	1986 FS - 103
1992 MKE - 675	1990 LK - 97
1985 VK2 - 662	1992 SKO - 90
1992 AKK - 569 (889) ⁶	1993 BD - 89
1984? VK - 503	1992 JK - 87
1993 MS- 479 (669)	1970 SES - 84
1992 ALK - 470	1985 KRO - 75
1992 MAK - 460	1986 AK - 68
1992 AJ - 381	1993 BTK - 53
1993 AB- 344	1992 AUK - 27
1992 MKO - 337	1993 AMK - 16
1992 AD - 329	
1985 KK - 303	
1990 FMK - 291	
1990 ABK - 278	
1986 M5 - 267	
1970 JIK - 264	
1986 YD - 222	

⁶The number in the parentheses indicates the total number of lines of the first and second interview in cases where two interviews were conducted.

Figure 11 Episodes in chronological order of sources

1849,1854 SWK - 5	1946-1947 G - 22	1985 VK - 165	1992 AJ - 12
1867 HC - 9	1948 HL - 12	1984 MK - 3	1992 MKO - 12
1868 BA - 2	1949 HLL - 2	1984 S - 13	1992 AUK - 7
1893 ES - 7	1952 BH - 8	1985 MAD - 20	1992 JK - 6
1905 D - 36	c.1957 DK - 18	1985 BK - 9	1992 FK - 12
1906 L - 2	c.1958 J - 7	1985 KS - 2	AD1- 22
1908 ML - 12	c.1958/94 FO - 3	1985 SKR - 9	1992 AKK - 42
1909 LL - 9	c.1959 MB - 14	1985 A - 4	1992 BD - 24
1910 MA - 5	c.1960 SK - 17	1985, 1986 YD - 17	1992 ALK - 16
1911 B - 5	1960 PK - 3	1985 KRO - 15	1993? CB - 1
1913 BA - 16	1961 KSK - 6	1985 KK - 20	1993? VK7 - 89
1913, 1914 E - 5	1965 SS - 31	1986 FS - 24	1993? ZK - 2
1917 KV - 5	1967 ASM - 7	1986 AK - 3	1993 TBK - 2
1918, 1951 H - 7	1967 JT - 7	1989,1993 MS-57	1993 AMK - 2
1930 WHM - 4	1967 MNT - 12	1990,1992 MCK -26	1993 AB - 33
1936 NB - 4	1968 YP - 27	1990,1992 FBK - 11	1993 MD - 19
	1969 FA - 3	1990 LK - 10	1993 MMD - 1
	1969 MKU - 5	1990,1992 FMK - 19	
	1969 ZR - 3	1990 AKD - 22	
	c.1969 LOF - 6	1990 ABK - 29	
	1970 SES - 11	1992? WMK - 109	
	1970 JIK - 34	1992 SKO - 7	
	1971 SKA - 9	1992 LKK - 32	
	1972 T - 4	1992 Y - 2	
	1973-74 SB - 19	1992 MKE - 38	
	1973-74 DS - 6	1992 TKK - 64	
	1976 W - 5	1992 MAK - 65	
	1976 ZD - 10		
	1976 Z1 - 2		
	1976 Z2 - 2		
	1979 DC - 2		

The Musadu epic roughly comprises 231 episodes from all of the sources that have been collected.⁷ The episode numbers are noted in brackets in Chapters 2-8. The way one divides an epic into episodes is arbitrary, depending on how one defines “episode.” Here, I accept Joseph Miller’s explanation that episodes “are interactions between a relatively small number of human beings” that provide the narrative with a

⁷The episodes are listed in Appendix E.

close and personal trait.⁸ They represent the “sequence in the action” that advances the plot of a story from one movement to the next. The plot represents the total number of moves as in a game of chess, and the episode represents each move. Each episode relates a distinct event.⁹ The Musadu epic contains information that has been orally transmitted for centuries. So much data has been lost, manipulated, embellished, and set in cliches that the epic does not retain much that is historical. It is important, therefore, to break down the epic into relatively small units and consider as many episodes as possible to increase the likelihood of identifying information which might be important that someone might otherwise overlook.¹⁰

The “core episodes” that are essential to the Musadu epic tell how Musadu was founded and explain how Foningama overthrew Zo Musa and became chief. “Augmenting episodes” are important but not central to the story.¹¹ Some augmenting episodes trace the migrations of the Maninka from the Manden to Musadu, and explain how everyone dispersed from Musadu after Foningama became chief. Augmenting episodes help the listener understand the content and context of the core episodes, and provide scholars with further data about process, change, and the setting in which the core episodes are told.

The versions vary in length from a one line statement about a chief’s famous ancestor in 1897 to “unified epics” of several hundred lines which consist of the core episodes and several augmenting story units. The completeness of the versions can be partly measured by episodes, lines, pages, and words. Vase Kamala’s 1985 text has the

⁸Miller 1980:8.

⁹Vansina 1985:73-74.

¹⁰See Conrad 1992:148; Belcher 1985:84,240-243,259; Bulman 1990:81,111-112.

¹¹Johnson 1986:38-39.

largest number of episodes with 165.¹² Several other versions only have one to three story elements. Almost ninety percent of the versions have fewer than thirty episodes (Figure 9). All of the oral traditions that we translated are set in linear form, and range in length from Alhaji Makula Mammadi Kamara's sixteen line story to Tènu Kamã Kamara's 1,474 line epic.¹³ Three each are six hundred to nine hundred lines long, and five are between four hundred and five hundred lines long (Figure 10). These are considerably shorter than some versions of the Sunjata epic, but they nonetheless demonstrate that the epic tradition of the Maniyaka is alive.¹⁴

Several of the episodes only appear one or two times in the older accounts. There are several explanations for why some of these episodes are not in later accounts. One is because they are "dying motifs," episodes that people have gradually forgotten.¹⁵ One example is Captain Dauvillier's story of how Zo Musa used a talisman to wrought poor harvests, misery and death on the people of Musadu.¹⁶ This is a slightly more realistic explanation of what might have happened than the more recent narratives that claim that Zo Musa's *saafè* or 'sheep horn' ate children and animals. Dauvillier's accounts are more than a half-century closer to whatever happened, so some of his explanations might not have been as clichéd. The singular telling of some early episodes may also result from gradual change. In 1913 for instance, the people of Musadu told Father Bouyssou that Foningama's daughter Magnambouy was buried under Musadu's mosque.¹⁷ All of the

¹²App. 7.6.

¹³App. 7.19, 7.33a.

¹⁴E.g., Kouyaté, in Niane 1960/1980; Camara 1980; Conrad 1999a:157-202. David Conrad plans to publish the late Djanka Tassey Conde's epic of Sunjata that is nearly 17,000 lines long (1998-99:8; see 1999a:11).

¹⁵Bulman 1990:112-115.

¹⁶App. 3.

¹⁷App. 4.3.

subsequent accounts say that the persons who were buried there were Foningama's sons who were executed for breaking a law. Other unique information seems to have resulted from a mistake on the part of the narrator or the person who recorded the information. Examples are Bouyssou's statements that Foningama founded Musadu and that Zo Musa and his companions were Foningama's sons. All other stories say that Zo Musa founded Musadu; none state that Zo Musa or any of his associates were Foningama's sons. Some episodes have undoubtedly only been recorded once because there is probably much more information in the Musadu zone that has yet to be collected. Seku Salifu's story about the founding of "Masaka" is an example of a circumstance where we do not have enough information to properly determine how the episode fits with other episodes in the epic.¹⁸ This is equally true for Alhaji Kaamòò Dole's claim that Foningama built two wells for his daughter so she would remain in Musadu, and Sumawolo and Fofin Sumawolo's stories about how a Sherif instructed a Sanoe to found Kabadu.¹⁹ Also, information about the more recent past tends to filter into oral traditions as time passes, which may explain how some stories that people include in an epic may not have anything to do with the story. Some episodes are only told once in oral traditions because the episode is contrived. This may consist of a story that is added to embellish the story, or spurious information that is given to further the agenda of a particular person or social unit. One case in point is where Seku Saiyòn boasted that the Sherif conquered all of the land from Konya-Mani to the coast to augment the status of the Sherif with whom he was closely related.²⁰ Lastly, historians must admit that they often do not have enough information to

¹⁸App. 5.1.

¹⁹App. 7.13; App. 6.1; App. 7.7.

²⁰App. 5.2.

discern why episodes are no longer told or why the episodes that remain are even told in the first place.

Many of the variations in the way that episodes are told can be attributed to differences between ethnic groups, clans, regions and religions. The Vai, Gola, Kpelle, Kono, Mano and Dã all have stories about Musadu that are unique to their groups. With regard to clans, the Sumaworo are the only clan who told how a Sanoe founded Kabadu. The Kamara and Kromah naturally say the most about how Fakoli's daughter Dama links the two clans. Narrators in Musadu are the most informed about local information that pertains to Musadu such as scarification, the multiple Musas, the offerings associated with Zo Musa, and esoteric matters about *jina* or 'spirits' and initiation associations like the Kòma (Komo). As for the impact of Islam on the contents of the epic, informants sometimes attribute Muslim ancestors to key figures such as Foningama. Some claim that Foningama's parents were Adama and Mawa (Hawa, Eve), or imply that the Prophet Muhammed personally converted the first "Jomani" or Kamara. One Muslim source dated the movement of one of Foningama's descendants from Musadu into the forest to the month of Ramadan.²¹ An informant with some Catholic education dated the same movement of this descendant of Foningama to the period of Lent.²²

Fieldwork and approach to data collection

I conducted fieldwork while I worked as a missionary with SIM. I did not have the opportunity to live in Guinea for several months to become more proficient in Maniyakã, learn more culture, or collect more interviews. I did, however, make opportunities to

²¹Liurette 1908, App. 4.1.

²²El Hadj Camara Yomba c. 1970, in Kante 1971-72:19.

conduct research when I traveled to Guinea. Ideally, I would have lived in Musadu and traveled to other towns in Beyla province. Instead, I only went to Musadu three times in 1986, 1992 and 1993, and was only there for a total of four days. I spent three weeks visiting other towns in Beyla province. If I had lived in Musadu I would have identified more people to interview, conducted more follow-up interviews, and learned more about the physical and social environment of the town. Of the six trips that I took to Guinea, I could only direct my research toward Musadu on the last two trips.

The beneficial aspect of the way that I conducted my research in Guinea - usually going there for purposes other than dissertation research, means that I got information from a fairly wide range of places to which I would probably not have gone. Most of the information is from interviews that I conducted with an assistant. Djjobba Kamara and Jomah Kamara also recorded a few interviews. Some history came from tapes that I purchased from cassette tape vendors; others were from papers and theses in private libraries that authors and scholars permitted me to copy.

I unfortunately did not go to the National Archives in Conakry, Dakar, Monrovia or Paris. As my opportunities to conduct research in Guinea in 1992 and 1993 were limited, I decided that I would make the best use of my time by conducting fieldwork. Archives tend to last longer than people, although the recent destruction of large portions of the Liberian and Gambian archives remind one that archives are also time-critical. Martin Ford and James Fairhead and Melissa Leach respectively did visit the archives in Conakry and Paris. They knew of my interest in Musadu, and kindly sent me invaluable early-twentieth century reports and publications which prove that substantial accounts

about Musadu's early history were preserved in oral traditions over one century ago.²³

Since I lived in Monrovia, I examined the possibility of conducting research in the national archives. The Liberian government built an archives building in Sinkor during the 1980s, but the building was partially destroyed during the war. Some of the materials became water damaged, and others were looted. When I inquired about the archives in 1993, I was told that all of the documents that survived were boxed up and stored in the basement of one of the government buildings in central Monrovia. Given logistical problems and the charged political atmosphere at the time, I deemed it inadvisable to examine the archives at that time.

I conducted all of my fieldwork in Guinea, and conducted the most number of interviews in and around Macenta - twenty-two. I interviewed ten people in Macenta: one each in 1984 and 1990. While I was in Macenta for one month in 1992, I visited the outlying towns of Lassaou, Douama-Sobala and Daro with my friend Makula Mammadi Kromah and respectively interviewed seven, three and two people. I conducted thirteen interviews in western Beyla province and the southern part of Kerouane province. Four were in Musadu (one each in 1986 and 1992, two in 1993), four were in Diakolidu (one in 1990, two in 1992, one in 1993), two each were in Watafeledu (1986) and Lassaou (1986), and one each was in Damaro (1986) and Beyla (1992). I stayed with Maninka families in Macenta and in all of the towns, and resided in a mission guesthouse or with missionary families when I was in the other urban centers.

Most of my informants were men. I interviewed persons who represented a cross-section of society: chiefs, clan heads, imams, bards, smiths, hunters and a woman. My

²³Dauvillier c.1905, App. 3; Liurette 1908, App. 4.1; Lamole 1909, App. 4.2.

best informants were clan and regional chiefs like Tènu Kamā Kamara and Mammadi Kènè. They needed to know about genealogies, marriage alliances, rituals, and diplomatic history to negotiate, make policy, judge disputes and interact with the state and federal government.

Alhaji Bintu Ibrahim Béété (Bèrèté) was the only imam whom I interviewed. I met Béété in Musadu in 1992, and interviewed him one year later.²⁴ He provided a good summary of Musadu's history and explained how the Konè became the imams of Beyla. Mohammed Chèjan's father Mustafa Kromah was a hunter; he did not provide much information about hunting, but did offer some details about traditional medicine.²⁵

Only two of the interviewees were bards - half-brothers. When I went to Macenta in 1990, I asked Makula Mammadi Kromah if there were any bards whom I could interview. Mammadi told me that he knew one old man who resided in the town of Douama-Sobala where some of his in-laws lived. The man, Minata Musa Kièlè (Kuyateh), had become the chief of Douama-Sobala in 1954. Mammadi told me that he had been one of the most famous *jèli* in the region and could tell stories for hours. When Mammadi took me to Douama-Sobala, we found Minata Musa. Minata Musa was old, at least in his eighties, although people claimed that he was one hundred. He seemed to be in good health for his age, and had a clear mind. I was disappointed, however, because he only gave a short interview. I did not ask about Musadu, and he did not talk about Musadu, so his interview is not listed as one of the sources for this story. Minata Musa's brother Fata Musa, who vacated the chieftaincy of Douama-Sobala the year before I arrived, did grant me an interview on this occasion and again in 1992. Fata Musa, who

²⁴App. 7.35.

²⁵App. 7.20.

was ten to twenty years younger than his older brother, spoke with a strong voice and was clearly informed about the history of the Mali empire, Musadu and Douama-Sobala. Fata Musa's second interview was substantial, the sixth longest at 833 lines.

I asked for women to interview. When I went to Lassaou in 1985, people told me that a '125 year old' woman named Majongbè Sako knew some stories. (When I visited Lassaou five years later, the people said that she was '110 years old.') Majongbè was old, perhaps in her nineties, because she had a grandson who was in his fifties or sixties. Although some people did not think that it was necessary for me to interview her, she nonetheless granted me time for one. She talked about the capture of Samori and the French conquest of Macenta. She did not talk about Musadu, so her testimony is not a source for this dissertation. I met another woman in Diakolidu in 1992 who others said would be a good source of information, but she refused to grant me an interview.

My interest in women was partly inspired by David Conrad who was trying to learn about women warriors, and by the sixteenth and seventeenth century Portuguese and Dutch reports that told about a woman warrior named Macarico or Mabete who led an army from the interior kingdom of Mandi to the coast.²⁶ Yves Person "strongly suggest[ed]" that she embarked from Mahana that is just south of Konya-Mani.²⁷ When I was conducting research in the area where Macarico would have traveled according to his argument, I asked people if they could tell me about Macarico, Mabete, a woman like her, or other women warriors in general. I did not find anyone who resembled Mabete or Macarico in the oral traditions we collected. People also did not tell stories that vaguely matched the ones that the Portuguese described. My questions did, however, elicit a fair

²⁶See Ch. 8; Rodney 1970:44-45.

²⁷Person 1971a:679.

number of stories about women who fought that would not have been told if I had not asked.²⁸

I also scoured the markets for history tapes. I credit the idea of seeking market tapes to Makula Mammadi Kromah who informed me of their existence in Monrovia in 1985. Mammadi was a cassette tape vendor who told me that he acquired an oral tradition that a man named Vase Kamala had narrated.²⁹ Most of the tapes that I found were in Kankan, but none of these were germane to my dissertation. Fortunately, cassette tape vendors also sold tapes in and near the forest region. Between 1990 and 1994 I purchased six more oral traditions that Vase Kamala recorded in Monrovia, N'Zerekore and Diakolidu.³⁰ When I was in Monrovia in 1992 I purchased two other tapes. One was a recording of a history that Wata Mammadi Kamara narrated.³¹ The other was some music that the popular Guinean singer Blama Fofana recorded which mentioned Foningama.³²

My assistants positively identified Vase Kamala and Blama Fofana, but were not able to do the same for Wata Mammadi Kamara. One of the benefits of purchasing tapes is that one gets information that would have otherwise never been attained. This is true even when the researcher meets the speaker and is granted a good interview. The purchased tape represents a version that will vary from the story that the interviewee will grant the researcher. Market tapes also inform researchers about new sources of information. I regret that I never met Vase Kamala, whose tapes were so popular in the south. I hoped to meet him in 1993, but my premature exit from Guinea that December

²⁸E.g., see Conrad 1999b:218-223.

²⁹An English translation is partly published Geysbeek and Kamara (1994).

³⁰See App. 7.6; App. 7.38.

³¹Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37.

³²App. 9.1.

because of the elections pre-empted my plans.

The obvious draw-back of buying tapes is that one may never learn the identity of the speaker or the setting in which the story was recorded. We know that Wata Mammadi Kamara narrated that tape that we attribute to him because he stated his name at the beginning of the recording. Yet, the only other thing we know about him is that he spoke a dialect of Maniyakã - Busekã, and that he might have been from Kuankan. It was usually easy to identify the Vase Kamala tapes because his voice is so distinct, yet even here we had one problem. My assistants were divided about whether Vase was the speaker of one of the tapes that was attributed to him. This speaker narrated many of the same stories that Vase told. Most felt that the voice was Vase's, but one person disagreed. The dissenting assistant said that the voice on this tape matched that of a local historian named Kènase Kamara whom he had met in Vase's hometown of Fombadu in the 1980s. I ended up tentatively identifying the speaker as Vase Kamala, but see the introduction to Appendix 7.38 for a detailed discussion of this problem.

Even when one learns who the speaker is, one can usually never find out the date and setting in which the recording was made. Cassette tape vendors sometimes mislabel tapes. When they correctly identify the speakers, they usually have a rough idea about where the speaker is from or where he narrated the story. They can often estimate to the half-decade when the recording was made, and almost always know nothing about the setting in which the talk was recorded. With close listening, one can ferret out some information about the context of a recording. In rare instances, the speaker will explain why and where the talk is being conducted. Background sounds like vehicles honking horns, children making noise in the background, dogs barking, and discussions with

members of the audience can be other indicators.

Finally, one can tell by places where there are gaps in recordings that sections of some market histories are spliced together. The tape producers are more concerned about selling the tapes than trying to keep interviews in tact. The speaker of the Kènase Kamara tape, for instance, talks about Musadu and Samori Turé in four different places, and interjects a discussion about the late Guinean president Seku Turé in the middle. There is no continuity from one section to the next, although the tape would offer a coherent story if the different sections were put in chronological order. In this case, and in other instances like this, it is difficult to tell if the Seku Turé segment is from the same recording or from another session.³³

I understood that the best chances that I would have to build social networks in Guinea would be to be taken there by a Maniyaka host who had a good reputation and good contacts in Guinea.³⁴ I was fortunate in this regard because I played soccer with some Maniyaka who came from or had contacts in Guinea. The two men who were responsible for integrating me into Guinea were Makula Mammadi Kromah and Majògbè Mohammed Chèjan Kromah. Makula Mammadi, then probably in his late-20s, took me to Macenta in 1986. There, we resided with Mammadi's seventy-one year old 'older-brother' Fata Bakari Kromah. We stayed in Bakari Kromah's yard, and he became my host. His grandfather Sonindènè Bakari founded Macenta in the mid-nineteenth century, so Bakari Kromah was the traditional *mansa* of Macenta at the time. Mammadi Kromah even named me after Macenta's founder, and named my wife Tami after his wife -

³³For discussions about the production, dissemination and impact of "market tapes" or "epic cassettes" in Guinea and Mali respectively, see Conrad (1999a:2-14) and Newton (1999).

³⁴"Nothing is more important for a stranger than finding a good host" because the host helps the *stranger* develop a "meaningful" physical and social "integration into society" (Launay 1979:76).

Gbendu Konè. People thus associated me with the Kromah because of my name, and linked me with Bakari Kromah and his lineage when I was in Macenta province. The fact that my wife was a Konè also helped because I could playfully call upon the Konè to help me because they were my classificatory in-laws.

Majògbè Mohammed Chèjan Kromah took me to Guinea in 1986. Chèjan was from the town of Watafélédu in the southeastern part of Beyla province. He went to school in N'Zerekore, studied French and art in highschool, and went to Monrovia in the 1970s to find his fortune as a journalist and artist. Chèjan's father Mustafa was a respected hunter and herbalist who was well known throughout the region, and was the person who introduced me to Musadu's former chief Yaya Dole. Yaya became my host in Musadu; Baba his son became my host after Yaya died in 1991. Mohammed also took me to N'Zerekore where his mother eventually settled, and up to Kerouane province where his in-laws lived.

Another person who helped me in Beyla province was Muhammad Oppong Sanoe. Oppong was a brother of Faliku Sanoe, the assistant of Martin Ford who conducted research in Liberia in the mid-1980s. Oppong's mother was a Kromah, so he introduced me to Alhaji Kabine Kromah.³⁵ Alhaji Kabine had a good memory, and was reported to be the oldest man in Diakolidu. Oppong also introduced me to the only person whom I interviewed in Beyla, Alafã Konè, and went to Musadu with me in 1993.³⁶

Makula Mammadi Kromah, Mohammed Chèjan Kromah, Mustafa Kromah, Mohammed Sanoe, and Baba Dole were thus very important for my research in Guinea and one means by which people could place me in their social grid. These men introduced

³⁵App. 7.29; App. 7.34.

³⁶App. 7.31.

me to people, and explained proper forms of etiquette and translated for me. Some speakers said that they only let me interview them because they knew the person who introduced me to them; they trusted my assistants or contacts, and minimally believed that I would not deliberately distort their testimonies or go and make large sums of money from what they said.

I could ask questions and understand enough of some conversations to ask follow-up questions during interviews, but my Maniyakā was not good enough to do this comfortably. My assistants knew the subject matter, and I gradually taught them how to interview. We tried to interview people individually. In some cases, however, as with what happened during my first interview with Alhaji Kabine Kromah of Diakolidu in 1992, the interview turned into a clan event. After I was formally introduced to Alhaji Kromah, clan elders made opening remarks and I stated my mission. About three dozen people stayed for the interview. I gave each interviewee in Guinea the equivalent of about \$2.00 to 3.00, explained that I taught at ELWA, and told them that I was conducting research for my dissertation at MSU. In some cases, I was able to give informants a copy of the tape and any photographs that I took of the situation.

It is best to record interviews in natural settings such as ceremonies, special occasions, or at impromptu telling of stories in the evening. This allows the narrator to speak more freely and takes some attention away from the researcher. The most naturally told oral traditions that I obtained were those that were purchased in markets. I otherwise set up all of the interviews. This artificial atmosphere inhibited some such as Soko Konè and Mammadi Kènè from telling more than what they knew; Kènè, nonetheless, still

narrated a rich history.³⁷ Others like Tènu Kamã Kamara, Alifã Konè and Alhaji Kabine Kromah seemed to speak freely as if they had nothing to hide and as if nobody else was present in the room.³⁸

I tried to train my assistants to ask general questions before they went to more specific ones. In some cases, such as with Tènu Kamã Kamara, the interviewee spoke at length only after he was asked one question.³⁹ Layi Kèwulèn Kamara, on the other hand, needed to be prompted at every turn.⁴⁰ He even implored us to ask more direct questions. I also instructed my translators not to interrupt speakers, and not to coerce speakers to talk about topics that they did not want to address. My assistants sometimes did break up interviews to ask questions or get speakers to talk about topics which made them feel uncomfortable - usually about topics like secret societies or slavery. We talked about problems like this during interviews when there were opportunities, or after we completed the interviews. I did develop a list of questions over time but never took them with me when I interviewed.⁴¹ I just jotted down notes to ask in my copybook and reviewed the notes during the interview.

At the broadest level, I only asked questions about the early history of Musadu. After talking about Musadu though, speakers often progressed to histories about their own clans and important people who impacted Musadu in the nineteenth century. Some informants spoke at length about Samori Turé. Samori intrigued me, but I did not want a person to curtail his discussion about Musadu so he could talk about Samori. One time

³⁷App. 7.15; App. 7.18.

³⁸App. 7.19; App. 7.31; App. 7.29; 7.34.

³⁹App. 7.19.

⁴⁰App. 7.5; 7.16.

⁴¹App. F.

while we were translating a long portion about Samori, Boakai Yamah stated, “Tim, Samori is giving you a hard time.” When people veered off the path that lead to ancient Musadu and talked about Samori, the French conquest or some other topic, I often asked follow-up questions.

I needed to ask about the recent past and the present because such information would have provided a better context in which to evaluate my sources. I, however, avoided asking such questions; the political atmosphere in Guinea was tense because of the war that was being fought just across the border in Liberia. The civil war polarized divisions between the Maniyaka and Loma in northwest Liberia and between the Maniyaka and Kpelle in central Liberia. When I went to Diakolidu in 1990, an elder said that the Liberian was ‘our war.’ Several Maniyaka from southeast Guinea who had gone to support Charles Taylor or Samuel Doe are said to have been killed. Indeed, one sometimes saw Maniyaka combatants of the Liberian war in Guinea. The problems that the Liberian war generated spilled into Guinea. In the early 1990s, conflicts broke out between the Maniyaka and Kpelle in N’Zerekore province. Since 1998, the Maniyaka and Loma have sporadically been fighting in Macenta province and in adjacent parts of northwest Liberia.⁴²

I also did not ask about the present because I did not want people to misconstrue my purpose for being in Guinea. Guineans were not accustomed to seeing white people during the Seku Turé years, so some were naturally suspicious when they saw white people. Even when I went to Guinea before the war, some thought that I was a spy, businessman or journalist. I did not want to become embroiled in sensitive discussions

⁴²Højbjerg 1999; forthcoming.

about the war or Guinean politics when I was trying to learn what people believed happened many generations ago.

Monrovia was also a potentially rich venue for getting information, but I decided not to conduct dissertation research there because of the war. We lived through three successive “interim governments of national unity” while Charles Taylor controlled most of the interior, and were evacuated in mid-October 1992 when the NPFL attacked Monrovia. The Maniyaka were one of the key ethnic groups over which the war became polarized, and it would have been inadvisable for me to interview or for people to be interviewed.

In the next section, all of the available sources of the Musadu epic are identified and discussed. We begin with the Maniyaka accounts, and progress to the Vai, Kpelle, Konor, Loma, Mano, Dã and Gola stories. The sources in each category are introduced chronologically. Known information about the narrator, place, date, collector, circumstances of the recording, length, number of episodes, form, transcriber, translators, and source is noted for each version. The French who collected traditions during the colonial era usually did not offer this kind of information. Feedback, major episodes, unique elements, absence of certain data, and occasional comparisons with other sources are discussed. More detailed information about the informants, interviews, and translations appear at the beginning of each translation in the Supplementary Appendix that begins on page 607. English translations of the French accounts are in the Supplementary Appendices 3-4. Supplementary Appendices 2 and 8 contain English accounts that have not been published.

Summary of the Oral Traditions

Maniyaka sources

Most of the information that is available about Musadu's early history comes from Maniyaka sources. The first was collected in Musadu in 1868; the last is from an anonymous and undated handwritten school paper that I collected in Kankan in 1993. Most of the Maniyaka interviewees were elders or clan heads.

Benjamin J.K. Anderson

Recorder: Benjamin J.K. Anderson

Place of Recording: Musadu

Date of Recording: December 7-25, 1868

Length: combined, one paragraph

Number of story elements: 2

Form: English prose

Translator(s): See discussion

Source: Anderson 1870/1971; Fairhead et. al. 2003: ch. 5.

Benjamin J.K. Anderson was the famous Liberian explorer who traveled to "Musardu" in 1868 and 1874. Anderson recorded information about Musadu's current political situation, but missed an ideal opportunity to learn how the Musaduka ('people of Musadu') viewed the early history of their town. During his first visit, however, Anderson wrote that the "the grandfather of the oldest man in the town declared that the town was there when he was born, and that all the other towns sprang from this one. It's antiquity is

an undoubted matter among themselves.”⁴³ Anderson also wrote that Musadu was the “capital of the Western Mandingoes,” that the “principle cities” of this region were Beyla, Diakolidu, Nyèla and Nionsamoridu, and that Musadu was the parent city of Beyla.⁴⁴ Though he did not mention any of the core elements of the Musadu epic, everyone in southeast Guinea today agrees that Musadu is very old. More important is Anderson’s phrase that “all the other towns sprang from this one.” This complements one explanation which attributes the creation of the five towns of Konya to the ‘division of Musadu.’ Anderson did not state the source of this information. One person who likely translated for Anderson was his Maniyaka guide from Beyla, Kaifal Kanda.⁴⁵ Others who also interpreted for Anderson and might have told him about Musadu’s past were Mamabinè Mammadi, Ma Fine Kaba, and Fode Lua.⁴⁶

Captain Dauvillier

Recorder: Captain Dauvillier

Place of Recording: Beyla province, Guinea

Date of Recording: c. 1905

Length: c. 1700 words

Number of story elements: 36

Form: French prose

Source: Dauvillier c. 1905. English translation in Appendix 3.

⁴³Anderson 1870/1971:104.

⁴⁴Anderson 1870/1971:5,93,107. Oral traditionists do not consider Nionsamoridu to be one of the ‘five towns of Konya’ (e.g., see Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28). The five towns are Musadu, Beyla, Diakolidu, Nyèla and Dukulela.

⁴⁵Anderson 1870/1971:9,107.

⁴⁶Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35.

Captain Dauvillier became the commandant of the Beyla post in December 1898, and wrote his monograph about the history of Beyla sometime around 1905. James Fairhead located Dauvillier's report in the French National Archives in 1995, and kindly sent me a copy with an English translation from French. Fairhead noted that Dauvillier was a good observer who took photographs, kept a diary and drew several maps.⁴⁷

Dauvillier's study is critical because it demonstrates that all of the major components of the Musadu epic were developed by the turn of the century.⁴⁸ Dauvillier divided his account into two separate parts. The first focused on the Kamara role in the epic. In this section, the author recorded information about Foningama's flight from the Manden, rescue by the Fulbe who hid him in a granary, journey to Goye (Gbè) and subsequent assassination, flight to Musadu, ascension as the chief of Musadu, and journey to the ocean. Dauvillier also wrote about the "gris-gris" which caused havoc in Musadu, the clerics who destroyed this talisman, the talisman-owner's flight into the Loma forest, the execution of four of Foningama's fifteen sons for stealing, and the exploits of his son "Diara" (Fanyala). The captain alluded to the origin of "Foni" in his name in the Kankan section, and Foningama's confrontation with Kònsaba in the Gbè portion.

Dauvillier also furnished several unique elements that do not appear in subsequent accounts. His informant(s) said the Zo Musa's talisman caused large-scale death, poor harvests and wide-spread misery. Later accounts say only that Zo Musa's sheep horn ate

⁴⁷Personal communication, 28 July 1995. Dauvillier also organized the posts at Diorodougou and Sampouyara north of Macenta in 1899, and worked in the region until 1909. One of his objectives was to insure the security of the trade from the forest to Kerouane (Arcin 1911:685; Bouet 1911:233; Peyrissac 1912:25; Person 1975:2034). Fairhead noted that Dauvillier wrote this document in c. 1905. Dauvillier wrote other historical monographs such as "Au pays Toma" (Bouet 1911:223-224; Person 1975:2147).

⁴⁸Dauvillier's story about Sunjata is the sixth earliest known on record (Bulman 1990:19-30).

animals and babies. Likewise, in contrast to later accounts which simply state that Foningama collaborated with the clerics to help destroy his talisman, Dauvillier's informant(s) portrayed Foningama's actions in much more practical terms. They said Foningama used clerics to help him get a talisman that fertilized the land which produced a fruit tree forest and a more diverse crop base.

Dauvillier's sources seem to have partial to the lineage that descended from Foningama's son Fanyala. The Kamara presently argue about which of Foningama's sons was the most important - Fanyala or Fasujan. Dauvillier only named Fanyala, though he mentioned Foningama's first and third sons. Some later accounts say that Foningama's first son's name was Fasujan. Dauvillier sources cast Fanyala as Foningama's favorite son, the person who became the chief of Musadu after Foningama, the good-willed son who trailed Foningama back to the Salamani near Kankan at the end of his life, and the son who dreamed that his own sons would spread into many different lands and became 'important chiefs.' Later informants accused Fanyala of following Foningama back to the Salamani to steal from him. Vase Kamala said that Fanyala failed in his bid to reclaim the chieftaincy of Musadu from his brother Fasujan.

In the second section of his report, Dauvillier summarized what is now regarded as standard information. His informants told him that the Maniyaka pushed the "Toma" (Loma) and "Guerzee" (Kpelle) to the forest, "Toumani Kourouma" (Tumaningèmè) moved to Konya-Mani, and Tumaningèmè's slave "N'zougou Moussa" (Zo Musa) founded Moussadougou. Dauvillier knew that the accounts in both sections were related, but he did not know how. By examining later versions, one can merge the information that Dauvillier divided into two sections: Tumaningèmè preceded Foningama to Konya-

Mani; Tumaningèmè was present in Musadu when Foningama helped the clerics destroy the “gris-gris,” the owner of the malevolent “gris-gris” was Zo Musa who founded Musadu; and Sunjata chased Foningama to Kankan and drove the Loma and Kpelle into the forest.

In his opening preface to both accounts, Dauvillier wrote that the stories were ‘related only by anecdotes surrounded by legends.’ Dauvillier wrote that he collected the second portion of his report ‘from a series of stories analogous to that of the captive, Fere Kama.’ Dauvillier thus summarized this material from several informants, and may have written this after hearing many stories. His sources for his first section may have been Kamara or had some reason to favor the Fanyala branch of Foningama’s family.

M. Liurette

Recorder: A. Liurette

Place of Recording: Beyla province, Guinea ?

Date of Recording: 1908

Length: c. 225 words

Number of story elements: 12

Form: French prose

Source: Liurette 1908, in a colonial *Le Prince* (1910:102-103) and *Turé* (1972-73:172).

The English translation in Appendix 4.1 is based on the excerpt in *Turé* (1972-73).

Martin Ford found this document in the Conakry archives, and sent me two maps that Liurette included as part of his report.

Liurette was the Commissioner of Beyla province at least from 1907-1909, and was instrumental in making the chiefs of N'Zebela, Gouecke, N'Zapa, Sampouyara, Bamba, Bossoso, Singbèdou and Kuankan submit to French rule.⁴⁹ Although Yves Person wrote that Liurette's report was 'very mediocre,' Liurette's piece is valuable for this study because he broadly covered many key elements in the Musadu epic except for the town's founding.⁵⁰ Liurette, like Dauvillier, traced Foningama's migration from the Manden and Kankan to the Loma village of "Moussatazou" where five of his sixteen sons died at an early age. The latter may derive from the story about Foningama's sons who were executed for breaking a law. Liurette then mentioned stories that involved a female elephant, a baobab branch, and the founding of Malikoun village while Foningama was traveling to the sea. None of these episodes appears in any later accounts, except in the testimony of an early-1970s informant from Kissidougou named El-Hajj Camara Yomba (discussed below) who recounted the same story that Liurette wrote.⁵¹ While Liurette did not offer clues about his source or sources, he may have provided the dates that appear in the story: Foningama left Sibi in 1200; he stayed in Kankan from 1200-1202 before traveling to Musadu; and two of his sons started their journey toward the ocean in 1225.

Père Bouyssou

Recorder: Père Bouyssou

Place of Recording: Probably Musadu, Guinea

⁴⁹Terrier/Mourey 1910:406. Yves Person and Martin Ford, who had copies of Liurette's report, wrote /A/. Le Prince and Terrier & Mourey wrote that the first initial of Liurette's name was /M/. Le Prince is alone among the sources to date Liurette's monograph to 1908-09. One of the maps that Ford sent me is dated October 1908. All of the other sources cite 1908 as the date (see Ford 1990:300-301).

⁵⁰Person 1975:2161.

⁵¹In Kante 1971-72:19.

Date of Recording: Probably on 26 December 1913

Length: c. 150 words

Number of story elements: 16

Form: French prose

Source: Summarized in Lelong (1949:24-25). The English translation is in Appendix 4.3.

In 1913, Monseigneur Lemaître of the Holy Ghost Fathers sent Father Bouyssou, Father Garlantézec and Brother Aloys on a survey trip to learn how feasible it would be for their society to do missionary work in French occupied territories. The men had spent considerable time in the French Soudan, and Father Bouyssou supposedly learned how to ‘speak Malinke [Maninka] to perfection’ in Mali. They left Bamako on November 24 with two bicycles, a horse, a Peugeot, and thirty-nine “Bambara” porters, but eventually abandoned the vehicle because of mechanical problems. After passing Siguiri, Kankan, Bissandougou and Kerouane, they reached their final destination - Beyla. On December 26, Father Bouyssou and Brother Aloys set out on bicycles to tour the northeast towns of Beyla province. They noted that this region was completely Islamicized, and that “Misagadougou” was the ‘saintly village of the Muslims.’ The missionaries also recorded some oral traditions when they visited Musadu.⁵² H.M. Lelong set their history of Musadu in quotes when he published this account in 1949, which indicates that he had access to a report or other written documentation from the trip. Examining the archives of the Holy Fathers might prove fruitful for learning more about the situation, and turn up their report and other materials.

⁵²Lelong 1949:13-25.

Bouyssou and Aloys mentioned “Falikaman Kamara or Djomannou” and “Zogomisa Kòma.” They wrote that Foningama’s sons founded several other towns, and reported that Foningama’s daughter Magnambouy married a Konaté cleric who came from the north. Magnambouy appears in later traditions as having married famous Sherif or Kanè clerics. Bouyssou and Aloys also said that Magnambouy was buried under Musadu’s mosque. Later accounts refer to what seems to be the same burial place, although they say that this was the grave of Foningama’s sons who were executed for breaking a law. Bouyssou and Aloys’ account differs most radically from most others in claiming that Foningama founded Musadu and that Zo Musa was one of his sons. They were simply mistaken on these points.

Paul Humblot

Recorder: Paul Humblot

Place of Recording: Kankan area, Guinea

Date of Recording: Probably 1918

Total Length: c. 240 words

Number of story elements: 7

Form: French prose

Source: Humblot (1918:530; 1951:113). The English translation is in Appendix 4.4a-b.

Paul Humblot was the Administrator of the Colonies at Barawoli between Bamako and Segu from the late-19teens to the early-1920s. During this time, Humblot published the first of a two-part series of articles on the names of Upper Guinea. His earliest

information about Foningama appeared in the first article. Humblot published another article in 1951 and supplied more information. Humblot evidently collected the data for his 1951 article during 1918 or a little earlier. The title of his first piece indicates that he gathered his material in the Kankan area of Guinea.⁵³

Humblot focused on the Kamara. He identified “Farèn Kaman Kamara” as the chief and father of the Kamara of the “Konian,” and reported that Foningama moved to this area ‘several centuries ago.’ Humblot said that Foningama passed through the Sankaran before reaching Konya-Mani, and discussed the origin of “Dioman’den” or Dyomande which is an equivalent clan name for Kamara. Humblot did not mention Musa, Musadu, or the town’s founding. Humblot also wrote that there was an alliance between the Kamara, Kromah and Konde because of marriage ties.

H. Linard

Recorder: H. Linard

Place of Recording: Probably Beyla province, Guinea

Date of Recording: late 1940s

Length: c. 390 words

Number of story elements: 12

Form: French prose

Source: Linard 1948, in Turé (1972-73:172-174). English translation is in Appendix 4.6.

Independent information about Linard was not forthcoming, so it can only be assumed,

⁵³See Bulman 1990:44-45; Conrad 1995:122, n. 45.

from the title of his monograph, that he was a colonial administrator in Beyla during the late-1940s. Our information from Linard is based on five paragraphs that Ibrahima Kalil Turé quoted in his theses on Kerouane. Turé separated Linard's work in two parts and titled them 'The legend of the Kamara' and 'The legend of the Kourouma.' While it is not possible to tell if this is Turé or Linard's division, Turé did not copy Linard's complete report. Therefore, more can be learned by retrieving Linard's report from the archives in Conakry, Dakar and/or Paris.

This material covers the history of the Kamara and Kromah in two separate sections, and does not make any references to Zo Musa or the means by which "Moussadougou" was founded. Linard did, however, mention many of the major episodes that involve the Kamara: their conquest of the "Konian," the execution of "Fonikaman's" sons for plundering a market, the burial of their heads under the stone near the mosque, and the 'division' of Foningama's sons to many other areas. Linard was the first to state that one of Foningama's sons was buried near the mosque. This is echoed later on, and is different from Dauvillier's sources who said that Magnambouy was buried under the mosque. Linard also mentioned a blood pact that was formed between the Kamara and Kromah, and cast their relationship in the framework of marriage ties.

M.H. Lelong

Place of recording: N'Zerekore district, Guinea

Date of recording: late-1940s?

Length: Two sentences

Number of story elements: 2

Form: French prose

Source: Lelong 1949:108.

M.H. Lelong wrote that “Misata” (‘town of Misa’ in Kpelle and Loma) was ‘a Malinke village established in Kpelle country. It was founded by a Malinke of Kankan.’ It is tempting to argue that Lelong derived some of his this information from Bouyssou and Aloys’ visit to Musadu that he also described in his book. Lelong, however, spelled the names of the town differently, and did not connect “Misata” and “Misadougou.” Lelong also wrote that “Misata” was situated in a Kpelle area, and that many of the Maniyaka there had adopted Kpelle ways and become “Kpelle Maninga.” This is not characteristic of the Islamicized Musadu about that Bouyssou wrote.

Dyigiba Kamara

Recorder: Dyigiba Kamara

Place of Recording: Mostly in Sumandu province, Guinea

Date of Recording: c. 1927-1957

Length: 109 or 110 pages

Number of story elements: at least 18

Form: French prose and a genealogical tree

Source: Kamara n.d. Closely guarded, though its genealogical tree has been published and some information has been cited locally.⁵⁴

⁵⁴Camara published this genealogy (1979, App. 4.9).

Dyigiba (Jiba) Kamara wrote a manuscript titled “Essai d’histoire locale” that is an enigma in the historiography of Guinea; few scholars and students in Guinea do not appear to have seen the document, but many have cited it. The existence of the work also seems to be generally known. One informant in Musadu, for instance, lamented that no one had written a history about Musadu, although “Va Dyigiba” wrote a book about Sumandu.⁵⁵

Yves Person apparently met Dyigiba Kamara and used his work. According to Person, Dyigiba Kamara was born in about 1885 and died in 1967. Daouda Camara, whose genealogy is discussed below, shifted the dates slightly to 1882-1963.⁵⁶ Dyigiba Kamara was a famous chief of the province of Sumandu who apparently collected many traditions about Konya-Mani and Samori. Person wrote that Kamara was intelligent, and that this work was a source of ‘premiere importance.’ Person also noted that Kamara refused to publish the manuscript while he was alive, but indicated that his Kamara relatives in Côte d’Ivoire were planning to have it published.⁵⁷

The other important source of information about Dyigiba Kamara comes from Soumaoro Kaba who completed his thesis in 1971 about Samori Turé’s influence in Beyla and Kerouane. Kaba wrote that Dyigiba Kamara collected most of his traditions in Sumandu from 1927 to 1957, and that the ‘document is of unestimateable value and constitutes a mine of information that traces the great odyssey of the Dyomande and

⁵⁵Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35.

⁵⁶Camara 1979, App. 4.9.

⁵⁷Person 1975:2161, 2194; 1979:276. During the mid-1980s, the leader of the Sumandu-Kamara in Monrovia was nicknamed “Damaro Dyigiba” after Dyigiba Kamara. The Kamara tell legendary stories about Dyigiba’s refusal to rebuff instructions that came from Seku Turé’s government. Similarly, Person wrote that Dyigiba Kamara was “an important politician who worked against the R.D.A. (Rassemblement Démocratique Africain) in Guinea before 1958” (1979:276).

Samori.’ He noted that Kamara’s manuscript contains ‘a great genealogical tree of all the Dyomande clans since their patriarch Fonikaman Dyomande up to the lesser Dyomande chiefs.’ Kaba added that “Dauda,” one of Dyigiba’s sons, obtained possession of the history after Dyigiba’s death, and that Dauda planned to revise and have it published. A “Daouda Camara” from Damaro produced a large genealogy of the Kamara in 1979 that appears in Appendix 4.9. Kaba’s “Dauda” and “Daouda Camara” is undoubtedly the same person, which means that much of the family tree that Daouda Camara published comes from Dyigiba Kamara’s book. Kaba accused Person of basing most of his work about Samori Turé on Dyigiba Kamara’s history without giving him enough credit.⁵⁸

In 1993, Moliké Sidibé, whose mother is a Kamara from Damaro, said that Dyigiba Kamara’s history was in Damaro and that the Kamara elders of Damaro kept it closely guarded. Sidibé said that a copy of the monograph was once deposited in the University of Kankan’s library, but was stolen. Sidibé used the monograph for his thesis which he wrote at the University of Kankan, and stated that the town’s elders would not allow it to be taken from Damaro. Sidibé was a history professor at the same university in the early-1990s when I interviewed him. More recently, Kamara’s manuscript was supposedly taken to Conakry.

The question of feedback concerning the document is critical for trying to determine the independence of the written and oral sources now available. This can not be completely done until Mr. Kamara’s history can be examined. However, several historians in Guinea have cited Kamara’s manuscript, so we do have some notion about its contents. Working from Dyigiba’s manuscript, Soumaoro Kaba wrote about the

⁵⁸Kaba 1971:55-57.

Kamara migrations to Konya-Mani and those that occurred after the Kamara left Konya-Mani. Moliké Sidibé cited Kamara's work for his discussion about the migrations of the five Kamara brothers from Manden. Sidibé also explained how the Kamara left Konya-Mani and founded the old town of Damaro which became the capital of Sumandu.⁵⁹ Joel Maxim Millimono, a colleague of Sidibé's at the university, likewise credited Dyigiba Kamara for his discussion of the Kamara migrations from Manden in his 1989 thesis on the pre-colonial relations between Toron and Konya-Mani.⁶⁰ Bangaly Kourouma cited Dyigiba Kamara in the historical section of his study of Konya-Mani's toponymics, but copied his section almost word-for-word from Millimono.⁶¹

The earliest written source for the information that Kaba, Sidibé, Millimono and others use when they cite Dyigiba Kamara is from an anonymous and undated report titled "Monographique de la Region Administrative de Beyla."⁶² Information that the monograph contains about the migrations of the Kamara from Manden and the early history of Musadu is exactly what Kaba, Sidibé and Millimono got from Dyigiba Kamara. This indicates that the author of the Beyla monograph also used Dyigiba Kamara's manuscript. The relevant section about Musadu's history is from the Beyla monograph which is the most original source, so information that Kaba, Sidibé and Millimono used is not referenced. Since the "Monographique de la Region Administrative de Beyla" is more available than Dyigiba Kamara's history, it is likely that the Beyla piece is sometimes consulted. I have not, however, seen the Beyla monograph cited in any bibliographies. In cases where it is strongly evident that the information in a source is

⁵⁹Sidibé 1989:8-12; see App. 4.15.

⁶⁰Millimono 1989:12-13.

⁶¹Kourouma 1989-90:8-11.

⁶²App. 4.8.

based on Dyigiba Kamara's manuscript, this is mentioned.

**“Monographique de la Region Administrative de Beyla: Part I - Etat de Guinée
Federation de Beyla”**

Narrator: Probably from Dyigiba Kamara's manuscript

Recorder: Probably a French administrator in Diakolidu, Beyla province

Place of Recording: Probably in Diakolidu, Guinea

Date of Recording: n.d.

Length: c. 400 words

Number of story elements: 14

Form: French prose

Source: “Monographique de la Region Administrative de Beyla: Part I - Etat de Guinée,
Federation de Beyla” n.d. Portions are translated in English in Appendix 4.8.

This document, described in the previous section, broadly covers the history of Beyla province from the time of the original settlement of the Kpelle and Loma to 1959. It records important aspects of the Kamara migrations, “Foni Kaman's” conflict with “Kònsaba,” “Toumani Kourouma's” move from “Wanino” to “Moussadougou,” and the execution of Foningama's sons for breaking a market law. This represents all of the major elements of the Musadu epic except for Zo Musa's founding of Musadu and his exodus south. The monograph simply states that Zo Musa or “Zoo Missa Konè” was one of the three autochthones of Musadu. The report also discusses the founding of the other major towns in Konya-Mani, the history of Musadu during the unsettled times of the mid-

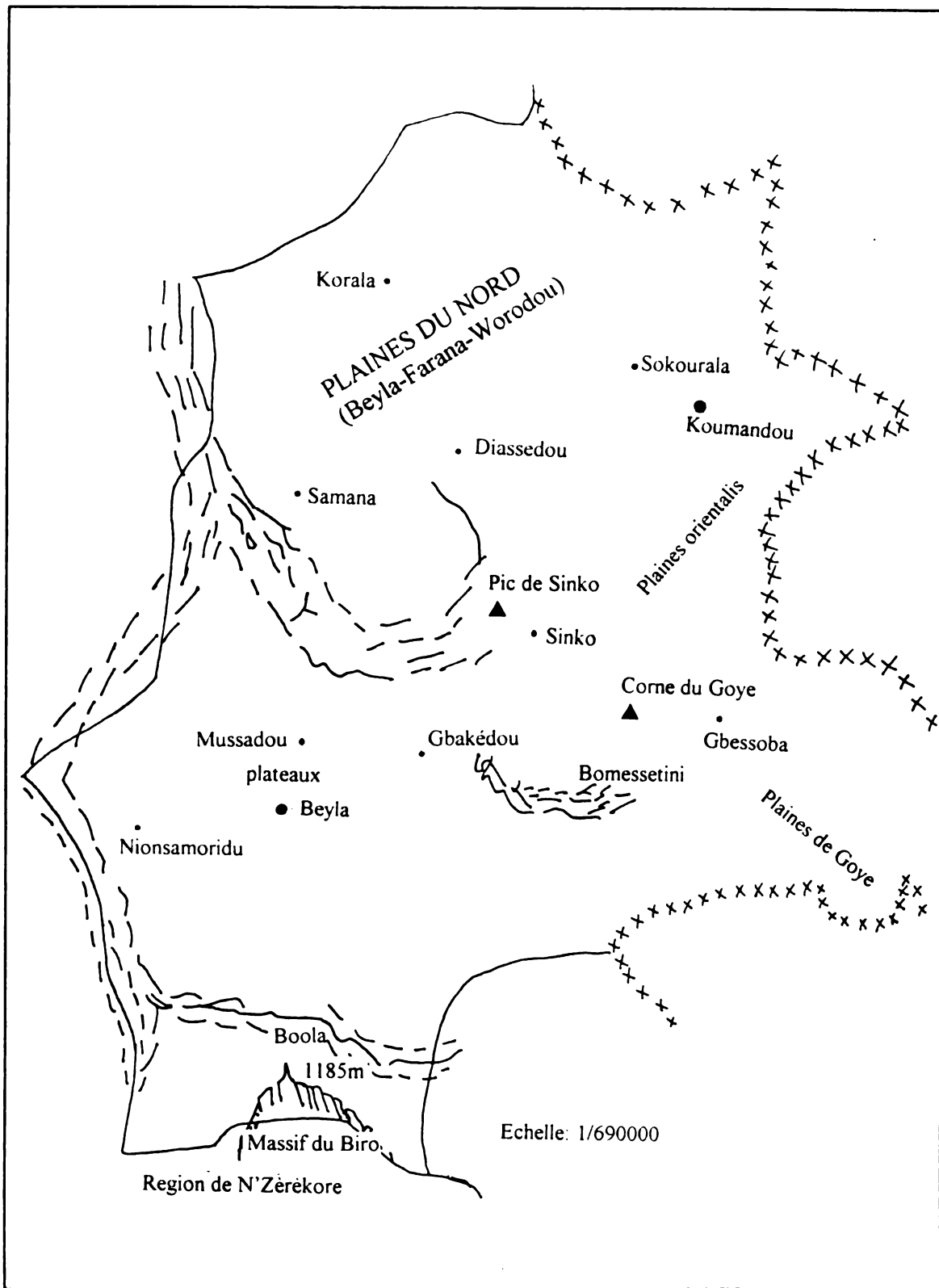


Figure 12 "Region de Beyla" (Source: "Monographique de la Region Administrative de Beyla" n.d.)

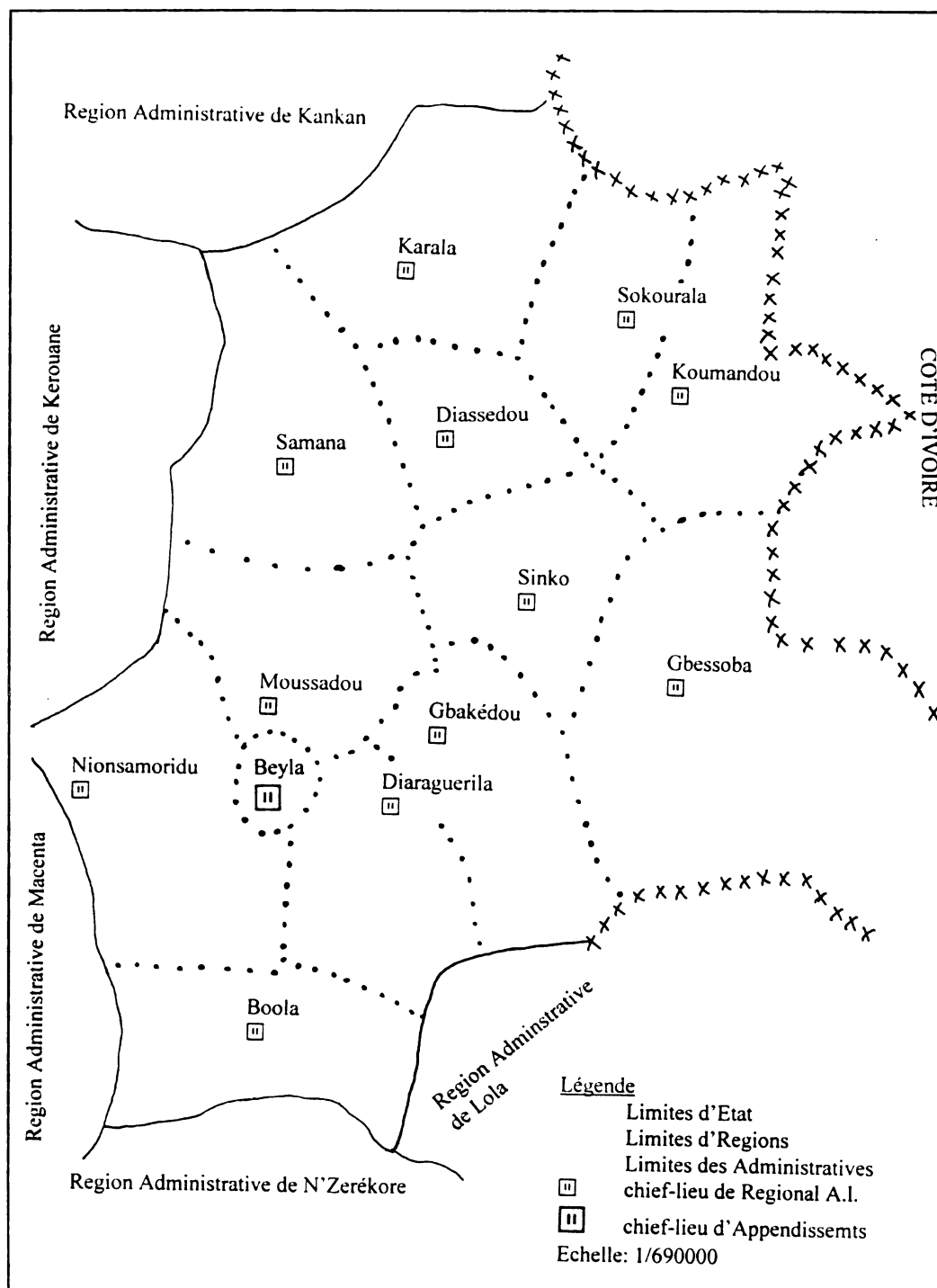


Figure 13 "Region Administrative de Beyla: Carte Politique et Administrative" (Source: "Monographie de la Region Administrative de Beyla")

to-late nineteenth-century, an overview of French activity in Beyla province during the colonial period, and data about climate and topography. The last date noted is 1959.

As indicated in the previous section, much of the information in this monograph is probably based on the history that Dyigiba Kamara wrote. The Beyla monograph is a good example of how colonial administrators freely borrowed from each other without citing references.⁶³ Because the Beyla monograph is a document unto itself that contains disparate information, it is listed separately and does not appear under Dyigiba Kamara's name. The same is true for Daouda Camara's genealogy that is largely based on the history that Dyigiba Kamara wrote.

I obtained the first six pages of the Beyla monograph from Djobba Kamara who sent it to me from Monrovia along with Daouda Camara's genealogy in 1990. Two years later, Alhaji Fomba Lanse Donzo retrieved a complete version of the document midway during my interview with him in Diakolidu. Donzo used the report to help him recall some of the names that he could not remember, and allowed me to make a copy. The interesting thing about Donzo's copy is that pages one to six duplicates of the same that I received from Djobba, were typed on one kind of paper. Pages seven to twenty-four and two hand-drawn maps (Figures 12-13) appeared on another kind of paper with different font. The information on page six, which contains a short history of Nionsamoridu, ends mid-way through the page and is followed by a row of plus signs (+++). All of the others sections continue after a couple of spaces and do not end this way. This suggests that the original document ended on page six and that the rest might be part of another report. Page seven seems to naturally continue with a discussion about a history of Konya-Mani

⁶³See Vansina 1990:17.

during the nineteenth century. I was told that another man had a copy of this monograph in Diakolidu, so it is likely that more can be learned about the origin of this document and the forms in which it has been reproduced with additional research.

S. Jangaba M. Johnson

Recorder: S. Jangaba M. Johnson

Place of Recording: Liberia

Date of Recording: 1952-1962?/1974⁶⁴

Length: c. 310 words

Number of story elements: 7

Form: English prose

Source: Johnson n.d./1974. A portion is reproduced in Appendix 8.1.

The late Liberian ethnographer, Samdu Jangaba Mole Johnson, wrote this paper to show that the basic structure of all the “tribes” in Liberia is based on the Poro and Sande societies. Johnson argued that the Poro was a “cult of unity” and a “friendly cult,” and that “it would be well for the government to reaffirm the maintenance and protection of this cult.” Johnson wrote this paper after he and others made a “flying fact-finding tour

⁶⁴This document was located in the uncatalogued section at the Indiana University Library in Bloomington in July 1994 (DT 629.J69). Johnson wrote this paper during President William V.S. Tubman’s administration, and presented it at a seminar at the University of Liberia in 1974 (Ellis 1999:224, fn. 8). Johnson did not date his paper, though signed off as “Research Officer, Interior Department, R.L. - Poro Investigation and adjustment.” Tubman appointed Johnson as the Administrative Assistant and Research Officer of the Department of Interior’s Bureau of Folkways in 1952. He held that post until the government transferred him to the Ministry of Information in 1962 (d’Azevedo 1972-74). Johnson therefore appears to have written the paper (or at least the first draft of the paper) sometime between 1952-1962. Johnson provided several clues that should help date the document. This most important is that Paramount Chief Boakai Koli of Pokpaa died the December before he wrote the report.

through Bomi Territory, Upper Gola Konè, Pokpaa, Tewo, and Gawula” to resolve some problems between Muslims and the Poro.⁶⁵ This paper was prepared during the time of President Tubman’s Reunification. Tubman used “Reunification” to improve relations between Liberians and ostensibly integrate more indigenous people into the government.⁶⁶

Johnson used the Musadu story to show that the Poro was an institution of peace and unity, and that Muslims and members of the Poro could live peacefully together. Johnson explained how “Zoa Musa” founded Musadu, but treated Zo Musa’s encounter with the cleric and his departure from Musadu in harmonious terms rather than in the spirit of conflict that pervades all other accounts. Johnson’s revisionist interpretation seems to have been primarily intended for the “Mandingo Muslims.” The Maniyaka, after all, were more familiar with the Musadu epic than any other group. Johnson apparently hoped that the most staunch Muslims would come to realize that they could not make everyone denounce the Poro, and that they should recognize the importance of the Poro in the peaceful administration of Liberia.

Yves Person

Recorder: Yves Person (and others?)

Place of Recording: Beyla province, Guinea , and western Côte d’Ivoire

Dates of Recording: 1955-1958

Length: numerous sections

Number of story elements: about 27

Form: French prose

⁶⁵Johnson n.d./1974:1-2,7,10.

⁶⁶d’Azevedo 1972-74.

Source: For example, see Person 1968b; 1971.

Yves Person interviewed nearly one hundred people in the provinces of Kankan, Beyla, and the forest area of southeast Guinea to Macenta from 1955-1958.⁶⁷ Person published most of his information about early Musadu and Beyla province in volume one of his *Samori: Une Revolution Dyula*.⁶⁸

The important components of the Musadu epic that Person chronicled were the Kamara migrations from the Manden, the early Kamara settlements in Côte d'Ivoire, the claim that "Feren-Kaman" invaded "the Konyan" with cavalry and founded "Moussadougou, the "laws" of "Feren-Kaman," and the statement that the Dole, Kromah and Bèrètè became the chiefs of Musadu after the Kamara left Konya-Mani. The University of Paris lecturer theorized that the early Kamara migrations from the southern portion of Greater Konya-Mani to the ocean corresponded with the "Mane" invasions that the Portuguese and Dutch recorded along the coasts of present-day Liberia and Sierra Leone during the sixteenth century.

Historians tentatively accept much of Person's discussions about the Mane invasions.⁶⁹ Paul E.H. Hair and Adam Jones, however, have criticized Person's theories partly because he used evidence which he culled from the oral traditions that he never published. They called for Person to publish his "remarkable unpublished traditions." Person hoped to publish his materials, but unfortunately died in the early-1980s before he could begin the task.⁷⁰ We still hope that the persons who have been entrusted with his

⁶⁷Person 1975:2194-2197; Person 1982:144.

⁶⁸Person 1968b.

⁶⁹E.g., Rodney 1970; Brooks 1993.

⁷⁰Hair 1968a:67, n.54; Jones 1981:177; Person 1971a:679; 1982:144.

oral traditions will publish them as Person wished, as has been done with his maps.⁷¹

An examination of Person's oral traditions would be valuable for this study as well. Person gave few citations for the information that he published about Musadu and the Kamara migrations before Samori. Perhaps there is something to Soumaoro Kaba's claim that Person did not give enough credit to Dyigiba Kamara's manuscript, a work that few other academics have seen. Furthermore, it is curious that Person never mentioned Zo Musa. He even claimed that Foningama founded Musadu. The only other persons who made this claim were Father Bouyssou and Jacques Germain.⁷² Person might have gotten his information about Musadu's founding from Lelong, but Person did not cite Lelong's book in the 50 page bibliography that he published at the end of his three volume work on Samori.⁷³ It seems extremely improbable that Person collected forty-seven traditions in Beyla province, learned about Foningama and Musadu, and was not told about Zo Musa. Person most likely recorded information about Zo Musa, but did not mention him. Lastly, Person wrote that he collected thirty genealogies, and that only one dozen were shortened. It is odd that Person's genealogies consistently said that Foningama had twelve sons, and that these sons had the same names and were in the same positions in the birth order.⁷⁴ Person, again, might have taken this information from Dyigiba Kamara's manuscript. The written and oral sources, on the other hand, gave a combined total of twenty-eight names. Their testimony is only consistent for the names and ordering of the first two sons, Fanyala and Fasujan.⁷⁵ These criticisms of Yves Person's work are not made with the

⁷¹Person 1990.

⁷²Bouyssou 1913, in Lelong 1949, App. 4.3; Germain 1984, App. 4.5.

⁷³Person 1975:2152-2192.

⁷⁴Person 1972:10; see Geysbeek/Kamara 1991:91.

⁷⁵Ch. 8; App. O.

view of undermining what he accomplished. His contribution to our knowledge about the history of southeast Guinea and many other regions is invaluable, and has provided a working foundation from which persons like myself have preceded.

Alhaji Seku Salifu

Recorder: Svend E. Holsoe, with Muhammed Salifu (?)

Place of Recording: Monrovia, Liberia

Date of Recording: 7 December 1965

Length: 910 lines

Number of story elements: 31

Form: Liberal linear translation into English

Translators: Boakai Yamah, with Amara Cissé

Source: The English translation is in Appendix 5.1.

When Svend E. Holsoe conducted research on the Vai in Liberia during the mid-1960s, he interviewed Alhaji Seku Salifu (Sherif). In 1991, Holsoe sent me a tape which contained three interviews that he had conducted with people who spoke Konyakã. Holsoe did not have the opportunity to translate them, so he offered them to me.

Holsoe's interview with Salifu is inestimable for two reasons. It is the first substantial oral tradition produced from a tape where a transcript and translation has been made. This process was not replicated again until we translated Vase Kamala's earliest known history in Monrovia twenty years later.⁷⁶ The only other early interviews which

⁷⁶Geysbeek/Kamara 1994.

potentially fit this category are those that Yves Person and Humphrey Fisher conducted in the 1950s and 1960s. I tried, without success, to gain access to their original notes or recordings. Fisher's materials are less problematic than Person's because he presented his traditions in a form that is close to their original recording.⁷⁷ Salifu's history is also important because it contains all of the major components of the Musadu epic; this shows that some Maniyaka migrants transmit stories about Musadu when they go to Liberia and other places.

Seku Salifu talked about "Fèlèngama's" migration from Manden to "Misadu," "Zo Misa Kòma's" founding of the town, the *saafè* which swallowed children and beat up sheep, Foningama's reign as the chief of Musadu, and the famous *wakèlèn salaka* or 'sacrifice of one thousand' where he symbolically gave everything that he had in his possession to some clerics so they could bless him. Several components of Salifu's history are unique: a lengthy genealogy that traces Prophet Muhammed's ancestry to Adam; detailed information about the role of the Sherif which includes his marriage to Foningama's daughter Mayāmoi; Foningama's replacement of a Traoré as the chief of Musadu; and a story about the founding of "Masaka" that does not seem to be linked with any other episodes in the Musadu epic. Salifu was also the first person to link Zo Musa to the "Kòma" or Komo society, and the first to provide an elaborate description of the Sware and their role in blessing Foningama.

One member of the audience encouraged Salifu to say good things about his clan for posterity sake because he knew that Holsoe was conducting research. This caused Salifu to embellish his testimony, and partly explains the dominant role that the speaker

⁷⁷Fisher 1971:ix-x.

ascribed to the Sherif in wresting the land from Zo Musa for Foningama and eventually becoming the owners of the land.

William Morlu, al-Hajj Brimah Nyi, Judge Tulay, Ismail Malik and Judge Tulay

Recorder: Humphrey J. Fisher

Place of Recording: Liberia

Date of Recording: 1967

Length: Morlu, Nyi, Tulay, Malik - c. 705 words; Tulay - c. 100 words

Number of story elements: Morlu, Nyi, Malik - 12; Tulay - 7

Form: English prose

Source: Fisher 1971:ix-x.

In 1967, Humphrey J. Fisher set out for West Africa to collect fresh information for an introduction to Frank Cass and Company's republication of Benjamin Anderson's two journeys to Musadu. After the authorities in Conakry thwarted Fisher's attempt to visit Musadu, Fisher traveled to Liberia where he interviewed William Morlu, al-Hajj Brimah Nyi, Judge Tulay and Ismail Malik. Fisher wrote that he "learnt two oral traditions about the early history of Musadu." Working from his "typescript journal," Fisher wrote: "The oral traditions I tried to give in a form close to that in which I myself was told them - hence sometimes curious phrasing. I have deliberately refrained from editing or summarizing, lest in doing so I should also distort."⁷⁸

Fisher wrote that William Morlu was from Bolahun. Bolahun is located in a

⁷⁸Fisher 1971:vii-viii, xxi.

Gbandi area, and Morlu is a common Gbandi name. The speaker, therefore, may be what Liberians refer to as “Gbandi-Mandingo.” Many Gbandi-Mandingo speak Gbandi and Maniyakã, and usually trace their Maniyaka ancestors to Guinea. Al-Hajj Brimah Nyi was a Maniyaka teacher who lived in Fas near Bomi Hills or Tubmanburg. Judge Tulay was “a Kpelle civil servant of Mandingo origin” near Voinjama. Ismail Malik was a “Mandingo teacher” who lived in the town of Mecca which is close to Bopolu.⁷⁹

The four men narrated one version of the Musadu story that Fisher apparently streamlined into one story. They said there were three *zo*’s or hosts and three chiefs or strangers. “Zo Musakoma” was one of the *zos* and “Fangamma” was one of the chiefs. Unable to unseat Zo Musa from power, Foningama summoned a cleric to swallow Zo Musa’s “juju.” This is fairly similar to the Maniyaka traditions that have been collected in Guinea since that time. The informants went on to say that Foningama presented a sacrifice to Talata Sherif for power to conquer the coast, and that Foningama gave his daughter to Sherif in return. Foningama later had to pay a heavy fine for circumcising boys and girls together.

Judge Tulay narrated the second version of the story. He did not mention Foningama. It seems, as Fisher suggested, that Tulay confused “Zo Musakoma” for “Fangamma.” In this account, Talata helped Zo Musa defeat a rival Kpelle chief. Talata was given a wife in return who bore three sons before he returned home to die. Two years earlier Holsoe’s informant Seku Salifu provided much more information about Talata’s marriage and his three sons.⁸⁰

⁷⁹Fisher 1971:xxi.

⁸⁰App. 5.1.

Soumaoro Kaba

Narrator: M. Kamara Monzon, for some of the data

Recorder: Soumaoro Kaba

Place of Recording: not stated

Date of Recording: 1 April 1970, for Monzon's material

Length: two pages

Number of story elements: 9

Form: French prose

Source: Kaba 1971:64-68.

Soumaoro Kaba outlined how the Maniyaka migrated to Beyla and Konya-Mani in the prelude to his 1971 history about Samori Turé. Part of Kaba's discussion is about the Kamara migrations, and he based some of his material on some of Yves Person's work. Some came from a M. Kamara Monzon who he interviewed in 1970. Kaba also wrote about the clerical clans of Musadu and Konya-Mani, the process of conversion to Islam, and the vegetation and climate factors that helped the Maniyaka become established in this transition zone near the forest. Kaba did not cite the sources for some of his information, and did not write about Zo Musa or the founding of Musadu. Mr. Kaba wrote on the same topic one year earlier, but he supplied the same information in his 1971 memoir and added new material. I thank Professor Moliké Sidibé for letting me examine Soumaoro Kaba's two works. All of the theses from Guinea, except where otherwise indicated, came from Professor Sidibé. Thanks also to Mark Wilson for copying certain pages for Kaba and other theses, and mailing them from Kankan.

Seku Saiyòn

Narrator: Seku Saiyòn

Recorder: Svend E. Holsoe

Place of Recording: Bushrod Island, Monrovia

Date of Recording: 20 July 1970

Length: 84 lines

Number of story elements: 11

Translator: Mamadi Kroma

Form: Concurrent linear translation from Kpelle to Liberian English

Source: The tape is in Indiana University's Archives of Traditional Music (# 28/2/2), and the English translation is in Appendix 5.2.

Seku Saiyòn (Sanoë, Sayon) was a Kpelle-Mandingo speaker from Bopolu Chiefdom in westcentral Liberia. He said that he received his information from his "honorific father" Soko Sirleaf, the well known Paramount Chief of Bopolu Chiefdom who died in 1951. Saiyòn said that three hosts 'start[ed] the Musadu business,' and that three strangers followed them to Musadu. Saiyòn respectively named "Zo Musa" and "Foningama" as one of the hosts and strangers. Saiyòn did not explain how Zo Musa founded Musadu, and did not say anything else about Foningama. He did tell how Zo Musa's 'sheep horns' ate the livestock that the strangers brought to Musadu, and explained how one of the host-clerics, Kamò Sane - summoned Seku Tawalata (Talata Sirleaf) to Musadu. Seku Saiyòn told the familiar story of how Zo Musa's sheep horns were destroyed by swallowing a frog with a 'talisman' (*lizimò*, also *lisimu*) around its neck that a cleric had made. He was

the only speaker to claim that the cleric made a protective *lizimò* for Musadu. Saiyòn also told the common story of how Zo Musa took a cotton tree branch and a piece of a rock from Musadu with him when he went to Zota. He said that a Sirleaf cleric accompanied him to this first Zota. Saiyòn seems to imply that the Sirleaf who went to Zota was the same Sherif who destroyed his sheep horns, but this part of the story is not clear. He then alleged that Zo Musa traveled down into today's modern Liberia without his cleric and conquered the region that became known as Zota.

According to Saiyòn, the most prominent cleric or clerics in the epic were Sirleaf. One can question the high profile that Saiyòn gave to the Sirleaf because of the close relationship that he had with his teacher and honorary father - Soko Sirleaf. Soko Sirleaf either told Saiyòn that his ancestors played these important roles in Musadu's history, or Saiyòn added these names to honor his adoptive family. The first option seems likely, but Saiyòn could have embellished a little as well. Nonetheless, many other sources do assign important roles to Sirleaf clerics in the Musadu story, so there is some merit in the stories that Saiyòn told.

Jigbè Kamara

Narrator: Jigbè Kamara

Recorder: Svend E. Holsoe

Place of Recording: Camp Johnson Road, Monrovia

Date of Recording: July 1970

Length: 263 lines

Number of story elements: 34

Form: Linear translation from Maniyakã to Liberian English

Source: English translation in Appendix 5.3. The tape is in Indiana University's Archives of Traditional Music (# 28/1/1).

Svend Holsoe interviewed Jigbè Kamara during the same month that he interviewed Seku Saiyòn. It is not known if Kamara and Saiyòn knew each other. Although Kamara was often unclear about whom he was speaking, one can identify most of the people by carefully reading the text and comparing his interview with other sources. Jigbè Kamara cast the Musadu epic in the larger context of what happened in ancient Manden. He said that “Mani Kamara Sumalo” or Sumaworo ‘slapped’ the ‘hippo’ or the Mali empire nine times, and traced “Kama” or Foningama’s ancestry back to the time of the empire.

Kamara said that Foningama’s father was Dantuma, and that his mother was Sulun Koroma. Dantuma seems to be Sumaka Kamara of Vase Kamala’s histories. Sulun Koroma is a composite of Fakoli’s wife Kèlèya Konkon and Makula Dama Soba that Tènu Kamã Kamara and other speakers later identified as being ‘Foningama’s mother.’⁸¹

Jigbè said that Foningama and two of his brothers fought his father. His father defeated them and made them become fishermen. Foningama, unhappy with his reduced status, boarded a canoe and traveled upstream to Diemou. Kamara’s story supports other claims that Foningama migrated south because he came into conflict with his father or other members of his family. Kamara said that the people of Diemou kept him in captivity for forty days, but carefully pointed out that Foningama was not a slave. Kamara’s admission that Foningama was captured supports other speakers who claimed that Foningama was

⁸¹App. 7.19.

enslaved for at least a brief period during his life.

According to Kamara, Tumaningèmè Kromah, Filimò Dòle, and Naramisa (Ngana Musa Kromah) accompanied Foningama to Musadu, and that Zo Musa was in Musadu when they arrived. The sources differ about whether the individuals who Kamara identified as being companions of Foningama were ‘hosts’ with Zo Musa or ‘strangers’ with Foningama.

Kamara said that Foningama and his companions ousted Zo Musa from Musadu, and that Zo Musa initially went to Zota. He then told the only version of a story which said that Zo Musa settled in Zota because he made some medicine that helped the chief’s daughter successfully deliver her baby at the end of a difficult pregnancy. Like Seku Saiyòn, Kamara said that Zo Musa preceded down to the town of Fokwèle in modern Liberia, in Zota district.

Jigbè Kamara explained that Foningama buried his son Flansan in a big hole. This is reminiscent of later stories which state that Foningama sacrificed one or more of his sons so he could become more powerful. Kamara also told how Foningama circumcised one hundred boys and one hundred girls in the same area in the ‘grege bush,’ and that he had to sacrifice one thousand items to atone for his wrongdoing. Foningama gave the sacrifice to a man named Gamusa, Gamusa gave it to Lai Sware, and Lai Sware gave it to the citizens of the country who selected Silifu Tata (Talata Sherif) to receive the sacrifice. Talata Sherif, Beyan Dukule, Lai Sware and the first sons of each of the other clans met Foningama in a town that Jigbè did not name. Foningama gave them ripe bananas to eat during their stay. He promised that he would bring banana seeds to them so they could take the seeds back to their homes and plant them. Foningama, however, used the bananas

as a ploy to keep these clerics nearby; he never brought the seeds, and the descendants of these men are still waiting for the seeds. Foningama gave his daughter Ngowo to Silifu Tata in marriage, and she born three sons - two who settled in Liberia.

Jigbè Kamara added some Liberian stories to the Musadu epic that are not found in the Guinean variants: Zo Musa's migration to Zota in Liberia, Foningama's mixed circumcision of boys and girls, and the migration of two of Talata Sherif's sons to Liberia. Some of the traditions that Svend Holsoe and Humphrey Fisher recorded in Liberia also include these themes.⁸² Kamara mentioned standard Guinean stories like the 'sacrifice of one thousand' and the banana episode which many speakers say accounts for the founding of the town of Nionsamoridu near Musadu, but he cast them in a more Liberian context. Of particular interest is the way that Jigbè Kamara incorporated elements of the Sunjata epic into the Musadu epic. Although he apparently mixed up some of the story elements, he understood the general tenor of the Sunjata epic and made similar links between individuals in the two epics that his Guinean counterparts who are more familiar with the Sunjata and Musadu epics made.

El-hajj Camara Yomba

Narrator: El-hajj Camara Tomba

Recorder: Bala Kante

Place of Recording: Mafran?

Date of Recording: c. 1971

Length: 2 paragraphs

⁸²App. 5.1-2; Fisher 1971:ix-x.

Number of story elements: 1

Form: French prose

Source: Kante 1971-72:19.

Bala Kante wrote a history of Kuranko and cited El-Hajj Camara Yomba as a source in his discussion about how the Kamara migrated from the Manden to the Kissidougou area. Kante explained that Yomba Camara was a 75 year old farmer from Mafran. It turns out that Camara's history is nearly identical, and sometimes word to word, to the oral tradition that M. Liurette published in 1908-09.⁸³ This is a clear case of feedback, where one individual learned his story from a written source without mentioning where he got his information. We therefore do not count most of Camara's testimony as contributing to our knowledge of the Musadu epic, except for Camara's comments, which Liurette did not write, that Kònsaba was a 'slave merchant.' Camara also said that Kònsaba was Foningama's 'childhood friend,' not his older brother as most of the other accounts claim.

Ibrahima Kalil Turé

Recorder: Ibrahima Kalil Turé

Place of Recording: not identified

Date of Recording: not identified

Length: four lines of original material

Number of story elements: 4

Form: French prose

⁸³Liurette 1908, App. 4.1.

Source: Turé 1972-73:23,77.

Ibrahima Kalil Turé was a historian who wrote how the French colonized Kerouane. Turé was tragically killed in a recent automobile accident in Guinea. Much of his information about the Kamara migrations to the Kerouane area can be traced to Yves Person, though he only mentioned Person in passing. Important for our purposes is his statement that “Musadu” was a Dole town. He also wrote that the Kamara have a leopard taboo and that the Kamara were ‘the first conquerors of the earth.’

Karin I.S. Weisswange

Recorder: Karin Weisswange?

Place of Recording: Liberia

Length: two sentences

Number of story elements: 5

Form: English prose

Source: Weisswange 1976:8.

In 1976, Karin Weisswange, a missionary-anthropologist, presented a paper about the historical relations between the Loma and Maniyaka at a Liberian Studies Association conference at Indiana University. Much of what she presented in this paper does not appear in her M.A. thesis. Near the end of her paper, directly after she wrote that Yves Person had allowed her to copy the “Fèrè Kama” genealogies that he collected, Weisswange wrote: “Fonigama originally came from Kankan and later went to Misadu

where all his sons grew up. From there, they started to gain their own territories.” Yves Person did not publish the notion that Foningama traveled through Kankan. This could have been noted on one or more of the genealogies that he allowed Weisswange to copy, but Weisswange did not cite him for this claim. It is also possible that Weisswange gathered this information in Liberia.

Daouda Camara

Number of story elements: 1

Date: c. 1979

Form: Genealogical tree

Source: Camara 1979. The genealogy is partly published in Geysbeek/Kamara (1991:62), and is reproduced in Appendix 4.9.

In 1990, Djobba K. Kamara sent me a large genealogy from Monrovia for which I am much appreciative. This genealogy measures 42" x 36," and was authored by Daouda Camara of Damaro. The tree consists of twenty generations of Kamara and dozens of towns that the Kamara inhabited as they migrated from the Manden to Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia. Soumaoro Kaba's statement that Dauda Kamara obtained Dyigiba Kamara's history confirmed my early suspicion that this was based on Dyigiba Kamara's work.⁸⁴ Daouda Camara's genealogy is probably based on information from Dyigiba

⁸⁴Kaba 1971:57. Raymond Silverman explains that a document like this “involves using a photo/light-sensitive paper. Basically, you create a master on a translucent paper. Place the master on top of the photo-sensitive paper. This then goes in a frame that keeps the two sheets from moving, and the frame is taken outside and exposed to direct sunlight. Those areas that have not been covered with the image from the master are ‘bleached’ into white. Those areas that are covered remain blue” (personal communication).

Kamara's book except for the last generation of people who were born after Dyigiba died. Since I have not seen Dyigiba Kamara's manuscript, and I do not precisely know what Daouda took from him. Camara's genealogy should not be considered entirely based on Dyigiba Kamara's genealogy until the latter can be examined. My Guinean colleague, Majôngbè Mammadi Chèjan Kromah, showed me another copy of Daouda's genealogy in N'Zerekore in 1992. These two genealogies and another one hinted as being in Macenta suggest that the genealogy has limited circulation in the region. After listing "Farin Kaman Camara's" ancestors who migrated from Sibi to Siguiri, Mau, and Diemou, the genealogy indicates that Foningama moved to "Moussadougou" and that his sons and descendants traveled to several other lands.

Camara's work is an oral tradition that is recorded in the form of a genealogy. It lists several people and adds a few short statements about what some of the individuals reportedly did. These serve as mnemonic devices for those who want to tell stories about what they believed happened in the past. It is also a living document, like an oral tradition, to the extent that individuals periodically make additions to the genealogy with a pen or pencil; they add the names of towns and people, change birth orders, and clarify what they believe certain people did. The last printed date that appears on the genealogy is 1985. This means that Daouda Camara or someone else in Côte d'Ivoire is probably continuing to update the genealogy, and that new versions of the genealogy have been published in the last decade.

Sumawolo

Recorder: Martin Ford

Place of Recording: Bahn, Liberia

Date of Recording: 1984

Length: c. 1,100 words

Number of story elements: 13

Form: Liberal translation from Konyakā to English

Translator: Faliku Sanoë

Source: English translation in Appendix 6.1

Martin Ford conducted two interviews which delved into the early history of Musadu during the course of his dissertation research on the Maniyaka and Dã (Gio) in Nimba County, Liberia. The first speaker was Sumawolo who moved from Musadu to Liberia in 1962. Sumawolo narrated how “Misa’s” talisman ate babies, and how the Maniyaka summoned a famous cleric to destroy the talisman. He also told how “Foninkama” traveled through Gbè to Musadu with Karamo Sayon. In a variation from most other accounts, Sumawolo explained that one of his ancestors asked a great Sherif cleric to help Sayon (rather than Foningama) have children, and that Sayon later founded the town of Kabadu after Sherif told him to follow a deer and settle where the deer stopped. Sherif later married Sumawolo’s daughter and had children. The speaker concluded by stating that Foningama had many children after he made an important sacrifice, and that he left his children in Musadu.

Matènè Lanse Moligbè Kromah

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek, with Makula Mammadi Kromah

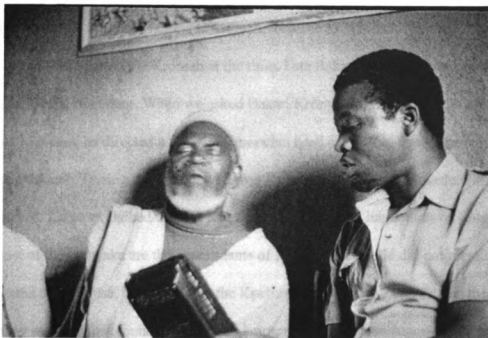


Figure 14 Mammadi Kromah interviewing Matènè Lanse Moligbè Kromah, Macenta, 1986⁸⁵

Place of Recording: Macenta, Guinea

Date of Recording: 27 August 1984

Length: 33 lines

Number of story elements: 3

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcriber: Kèlèti Fofana

Translators: Boakai Yamah, with Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation of portions of his narrative are in Appendix 2.2 and Appendix 7.2.

⁸⁵All photographs reproduced in this dissertation were taken by the author unless indicated otherwise.

This interview was recorded during my first visit to Guinea. My neighbor and soccer team mate in Monrovia, Makula Mammadi Kromah, took me to Macenta. We stayed in the house of the clan head of the Kromah at the time, Fata Bakari Kromah, and were accorded special treatment. When we asked Bakari Kromah to tell us how his ancestors founded Macenta, he directed us to the former clan head of the Kromah - Matènè Lanse Moligbè Kromah. During the interview, Lanse Kromah talked about Musadu without being asked. Lanse explained that the Kpelle were the original inhabitants of Musadu, and that most of the Konyaka are the descendants of Kpelle women. He did not mention Foningama or Zo Musa, but stated that the Kpelle were driven to Zota. Zota is the town that many say Zo Musa founded. Kromah's impromptu discussion suggests that Musadu is recognized as an important town even among those who are not from Konya-Mani or to those whose immediate descendants do not hail from there.

Kromah

Recorder: Jomah Kamara, with Mark Wilson, Jerry Swank and Jerry Tamba

Place of Recording: Boola, Guinea

Date of Recording: 21 March 1985

Length: 34 lines

Number of story elements: 15

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcriber: Ansu Cissé

Translator: Faliku Sanoe, with Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation in Appendix 7.3

Jomah Kamara conducted the next two interviews. Jomah was a broadcaster who, with Djobba Kamara, co-produced the “Mandingo” programs at Radio ELWA that SIM managed. Broadcasters made regular trips to the areas where their programs were targeted. They recorded and broadcast music, sermons, special events, greetings, and announcements of births, marriages, matriculations and deaths.

Jomah and Djobba made several trips into different parts of Liberia and Guinea during the 1980s. On one occasion in November 1984, Djobba visited Nionsamoridu and recorded an oral tradition which he later aired over the radio. Djobba also visited Musadu at that time, and some town elders narrated some history to him. Unfortunately, Djobba did not record this session. He was running low on batteries and assumed that I would someday go to Musadu and do my own recording. I had arrived in Monrovia almost one year earlier, and had asked both of the Kamara to record oral traditions when they had a chance, and to air some of them on the radio. Jomah and Djobba agreed that stories about the past would resonate well with their listeners.

Jomah accompanied John Tamba and SIM missionaries Mark Wilson and Jerry Swank on a trip to Guinea in March 1985, and planned to travel from N’Zerekore to Kankan by land. Jomah recorded his first narrative history in Boola. No direct information is available about the speaker or the interview situation other than that the speaker’s name was “Kromah.” Given that Jomah was well known throughout the sub-region, one can suspect that several people of all ages and both genders were present.

The portion relevant for this study concerns the speaker’s story about his Kromah ancestors migration from Manden to Boola. According to the speaker, Mèyemuu Kromah was forced to leave “Misadu” and “Koyya” because he refused to disassociate himself

from the 'zo business.' Mèyemuu's descendants became known as "Kpelle-Mènya," a term used for Maniyaka who live among the Kpelle and learn their language. It is possible that Jomah later aired this portion of the interview over the radio, but this is not known with certainty.

Bangali Koesia, Alhaji Kalifa Sanoë, Sumaka Kromah, Unidentified Speaker and Yaya Dole

Recorder: Jomah Kamara, with Mark Wilson, Jerry Swank and John Tamba

Place of Recording: Musadu, Guinea

Date of Recording: 23 March 1985

Length: Koesia - 47 lines, Sanyo - 29 lines, Kromah - 39 lines, Anonymous - 19 lines,

Dole - 37 lines

Number of story elements: Koesia - 9, Sanyo - 2, Kromah - 9, Anonymous - 4, Dole - 5.

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcribers: Boakai Yamah and Amara Cissé

Translators: Boakai Yamah and Amara Cissé, with Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation in Appendix 7.4.

Jomah Kamara and the others traveled from Boola to Musadu. Jomah recorded eighteen minutes of history from the five above named elders. Following Anderson and Bouyssou in 1868 and 1913 respectively, this is only the third known time that oral traditions were recorded in Musadu and made available to people who lived outside Guinea. The ELWA visitors were given a tour of Musadu that included a stop at Kabakòni; some history was

also told there but was not recorded.

Jomah asked how Musadu was founded; all of the answers revolved around Zo Musa. Yaya Dole, who I interviewed a year later, mentioned that Foningama was one of the three ‘strangers’ who moved to Musadu after Zo Musa and the other ‘citizens’ had already been living there. Interviews collected in Musadu are valuable because they tend to provide a more complex picture about what might have happened than those who do not come from the town. For example, whereas Vase Kamala and many others say that one man named Zo Musa Kòma founded Musadu and was later expelled by Foningama and the clerics, Samuka Kromah said that Zo Musa Kòma represented four generations of people: Zo, Zo’s son Misa, Misa’s son Kòma, and Kòma’s son. Kòma’s son was the person who fled from Musadu. This portrays a slower pattern of Maniyaka domination than what most of the other oral traditions provide.

Mammadi Dole

Recorder: Martin Ford

Place of Recording: Bahn, Liberia

Date of Recording: 28 June 1985

Length: c. 900 words

Number of story elements: 20

Form: English prose

Translator: Faliku Sanoe

Source: English translation in Appendix 6.2.

This is the second interview that Martin Ford conducted which deals with Musadu's past. Mammadi Dole was raised in Musadu and later moved to Zontuo, Liberia, where he became a kola trader. Dole only spoke about a "Misa" who founded "Misadu" and was later forced to leave. His discussion is similar to many others, but differs from most accounts in two ways. Dole said that Musa lived with "Foninkama" before he founded Musadu. Tumaningèmè (Kromah) or someone else is always said to have been Zo Musa's co-resident, overseer or slave owner, not Foningama. Dole also said that the 'bad' person who owned the sheep horn that ate children and sheep was Foningama, not Zo Musa. In comparing Dole's account with all others, it is clear that the speaker mistook Foningama for the slave owner in the first instance, and reversed the positions of Zo Musa and Foningama in the second. However, Dole's statement that Zo Musa left his first town of residence because he was afraid of the chief (Foningama in Dole's case) is voiced by a couple of other people and is important when this episode is analyzed and interpreted.

Kèwulèn Kamara

Recorder: Djobba Kamara

Place of Recording: Kuankan, Guinea

Date of Recording: 12 December 1985

Length: 281 lines

Number of story elements: 20

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcriber: Ansu Cissé

Translators: Boakai Yamah, with Ali Kromah and Tim Geysbeek

Source: The English translation is in Appendix 7.5.

Djobba Kamara co-produced the Mandingo Program at ELWA with Jomah Kamara.

When Djobba went to Guinea in late-1985 to record more material, he borrowed SIM missionary Jeff Morton's motorcycle for the trip. He traveled from Voinjama to Macenta, then preceded to Kuankan where he wanted to interview someone who was well versed in history. When he arrived in Kuankan, the people told him that the man who knew the most history was in Macenta. Djobba returned to Macenta to get the speaker and took him back to Kuankan. Kèwulèn Kamara did most of the talking in the interview. Three other people including the chief of Kuankan (who might have been Jala Kamara, one of the people who also spoke during the interview) were present during the interview to, as Djobba said, "ensure that the history that was being narrated was accurate and correct." Djobba conducted the interview after he recorded over an hour of messages from several other people.

Kèwulèn's testimony is informed. He led with a discussion about "Faingama's" migration from Sibi, the birth of his son "Kònsaba" in Gbè, and gave the first of two lengthy stories about how "Swèlè" (Sware), "Dukuwe" (Dukule), Dole and a fourth cleric blessed Foningama's 'sacrifice of one thousand.' Kamara linked this sacrifice with Foningama making the clerics wait for banana seeds. The clerics stayed long enough to found a town that other informants identify as Nionsamoridu. Kamara ended by describing "Zo Misa's" founding of Musadu and the dispersion of Foningama's sons from the town.

Vase Kamala

Narrator: Vase Kamala

Recorders: (#1) not identified, (#2) Djobba K. Kamara, (#7) not identified⁸⁶

Places of Recording: (#1) Monrovia?, (#2) Fombadu, Guinea, (#7) unknown

Dates of Recording: (#1) 1984?, (#2) 21 December 1985, (#7) unknown

Lengths: (#1) 503 lines, (#2) 662 lines, (#7) 664 lines

Total number of story elements: 165

Form: Linear translations in English

Transcriber(s): (#1) none, (#2) Djobba K. Kamara, (#7) Faliku Sanoe and Bangali Kamara

Translators: (#1) Djobba K. Kamara and Miliki Boakai Yamah, with Tim Geysbeek, (#2) Majôngbè Muhammed Chèjan Kromah, with Tim Geysbeek; (#7) Faliku Sanoe and Bangali Kamara, with Tim Geysbeek.

Source: (#1) Published in Geysbeek/Kamara (1994:57-75); (#2) published in Dutch in Geysbeek et. al. (1998:59-81), with the English portion of the Musadu section in Appendix 7.6; (#7) Appendix 7.38.

Two weeks after Djobba Kamara met with Kèwulèn Kamara in Kuankan, he went to Fombadu and interviewed Vase Kamala. I had learned about Vase Kamala in Monrovia earlier in 1985 from my friend Makula Mammadi Kromah who was a cassette tape vendor. Mammadi gave me one of Kamala's taped histories (#1) that he purchased from "Sam," a Lebanese merchant who worked at the Sony store at the junction of Randall and

⁸⁶Hera and below, the number signs (#) represent one of the accounts which were collected that a person narrated or wrote.

Waterside Streets. Djobba made a free translation into English which exposed me to a whole new perspective on Africa's past that has led me to this study. Kamala was a veteran of World War II and a school teacher, and reportedly lived in southwest Côte d'Ivoire for some time. In September 1995, Djobba wrote and said that Vase had died several months earlier.

When Djobba went to Guinea for this recording trip, I asked him to go to Fombadu and record Vase Kamala if he had a chance. On Saturday, December 21, 1985, Djobba departed for Fombadu from N'Zerekore. Djobba and his brother Ansumana arrived in Fombadu at noon on market day. They attracted considerable attention because they entered town on a motorcycle with helmets and backpacks, and because Djobba was a well known radio personality. After informally greeting the people, Djobba and Ansumana went to Fombadu's chief who introduced them to the Sous-Prefect.

The chief then took them to a house where they met Vase Kamala. Djobba had a copy of his English translation of the first market tape and a Superscope Marantz PMB 420 tape recorder that used D size batteries. The interview started at about 2:00 p.m. Djobba learned that Kamala knew his Djobba's late father, and that he listened to Djobba on the radio. Along with being willing to narrate some oral tradition to Djobba, Djobba said that Kamala wanted to correct some errors from Nionsamoridu that had been aired over the radio the previous year. Kamala may have been referring to the trip that Djobba made to Nionsamoridu the previous November. We do not know what the speaker from Nionsamoridu said, and Kamala did not indicate what he tried to correct.

Djobba Kamara interviewed Vase Kamala in Kamala's round dirt house. It was a hot and in the middle of the dry season, so the front and back doors of the house remained

open. Most of the people who were there at the beginning of the interview were children, though some men and women were present. Several others came as the interview progressed. The names of the people who listened to the interview are not known. Kamala's narratives were so patterned that Djobba simultaneously followed Vase's interview and read the translation that he brought with him as Kamala spoke. Djobba interrupted the interview every twenty minutes or so to change the batteries in his tape recorder or ask questions. The interview lasted until about 6:00 p.m. Although Djobba's continuous battery changing broke the flow of the interview, the interruptions are nearly imperceptible on the tape. Also, Vase did not have to backtrack when Djobba restarted the interview after each battery change, as he did after Djobba asked him questions.⁸⁷

Djobba recorded Vase Kamala for a total of two hours and forty-five minutes. Kamala spoke about Sunjata, Musadu and Samori. His whole text measures 3,147 lines. His sections on Sunjata, Musadu and Samori are respectively 1030, 662 and 1463 lines long. Two of Kamala's other sections on Musadu run for 664 (#7) and 503 (#1) lines.

Vase Kamala seems to have been more responsible than any other person to disseminate knowledge about the Musadu epic in southeastern Guinea and surrounding areas. During intermittent periods from 1985-1994, I purchased six more of Vase's traditions on cassette tape. In Monrovia, Amara Cissé purchased a recording in October 1992 which was a copy of the same tape that Mohammed Kromah acquired for me in 1985 (#1). Mohammed Konè found another tape in Monrovia in February 1993 (#5), and Djobba's brother Bangali located another one in Monrovia on February 16, 1994 (#8). I purchased one tape in Macenta on October 31, 1990 (#3), and two more tapes in the main

⁸⁷Djobba Kamara, personal communication, 10 Nov. 1999.

market in N'Zerekore on June 23, 1992 (#4). The two N'Zerekore tapes were copies of the same recording. On December 7, 1993, I bought a tape (#7) in Diakolidu from a man near the main mosque who had two boxes of sermons. There is some question about whether or not this is the same Vase. This is discussed in the introduction in Appendix 7.38.

The first, second and seventh interviews were translated most carefully, so these are the histories that are cited most frequently.⁸⁸ Vase Kamara's histories are important because they are one of the most systematic and detailed in southeastern Guinea. His first, second and seventh interviews also represent three of the nine longest oral traditions of Musadu that have been recorded (Figure 10). His first tradition alone has 165 of the 231 episodes in the Musadu epic. Wata Mammadi Kamara's story, which ranks second at 109, is heavily influenced by Vase.⁸⁹

Vase Kamala's recitations follow a similar pattern, although he occasionally made some changes. Along with narrating comprehensive stories about the Kamara migrations, the founding of Musadu, and Foningama's presence in Musadu after Zo Musa, Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara were the only ones who talked about Kònsaba, the Kanè, and the Baayo in Koro and Mau. Kamala's familiarity with these stories may be partly explained by the fact that he lived in Côte d'Ivoire for some time, and that Fombadu is closer to the Guinea-Côte d'Ivoire border than any of the people whom I interviewed.

At least until the mid-1990s, Vase Kamara's oral traditions were the most

⁸⁸Djobba Kamara's 1985 interview with Vase Kamala that appears in Appendix 7.6 is the one that is cited most frequently. In many cases, much of the information for which Appendix 7.6 is cited is also in Appendix 7.38 and in Geysbeek and Kamara (1994).

⁸⁹App. 7.37.

widespread in the region because they were such popular items for sale in southwest Guinea's major markets. This relative abundance of tapes circulating in the sub-region is bound to generate feedback as others incorporate some of Vase's stories into their own renditions of the past. One example is evidenced in the Wata Mammadi Kamara tape that I purchased in Monrovia. Wata Mammadi Kamara is from the Kuankan area, some fifty miles west of Fombadu. Wata Mammadi's Musadu account is similar in many respects to Kamala's with regard to the mode of presentation and content. The significant difference between the two is a one hundred plus line story about Foningama's 'sacrifice of one thousand' that Wata Mammadi Kamara narrated that seems to be unique to the Kuankan area.

Being literate, Vase might have owned or at least had access to two books which were readily available in the bookstores and market places of eastern Guinea during the 1980s and early-1990s: D.T. Niane's *Soundiata, ou l'Epopée Mandingue* and Yves Person's *Samori: La Renaissance de l'Empire Mandingue*.⁹⁰ Other written materials that I saw in people's homes which Kamala may have read were some of Yves Person's publications to the works of Guinean scholars, teachers and students.⁹¹ Kamala likely incorporated some of the material from these books and articles into his oral traditions. Such feedback would have mostly effected his Sunjata and Samori accounts; this is partly evidenced by the fact that they are about twice as long as the Musadu portion. Most of Kamala's information about the Musadu epic probably derives from oral sources, although he likely acquired some of his information from written sources like the

⁹⁰Niane 1960; Person 1976.

⁹¹E.g., Person 1968a; 1968b; 1975.

‘Monograph of Beyla’ and Daouda Camara’s genealogy.⁹²

Fofin Sumawolo

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek and Majòngbè Muhammed Chèjan Kromah

Place of Recording: Siatulò (Lansedu?), Guinea

Date of Recording: 12, 23 March 1986

Length: 121 and 125 lines; 246 total lines

Total number of story elements: 24

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcribers: Boakai Yamah, with Amara Cissé

Translators: Boakai Yamah and Amara Cissé, with Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation in Appendices 7.7a-b.

In 1986, Majòngbè Mohamed Chèjan Kromah took me to Guinea where we visited his family. Chèjan wanted to see his father, mother and in-laws, and I hoped to at least visit Musadu and perhaps make a recording. While journeying to Watafélédu and then to Mamolodu where Chèjan’s father Mustafa lived, we stopped in Siatulò and interviewed Fofin Sumaworo. We talked to Mr. Sumawolo again several days after we returned to Mamolodu and finally found Chèjan’s father. Fofin Sumawolo was a regionally acknowledged student of history, and enthusiastically spoke about Musadu and other topics. Fofin touched on all of the major aspects of the Musadu epic except for the visits of the Kanè and Baayo clerics to Kònsaba inGbè. Also, Fofin was the only other

⁹²App. 4.8; App. 4.9.

informant, beside the Sumawolo who Martin Ford interviewed, who told how a Sanoe founded the town of "Kavaladu." Fofin Sumawolo died in the late-1990s.⁹³

Amara Kamara

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek and Majôngbè Muhammed Chèjan Kromah

Place of Recording: Damaro, Guinea

Date of Recording: 18 March 1986

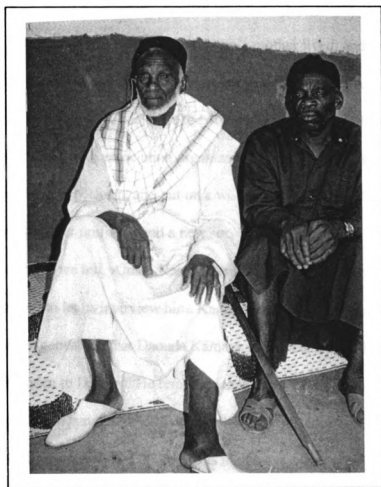


Figure 15 Amara Kamara on the left, Damaro, 1986

⁹³Mohammed Chèjan Kromah, personal communication, 21 July 1999.

Length: 68 lines

Number of story elements: 3

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcriber: Ansu Cissé

Translators: Ali Kromah, with Boakai Yamah and Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation in Appendix 7.9.

After Mohammed Chèjan Kromah and I spoke with Fofin Sumaworo, we traveled up to Sumandu. We first went to Manabili where Chèjan's mother lived, and preceded by foot to Damaro where we stayed for one week. We were given a house to reside in, more food than we could eat in one month, and tours to two nearby waterfalls and a deep underground cave. The youth association organized a soccer game in our honor, brought a *jèli* from another town to perform, and put on a western-style dance. We gave the youth association a set of soccer uniforms and a new soccer ball.

On the day that we left, Amara Kamara, the chief of the town and *jamanti* of Sumandu, consented to let us interview him. Kamara narrated a genealogy of his clan which replicates the genealogy that Daouda Kamara published, and told how the Kamara migrated from Manden to Damaro. He remarked that I was 'troublesome' when I asked if Musadu was older than Damaro. When I went to Kankan in December 1993, I was informed that Mr. Kamara had died the previous month.

Yaya Dole

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek, Mustafa Kromah, and Majòngbè Mammadi Chèjan Kromah

Place of Recording: Musadu, Guinea

Date of Recording: 24 March 1986

Length: 222 lines

Number of story elements: 17

Form: Linear translation in into English

Transcriber: Faliku Sanoe

Translators: Faliku Sanoe, with Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation in Appendix 7.8.

Mohammed Chèjan Kromah and I returned to Mamolodu after we left Damaro. Chèjan's father entered town while we were there, and agreed to take us to Musadu. On our way to Musadu, we stopped at Siatulò and recorded our second interview with Fofin Sumaworo. In Diakolidu, two people told us that no one would grant us an interview in Musadu. Chèjan's father Mustafa Kromah, however, was a well known hunter-herbalist who knew many people. We arrived just before the early afternoon prayers, and were soon greeted by Yaya Dole. Yaya Dole was the chief of Musadu from 1958-1962, and was one of the last remaining grandsons of the famous chief Vain Dole whom Benjamin Anderson met in Musadu in 1868 and 1874. After Yaya's wife Mèsi Sanoe served us a most welcomed meal of rice and chicken, Yaya talked about Musadu's past. He then gave us a tour of Musadu and took us to Doofatini (Figure 41). Doofatini is the rocky and slightly wooded area where Zo Musa allegedly scarified his followers and formed the Poro society. Yaya Dole died at the age of eighty in 1991. Although I never saw Dole after this visit, his family graciously hosted me when I returned to Musadu in 1992 and 1993.

Yaya Dole was one of the five elders whom Jomah Kamara interviewed the previous March. In the crowded setting of the group interview, Yaya only spoke for about three minutes. When we interviewed him one year later, no men were present except for Chèjan, his father and myself. This setting was much more conducive for an interview, and he talked for nearly one hour. Yaya elaborated on the same things he spoke of the year before with regards to “Zo Misa’s” founding of “Misadu.” He also spoke of Zo Musa’s trip to Zota, and explained how his Dole ancestors migrated to Konya-Mani. Yaya talked about the rock that Foningama’s son was buried under, and showed us the rock when he gave us a tour of the town. This seems to be the same rock that Father

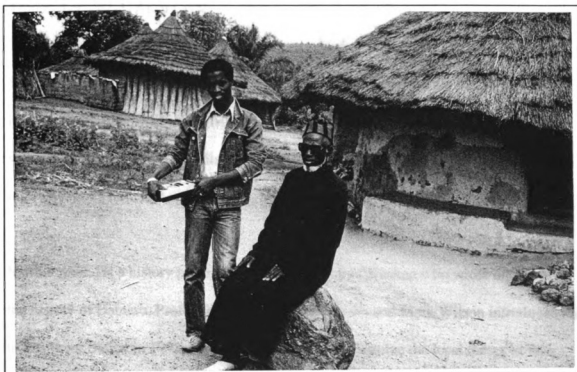


Figure 16 Yaya Dole with Mohammed Chèjan Kromah, Musadu, 1986

Bouyssou said was the tombstone of Foningama’s daughter Mayāmoi. Yaya also explained that the Kamara are not allowed to permanently live in Musadu because they

once broke an oath that they had made with the Dole.

Moliké Sidibé

Recorders: (#1) Moliké Sidibé, (#2-3) Tim Geysbeek and Toligbè Braima Kamara

Place of Recording: (#1) University of Kankan, (#2-3) Kankan, Guinea

Date of Recording: (#1) 1989, (#2-3) 1 December 1993

Length: (#1) c. 240 words, (#2) 426 lines, (#3) 180 lines

Total number of story elements: 57

Form: (#1) French prose, (#2-3) Linear translation in English from Sumandukã

Transcriber: (#2-3) Ansu Cissé

Translators: (#2-3) Faliku Sanoe, with Tim Geysbeek

Sources: (#1) Sidibé 1989, an excerpt is in Appendix 4.10. (#2) Most of Sidibé's first interview was published in English in Sidibé (1997). A short part of this interview that was not published is in Appendix 7.32. (#3) The relevant part of Sidibé's second interview in 1993 is in Appendix 7.33.

Moliké Sidibé is a history professor at the University of Kankan who wrote his thesis on the history of Damaro. Professor Joel Maxim Millimono and Mark Wilson introduced me to Professor Sidibé in 1993. Both men allowed me to examine the local theses in their libraries. They also arranged interviews and introduced me to their families and colleagues at the university. Professor Sidibé's mother is a Kamara from Damaro.

All of the Kamara, like Professor Sidibé, claim that the founders of Damaro were descendants of "Foninkaman's" son Fanyala. Sidibé also wrote about the sacred Kamara

horn that Foningama's father gave to Fanyala before he died, the plot that Foningama thwarted before he reached "Moussadou," and Foningama's ascendance to the chieftaincy of Musadu after he helped "Toumani Kourouma" defend the town against Kònsaba. Professor Sidibé provided much more detail about these points when we interviewed him in 1993. In the interviews, Sidibé also spoke about the execution of Foningama's sons, Islam and Manden traditional religion, and all of the Zo Musa related episodes except for the founding of Musadu. Moliké Sidibé's history of Musadu in his first interview was

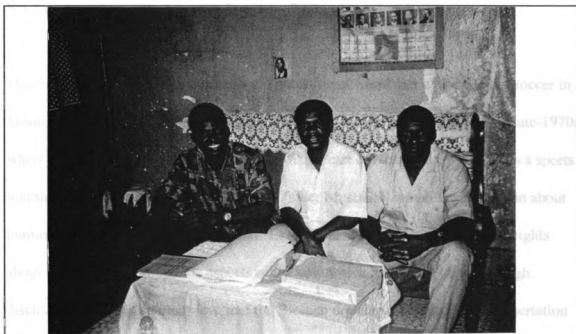


Figure 17 Professors Moliké Sidibé, Joel Millimono and a friend, Kankan, 1993

published because it is one of the most crisp, detailed, rich and lengthy accounts of Musadu's early history. Moliké also consulted Dyigiba Kamara's unpublished manuscript, so some of his information in his narrative is based on his reading of Dyigiba Kamara's work and perhaps even Daouda Camara's 1979 genealogy. This is certainly true of Sidibé's recounting of the Kamara ancestors who left the Manden.

Majòngbè Mohamed Chèjan Kromah

Recorder: (#1) 1990 letter; (#2) interview by Tim Geysbeek in 1992

Place of Recording: (#1) Monrovia, (#2) Macenta and N'Zerekore, Guinea

Date of Recording: (#1) 12 February 1990, (#2) 2, 23 & 28 July 1992

Length: (#1) 1½ pages, (#2) 14 pages

Number of story elements: 26

Form: (#1) English prose, (#2) Interview format

Sources: (#1) Appendix 8.2, (#2) Appendix 7.17

Majòngbè Mohamed Chèjan Kromah is a good friend who I met while playing soccer in Monrovia in 1984. Chèjan was raised in Guinea but moved to Monrovia in the late-1970s where he painted billboards for the London firm Pearl & Dean and freelanced as a sports journalist for a French magazine. Chèjan's father Mustafa Kromah taught Chèjan about hunting and herbalism during his youth. This provided Chèjan with valuable insights about many of the non-Islamic aspects of the epic which he relayed to me through discussions, a letter, an interview, and the Bic-pen drawings included in the dissertation (Figures 26-28). I was fortunate to travel to Konya-Mani and Sumandu with Chèjan in 1986, and visit Musadu with his father. Chèjan also had the advantage of having heard some things about Musadu's history when he grew up, and being present when we interviewed Yaya Dole. The letter he wrote to me in 1990 was in response to some questions that I wrote.⁹⁴ Though I do not have a copy of the letter that I wrote to Chèjan, the questions are self evident by reading his answers. Most of what he wrote in 1990

⁹⁴App. 8.2.

concerns “Foningaman.” Most of the subject matter in the 1992 interview relates to the non-Muslim aspects of the story, the relationships that sorcerers form with clerics, and his recollection of some of the things that Yaya Dole told us in 1986 that I did not record at that time.

Fata Bakari Kromah

Recorders: (#1) Tim Geysbeek and Makula Mammadi Kromah, (#2) Tim Geysbeek and Boakai Yamah

Place of Recording: (#1-2) Macenta, Guinea

Date of Recording: (#1) 28 October 1990, (#2) 20 June 1992

Length: (#1) 194 lines, (#2) 181 lines

Total number of story elements: 11

Form: Linear translations in English

Transcribers: (#1) Ansu Cissé, (#2) Adama Talawole

Translators: (#1) Faliku Sanoe, with Boakai Yamah and Tim Geysbeek, (#2) Boakai Yamah, with Tim Geysbeek

Sources: (#1) Appendix 7.10, (#2) Appendix 7.25

Fata Bakari Kromah was one of the last living grandsons of the mid-nineteenth century founder of modern-day Macenta, Sonindènè (Soni Tènè) Bakari Kromah. His father was Maniyaka and his mother was Loma, so he provided keen insights into the cultures and histories of both peoples. Fata Bakari became my stranger father when I went to Macenta in August 1984 with Makula Mammadi Kromah. Makula Mammadi, in fact, named me

after Sonindènè Bakari, so the Maniyaka called me Bakari or Bakariwulèn ('light-skinned Bakari'). Fata Bakari was the *kabila kundi* or 'clan leader' of the Kromah. His generosity and that of his wives - Macèmè Kamara, the late Mafatuma, and the late Mamè Kamara - were more than what I expected or deserved. My return visit to Macenta four months later with my wife Tami and our then sixteen month old son Jamie helped solidify this relationship. I interviewed Fata Bakari during our second visit, but it was not until I returned to Macenta in 1990 and 1992 that I asked about Musadu and related matters.

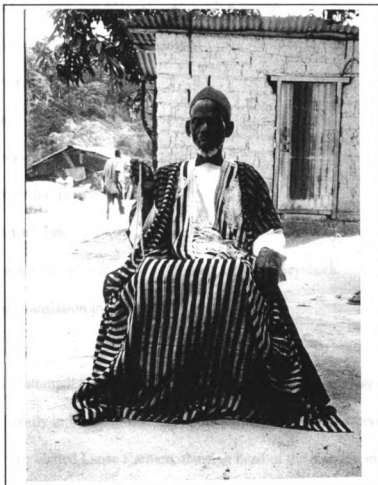


Figure 18 Fata Bakari Kromah, Macenta, 1990

Fata Bakari said that he did not know much about Musadu in the second interview, so he

said little. Part of this interview is included in Appendix 7.10 because of his lengthy discussion about the Kòma and Nyana esoteric societies, and his talk about Zo Musa. In 1992, he explained how Foningama acquired the Kromah's leopard taboo, and discussed the nature of Foningama's famous 'sacrifice of one thousand.' Fata Bakari unexpectedly passed away on February 18, 1999 at the age of eighty-seven.⁹⁵

Lanse Kamara

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek and Makula Mammadi Kromah

Place of Recording: Douama-Sobala, Guinea

Date of Recording: 29 October 1990

Length: 97 lines

Number of story elements: 10

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcriber: Ansu Cissé

Translators: Faliku Sanoe, with Boakai Yamah and Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation in Appendix 7.11.

When Makula Mammadi Kromah and I departed from Macenta one day to visit his second wife's family in Douama-Sobala, I took the opportunity to interview some of the town's elders. We visited Lanse Kamara, the clan head of the Kamara in Douama-Sobala. Mr. Kamara was well informed about the problems associated with the Kamara in-fighting in Manden, Foningama's journey to "Misadu," and the migration of the Kamara

⁹⁵Mark Wilson e-mail, 5 March 1999; Geysbeek 1999.

from Musadu to the forest, but did not know anything about Zo Musa or Foningama's 'brother' Kònsaba.

Fata Moussa Kièlè (Kuyateh)

Recorder: (#1-2) Tim Geysbeek and Makula Mammadi Kromah

Place of Recording: Douama-Sobala, Guinea

Date of Recording: (#1) 29 October 1990, (#2) 12 July 1992

Length: (#1) 89 lines, (#2) 494 lines

Total number of story elements: 19

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcribers: (#1) Ansu Cissé, (#2) Kèlèti Fofana

Translators: (#1) Ali Kromah, with Boakai Yamah and Tim Geysbeek, (#2) Boakai Yamah, with Faliku Sanoe and Tim Geysbeek

Sources: (#1) Appendix 7.12, (#2) Appendix 7.21

We interviewed Fata Musa Kièlè early in the evening after we spoke to Lanse Kamara. The Kièlè are the *jèli* of the Kamara in Douama-Sobala. Fata Musa's father Minata Musa Kièlè was the only other *jèli* whom I recorded in Guinea. The information that the Kièlè presented was not particularly better than many other testimonies that we collected from speakers who were not bards. Fata Musa narrated a good account about the troubles of the Kamara in the Manden. His narrative about the Kamara's migration to "Misadu" is similar to Lanse Kamara's. Fata Musa, like Lanse, did not know how "Zo Misa" founded Musadu, but did say that Foningama 'made him [Zo Musa] pray.' Lanse Kièlè and Fata

Musa Kièlè both claimed that “Foni” in Foningama’s name came after the Fulbe hid him in *fonio* to avoid being captured by his brothers who chased him from the Manden. Fata

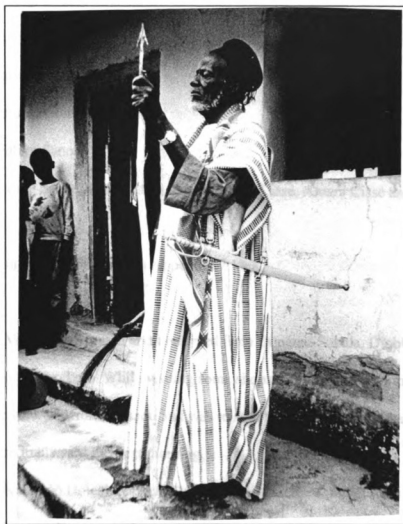


Figure 19 Minata Musa Kièlè, with his staff, fly whisk and sword, Douama-Sobala, 1992

Moussa died in the late-1990s.⁹⁶

⁹⁶Majongbè Mohammed Chèjan Kromah, personal communication, 6 Feb. 1999.

Alhaji “Banabulu” Kalamoo Dole

Recorder: Djobba K. Kamara

Place of Recording: N’Zerekore, Guinea

Date of Recording: 8 November 1990

Length: 204 lines

Number of story elements:

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcriber: Faliku Sanoe

Translators: Faliku Sanoe, with Boakai Yamah, Ansu Cissé, Amara Cissé and Tim Geysbeek

Source: The English translation is in Appendix 7.13.

After Makula Mammadi Kromah and I returned from Douama-Sobala, Djobba Kamara and I traveled to N’Zerekore. While visiting some shops near the market, I met Alhaji Kalamòò Dole who was from Musadu and was related to Yaya Dole. Djobba Kamara interviewed him in his yard the next morning.

Alhaji Kalamòò Dole, like Yaya Dole, claimed that the Kamara were expelled from Musadu because Foningama broke the oath that the Kamara had made with the Dole. Alhaji Kalamòò also told a little repeated story about Foningama giving his sister to the Musaduka only after agreeing to build two wells that remained full during the dry season. He said that “Musa” lived with the Kromah in the town of Dolela before he founded Musadu. Dolela was so named in honor of the Dole ancestor after Foningama stated that the Kromah should be chief. Even though the speaker probably

overemphasized the role of his clan, another informant narrated the same story (Chapter 3). Other traditions indicate that there might have been a significant Dole presence in Konya-Mani before Foningama moved to the area (Chapter 4). Alhaji Kalamòò also told a unique story about one lineage of the Sanoe who broke away from their family in Gbana to settle in Musadu's wooden fence enclosure. The oral traditions consistently say that the Sanoe lived in Gbana.

Alhaji Briama Kromah

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek, Djobba K. Kamara and Mammadi "Oppong" Sanoe

Place of Recording: Diakolidu, Guinea

Date of Recording: 9 November 1990

Length: 268 lines

Number of story elements: 29

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcriber: Ansu Cissé

Translators: Boakai Yahah, with Ali Kromah and Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation in Appendix 7.14

While Djobba Kamara and I were in N'Zerekore, we met Faliku Sanoe, the person who helped Martin Ford conduct his research in Liberia a few years earlier.⁹⁷ Faliku Sanoe became one of my assistants in 1993 and 1994 after I returned to Monrovia. As Djobba Kamara and I were passing through Diakolidu on our way to Kankan, Sanoe gave us a

⁹⁷Ford 1990:viii.

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letter of introduction to his family and younger brother Mammadi “Oppong.”⁹⁸ Faliku’s family treated us very well, and Mammadi introduced us to Alhaji Braima when we asked if he knew anyone who could provide some history. Alhaji Braima told us about “Foningama’s” conflict with Kònsaba in Gbè, the Kromah migrations from Manden to Konya-Mani, the eating of children and dogs by “Zo Masa’s” ‘bad medicine.’ Zo Musa’s scarification of people near Dagbanò, and Zo Musa’s journey to Zota after Foningama forced him out of Musadu.

Soko Konè

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek and Makula Mammadi Kromah

Place of Recording: Macenta, Guinea

Date of Recording: 28 June 1992

Length: 90 lines

Number of story elements: 7

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcriber: Ansu Cissé

Translators: Boakai Yamah, with Ali Kromah and Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation in Appendix 7.15.

In the summer of 1992, I traveled from Miango (near Jos), Nigeria to Guinea to do some translation work with David Conrad. We stayed with the ever-generous SIM family Jeff

⁹⁸Mammadi Sanoe got his nickname from the famed Liberian soccer player George Weah who has played for teams in Paris, Milan and other cities in Europe. FIFA named Weah the World Football Player of the Year in 1995 (“Oppong Escapes Again” 2001; “George Weah” 2002).

and Debbie Morton on the outskirts of Macenta. We worked in two spacious rooms that my stranger father, Bakari Kromah, provided in the center of Macenta in Mammadi Cinq quarter. During the evenings and on the weekends, I attempted to interview as many people as possible. Djobba Kamara also lived in Macenta at the time and helped us translate. I therefore met many good informants because of my connections with the Kromah and Kamara.

I first interviewed Soko Konè, Gbendu Konè's 'older brother.' Gbendu was Makula Mammadi Kromah's first wife and a good friend of my wife Tami. Gbendu had named my wife Gbendu after they met in Monrovia nearly ten years earlier. Soko gave a good general summary of the Kamara migrations to "Misadu," the 'division' of Foningama's sons that his "Konè" ancestor did not attend, the dispersion of Foningama's sons to several areas after they left Musadu, and a short account of how "Zo Masa Kòma" used to 'eat people' in Musadu.

Layi Kèwulèn Kamara

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek and Boakai Yamah

Place of Recording: Macenta, Guinea

Date of Recording: 28 June 1992

Length: 945 lines

Number of story elements: 32

Form: Linear translation in English

Translator: Adama Talawole, with Boakai Yamah and Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation in Appendix 7.16.

One day, as we were translating in Fata Bakari's house, one of David Conrad's assistants, Jala Kamara, started to talk about Foningama. When I asked Jala if I could interview him, he said that he learned everything that he knew from his father, Layi Kèwulèn. When Boakai Yamah and I went to Layi Kèwulèn's house after Jala arranged an interview, we realized that I had met Kèwulèn eight years before in Safekoydu when Makula Mammadi Kromah first took me to Macenta. Kamara narrated one of the richest traditions that I collected. He spoke at length on all of the major portions of epic except for Kanè and Baayo's journey to Kònsaba in Gbè. Most noted is his detailed history of the Kamara in the Manden, and accounts of how the "Jomani" got their name and leopard taboo. Because Kamara lives along the trail that the Kamara took after they left Musadu, he knew more about the Kamara who lived west of the Fon-Going Mountains than those who lived in Konya-Mani. Kamara associated Foningama's offering of his famous sacrifice to the Sherif who helped his sons conquer the land that stretches from Konya-Mani to the ocean. This is the same view that Humphrey Fisher's informants gave a quarter-century earlier in Liberia.⁹⁹

Boakai Yamah

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek, with David C. Conrad

Place of Recording: Macenta, Guinea

Date of Recording: 2,6,16 July 1992

Length: 7 pages

Number of story elements: 2

⁹⁹Fisher 1971:ix-x.

Form: Interview in English

Source: English transcript in Appendix 7.17

Boakai Yamah was one of the men who helped David Conrad and I translate in Macenta in the summer of 1992. During this time, I interviewed Boakai three times. Most of Boakai's knowledge about the Musadu epic was from the work he helped us do. Yamah, however, had heard bits-and-pieces about Musadu and Foningama when he grew up in the Bandi-Mandingo area of Kolahun, and through the popular singer Blama Fofana.¹⁰⁰ Most of Yamah's discussion concerned his understanding of initiation societies, sorcery, and the relationship between Mande traditional religion and Islam.

Mammadi Kènè

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek and Djobba K. Kamara

Place of Recording: Macenta, Guinea

Date of Recording: 2 & 23 July 1992

Length: 675 lines

Number of story elements: 38 episodes

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcriber: Kèlèti Fofana

Translators: Ali Kromah, with Faliku Sanoe, Boakai Yamah and Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation in Appendix 7.18.

¹⁰⁰App. 9.1.

Mammadi Kènè (Kanè) was another person who narrated an exceptional history. His, like Lanse Kèwulèn Kamara's, did not include nearly as many episodes as Vase Kamala or other speakers, but his narrative is longer than any of Vase Kamala's and he provided much information about the topics that he discussed. He was not in good health when he spoke to us, and died about one year later. According to Djobba Kamara, Kènè was known in the area for his knowledge of history; Soko Konè spoke highly of Kènè's knowledge of the past during our interview with him the previous week.¹⁰¹

Mammadi Kènè was conversant with many of the key stories about the Kamara and Kromah, and gave his own clan a central place in the events that unfolded around "Zo Misa Kòma" and "Fèningama." Kènè talked about the relationship between Fakoli's daughter Dama and their son Foningama, the adversarial relationship between Foningama and his brother Kònsaba, and the drama that unfolded when Foningama replaced Fakoli as the chief of "Misadu." According to Mammadi Kènè, his ancestor was the main cleric who destroyed "Zo Misa Kòma's" talisman, blessed Foningama's 'sacrifice of one thousand,' and married Foningama's daughter "Nyamoi." The next speaker, Tènu Kamã Kamara, elaborated on Dama's link between Foningama and the Kromah. Many other speakers also accord a central role to the Kanè in the epic.

Tènu Kamã Kamara

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek and Djobba Kamara

Place of Recording: Macenta, Guinea

Date of Recording: 3,4 July 1992

¹⁰¹ App. 7.15.

Length: 1476 lines

Number of story elements: 64

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcribers: Boakai Yamah, with Ansu Cissé and Amara Cissé

Translators: Boakai Yamah, with Ansu Cissé, Amara Cissé and Tim Geysbeek

Source: The English translation is in Appendix 7.19.

Our interview with Tènu Kamã Kamara ranks as one of the most extraordinary and original that we recorded. It is the longest oral tradition that we recorded - more than five hundred lines longer than Kèwulèn Kamara's history, and ranks fourth in the number of episodes (Figures 9-10). Tènu Kamã is more qualified than most to tell such a story because he is the chief of all the Kamara who live in Konokòlò, Buse, Koligblama, Koadu, Gboni and neighboring areas west of the Fon-Going Mountains.¹⁰² He is responsible for settling family disputes, representing the Kamara to other clans, and leading important ceremonies over this large area. Many of his functions require a good knowledge of Kamara history. At the conclusion of our second interview, Tènu Kamã brought out the Kamara symbols of authority that he said were transferred to him when he became chief: a horse tail, sword and *saafê*. Because Tènu Kamã is supposed to represent the full range of people and institutions among the Kamara, he must be careful not to alienate strong Muslims, those who remain largely in the sphere of non-Islamic Maniyaka culture, and the populace in between. His account reflects these positions. Because Tènu Kamã is well versed about some of the stories that link the Kamara to Islam, his ancestors

¹⁰²Djobba Kamara, personal communication.

might have been *funé* or bards who specialize in learning about Islam and reciting Muslim themes.

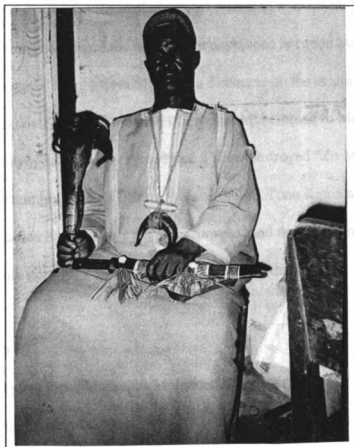


Figure 20 Tènu Kamā Kamara with his fly whisk, sword
and *saafè*, Macenta, 1992

Tènu Kamā Kamara's discussion about the relationship that evolved between the Kromah and Kamara in Manden is comprehensive. Tènu Kamā confirmed the idea, which Mammadi Kènè ventured earlier that day, that the Kamara's link to the Kromah through Makula Dama Kromah was probably much earlier than the time when Foningama moved to Musadu. The relationship between the Kromah and Kamara continued when the two

clans migrated south. New traditions evolved when the Kamara became more dominant than the Kromah in Musadu. Tènu Kamã's explanation of how political power was transformed from the Kromah to Kamara includes the story of how Foningama adapted the Kromah's 'leopard' taboo at the expense of his own clan's 'elephant' taboo. Other noteworthy discussions concerned the schism that developed between Sunjata and "Foningama," Foningama's flight from Sibi, and a discourse on the origin and meaning of "Jomani" that he extended back to the time of Prophet Muhammed in Mecca. Tènu Kamã agreed with previous speakers who claimed that a Kanè destroyed "Zo Misa Kòma's" *saafè*. Similar to Humphry Fisher's informants and others, Tènu Kamã said that Talata "Sefu" (Sherif) married Foningama's daughter Saweka, and that she born three sons which the Kanè ancestor took care of after Talata left Musadu.¹⁰³

Mustafa Kromah

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek and Majòngbè Mohamed Chèjan Kromah

Place of Recording: Macenta, Guinea

Date of Recording: 5 July 1992

Length: 460 lines

Number of story elements: 65

Form: Linear translation in English

Translators: Majòngbè Mammadi Chèjan Kromah, with Boakai Yamah and Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation in Appendix 7.20.

¹⁰³Fisher 1971:ix-x.

Mustafa Kromah was Majòngbè Mohamed Chèjan Kromah's father and the person who took Chèjan and I to Musadu in 1986. Mustafa was not a renown historian like Vase Kamala, Kèwulèn Kamara or Tènu Kamā Kamara.¹⁰⁴ He was, however, a well-known



Figure 21 Mustafa Kromah with his son Mohammed Chèjan Kromah, Mamolodu, 1986

hunter who received some of his training as a hunter and herbalist in Gbè where Kònsaba is said to have tried to kill Foningama, so I thought he might provide some unique insights. Mustafa reiterated some of the information that Yaya Dole narrated in 1986. He said that the Dole were the first people in Konya-Mani and that they founded Musadu, giving undue recognition to the Dole perhaps because of our visit with Yaya Dole six years earlier. Even though Mustafa confused Gbè for Musadu and Kònsaba for Foningama, he edged out Tènu Kamā to rank fifth in the number of episodes with sixty-

¹⁰⁴App. 7.6; App. 7.16; App. 7.19.

five. Of special interest was his claim that “Fengama’s” first son was executed for breaking a law when he cleared a path, and agreement with Soko Konè that the Konè and the Fula were not present for the Musadu division.¹⁰⁵ Mustafa’s lines about the path is faintly similar to testimony that a Loma chief gave during a court case in Voinjama in 1936.¹⁰⁶

Asumana Jabateh

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek and Makula Mammadi Kromah

Place of Recording: Douama-Sobala, Guinea

Date of Recording: 12 July 1992

Length: 381 lines

Number of story elements: 12

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcriber: Adama Talawole

Translators: Adama Talawole, with Boakai Yamah and Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation in Appendix 7.22.

One weekend during the our translation project in Macenta, Makula Mammadi Kromah and I visited Mammadi’s in-laws in Douama-Sobala. We interviewed three people in one day, the first being a follow-up interview with Fata Musa Kièlè mentioned above.¹⁰⁷ We next visited Ansumana Jabateh who was the chief of the old men in town and clan head

¹⁰⁵ App. 7.15.

¹⁰⁶ “Investigation and Decision...” 1936, App. 1.

¹⁰⁷ App. 7.21.

of the Jabateh and Traoré. Jabateh did not know about Zo Musa or Kònsaba, but was conversant with “Foningama.” He was the only speaker also who said that “Fòni” was added to Kama because he (Kama or Foningama) could harvest *fonio* quickly. He was also the only person who talked about Foningama’s blind, limp and deaf sons, and related the conversion of Foningama and his sons to Islam and the origin of “Jomani.”

Mammadi Konè

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek and Makula Mammadi Kromah

Place of Recording: Douama-Sobala, Guinea

Date of Recording: 12 July 1992

Length: 337 lines

Number of story elements: 9

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcriber: Kèlèti Fofana

Translators: Boakai Yamah, with Faliku Sanoe and Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation in Appendix 7.23.

The last person we interviewed on July 12, 1992, was Mammadi Konè. Despite the fact that we arrived just before supper time and Mr. Konè wanted to eat, he provided some unique information. This concerned the circumcision of men and women in a hyena hole, an initiation society called the Nyana that the Fulbe and Maniyaka controlled, and the passing of the control of Nyana from the Maniyaka to the Loma. Konè also provided the only Maniyaka account of how God created the Manden.

Alhaji Umar Komara

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek and Makula Mammadi Kromah

Place of Recording: Lassaou-Queglama, Guinea

Date of Recording: 19 July 1992

Length: 27 lines

Number of story elements: 7

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcriber: Adama Talawole

Translators: Boakai Yamah, with Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation in Appendix 7.24.

One weekend after Makula Mammadi and I went to Douama-Sobala, we traveled to Lassaou to visit the man who hosted my wife, son and myself eight years earlier. One man who we wanted to interview (Bolon Mori Kamara) was not in town, so Mammadi introduced me to Layi Umar Komara. In addition to providing an oral tradition about the Komara (Komala) which I did not have, Alhaji Umar spoke briefly about the taboo of the Kamara being the leopard.

Jèkè Kamara

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek and

Place of Recording: Daro, Guinea

Date of Recording: 23 July 1992

Length: 87 lines

Number of story elements: 6

Form: Linear translation in English

Translator(s): Adama Talawole and Boakai Yamah, with Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation is in Appendix 7.26.

One side-topic related to Foningama that I researched in Guinea was a ‘war’ that the Loma and Maniya allegedly fought against the “Wònò” or “Kònò” who lived in the area that encompass the current towns of Macenta and Voinjama.¹⁰⁸ Adama Talawole, one of our translation assistants, said that Jèkè Kamara from Daro had told him about the Kònò, so we boarded a taxi one afternoon and went to Daro. In addition to telling us about the Kònò, Jèkè said that he was a descendant of Foningama’s son “Fanyala.” Jèkè gave the “Sèlefù” or Sherif a prominent clerical role in the epic. He said that a Sherif helped “Foningama” defeat “Misa,” and that Foningama gave him a wife. The speaker also implied that Sherif was the person who made the hawk grab the hat from Foningama’s head. He said that the taboo of the Kamara was the leopard, and reported that people left Musadu and went to Gbè, Kissi and Kpelle areas after the ‘division.’

Francis V. Jala Kamara

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek, Adama Talawole and Frank Kamara

Place of Recording: Daro, Guinea

Date of Recording: 23 July 1993

Length: 137 lines

¹⁰⁸Geysbeek 1994; 1995.

Number of story elements: 12

Form: Linear transliteration in English which was narrated in English

Source: English translation in Appendix 7.27.

After we interviewed Jèkè Kamara, Frank Kamara, Adama Talawole's friend who was present during the interview, said that his father could tell us some history. Frank Kamara's father, Francis V. Jala Kamara, was a refugee from Liberia who settled in Daro. Francis Kamara said that "Foningama" was a warrior who came from the desert, and that his warrior sons 'divided' into many different areas. He also said that "Zo Misa" "started the Poro palaver" to make a distinction "between the children," and told how a leopard rose a human child who later became a chief. The folktale seems to be an anthropomorphized account of how the Kamara acquired their leopard taboo and Foningama became Musadu's chief.

Alhaji Fomba Lanse Donzo

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek, Mammadi Oppong Sanoe, and Majòngbè Mohammed Chèjan Kromah

Place of Recording: Diakolidu, Guinea

Date of Recording: 26 July 1992

Length: 329 lines

Number of story elements: 22

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcriber: Ali Kromah

Translators: Ali Kromah, with Bangali Kamara and Tim Geysbeek

Sources: Donzo n.d; English translation of the 1992 interview in Appendix 7.28.

After Mohammed Chèjan Kromah and I traveled from Macenta to Diakolidu, Mammadi Oppong Sanoe introduced us to one of his former instructors, Alhaji Fomba Lanse Donzo. Alhaji Donzo told us that he was born in 1930, and that he met Yves Person in Beyla in 1958.

While some of Alhaji Donzo's information about the founding of "Misadu" is fairly standard, several aspects of his interview are interesting. First, Donzo used some information from unpublished documents. Two papers that he showed us were the "Monographique de la Religion Administrative de Beyla" and a history of his family cited above.¹⁰⁹ Alhaji Donzo said that he wrote his family history to answer questions that some people from Conakry had sent him. Some of the information in this piece is original, but a few lines are also the same as a handwritten paper titled "Connaissance de la Region Administrative de Beyla" that Professor Sidibé showed me in Kankan one year later.¹¹⁰

Mr. Donzo's vocation as a teacher showed in his propensity to use dates more than others. He said that Nionsamoridu was founded in 1215, that Musadu was established more than 100 years ago, that Diakolidu was less than 100 years old, and that the Koesia migrated to Beyla more than 1,100 years ago, and that women have not fought with guns for more than 1,000 years. He wrote in his paper the Kromah founded

¹⁰⁹App. 4.9.

¹¹⁰I copied four pages from Donzo's paper by hand into my notebook, but did not have an opportunity to photograph his paper or make copies.

Diakolidu in 1640.

The speaker claimed, as another interviewee did, that Zo Musa Kòma represented three people: Zo who founded Misadu, Zo's son Kòma, and Kòma's son Misa.¹¹¹ In fact, the alhaji paused mid-way through the interview to consult his copy of the "Monographique de la Religion Administrative de Beyla" to make sure that he said names correctly. When he reached Zo Musa's name, he read "Zo Misa Konè." He then corrected himself and said "Zo Musa Kòma" (l. 242).¹¹² Alhaji Donzo echoed earlier claims that the Kamara were once not permitted to sleep in Misadu, and said that "So Misa Kòma" left Musadu because he broke the law which stated that medicine could not eat children or chickens.

Another unique contribution of Professor Donzo was his discussion about the 'hosts' and 'strangers' of Musadu. He listed Tumaningèmè, Zo Musa Kòma, and Jufa Kòne as hosts, and Foningama, Fuomuo Dole and Nyana Misa Kromah as strangers. He said that Nyana Musa became Tumaningèmè's *jèli*, but that Nyana Musa's *nyana* drove Tumaningèmè into the forest where he founded Diakolidu. Even though Donzo drew these names and categories from the Beyla monograph, his discussion about the relationship that transpired between the two Kromah has potential for explaining some of Musadu's early tensions and power struggles.

¹¹¹Sumaka Kromah 1986, App. 7.4c.

¹¹²Mr. Donzo permitted me to take the "Monographique" that day. I photographed it that evening and returned it the next day. One can enlarge 4" x 5" prints at 180% on a copy machine to make a good copy. When I visited him the following December, he let Oppong and I take the document to N'Zerekore to copy it with the condition that Oppong return it to him. I had not had my slides developed by December, so did not know if the slides (that I would turn into prints) turned out.

Alhaji Kabine Kromah

Recorders: (#1) Tim Geysbeek, Mammadi Oppong Sanoe, and Mohammed Chèjan

Kromah, (#2) Tim Geysbeek and Muhammed Oppong Sanoe

Place of Recording: Diakolidu, Guinea

Date of Recording: (#1) 27 July 1992, (#2) 7 December 1993

Length: (#1) 569 lines, (#2) 320 lines

Total number of story elements: 42

Form: Linear translations in English

Transcriber: (#1-2) Ansu Cissé

Translators: (#1) Faliku Sanoe, with Boakai Yamah and Tim Geysbeek, (#2) Faliku

Sanoe, with Tim Geysbeek

Sources: (#1) Appendix 7.29, (#2) Appendix 7.34

One day after visiting Layi Donzo, Oppong took us to interview his ‘grandfather’ Alhaji Kabine Kromah under the veranda in his yard. Ansumana Kromah the clan head, several elders and many women and children gathered as Alhaji Kabine spoke. Alhaji Kabine said that he was born in 1898, and that he was the second oldest man in the region. Although old and physically frail, Alhaji Kromah’s mind was sharp; he orated the eighth longest narrative (Figure 9). No one questioned or challenged what he said. We interviewed Alhaji Kabine in 1992 and 1993. I conducted a second interview by mistake, as I explain in the upcoming introduction about Alafã Konè.¹¹³ There are minor additions in the 1993 account, and no discrepancies in the material that he repeated twice.

¹¹³App. 7.31.

As a descendant of “Tumaningèmè” who is widely acknowledged as one of the first Maninka arrivals to Konya-Mani, Alhaji Kromah spoke about the situation that precipitated “Misa’s” founding of “Misadu” and the symbiotic relationship that the Maniyaka formed with the Kpelle and others before Islam became important. Layi Kromah distinguished between Musa and Musa’s son “Kòma” who later had the *doo* or initiation association and left Musadu. He spoke about the Kromah’s migration from the Manden, and narrated accounts about the attempts on Foningama’s life in Gbè and Diemou. As a Kromah, the speaker also gave detailed explanations about Foningama’s relationship to the Kromah, the conditions under which the chieftaincy was transferred from Tumaningèmè to Foningama, and the way that Foningama acquired the Kromah leopard taboo. Mr. Kromah also hinted at an oath that the Dole made with the Kamara, claimed that Foningama buried the nine sons that he sacrificed under the rock near the mosque, and said that Jufa Konè separated from Zo Musa after the two were forced to flee from Musadu because Konè did not want to participate in Zo Musa’s *doo* and be scarified. Zo Musa settled in Zota, and Jufa Konè went on to Lola.

Mèsi Baba Dole

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek

Place of Recording: Musadu, Guinea

Date of Recording: (#1) 27 July 1992, (#2) 7-9 December 1993

Length: (#1) 9 pages, (#2) 2 pages

Total number of story elements: 24

Form: (#1) Interview format, (#2) notes

Sources: (#1) Appendix 7.30, (#2) Appendix 8.3

I only visited Musadu for one afternoon on this trip because I had malaria. I still needed to travel overland to Abidjan, and then make three connecting flights and one taxi ride back to Nigeria to rejoin my family. I minimally hoped to renew my contacts with the Dole family, express condolences for the passing away of Yaya Dole, and make arrangements for future interviews.

When Oppong Sanoe and I reached town, we introduced ourselves to some men who were sitting on a bench near the road. They directed us to the Dole yard where I found Yaya Dole's wife Mèsi Sanoe who cooked for us in 1986. I also met Yaya Dole's son Baba who had returned to Musadu from Monrovia because of the war. Baba gave us a tour of Musadu, and I taped what he said along the way. Baba escorted us out of town, and we said good-bye to some of the men who were still sitting on the roadside bench. I told them that I wanted to return the following year and record some interviews. I ended up interviewing one of these men when I returned in December 1993, and took notes of some things that Baba told me.

When Baba Dole walked me through Musadu in 1992, he showed me the Donzo quarter where Musa reportedly made his first home and shot animals that came out of the forest (Figure 33). Dole supported earlier reports that a Kanè cleric destroyed Zo Musa's sheep horn, and that the Kamara were not permitted to settle in Musadu. He also told some stories that I had not heard. One was about the *jina* of Musadu that used to circumcise small children.

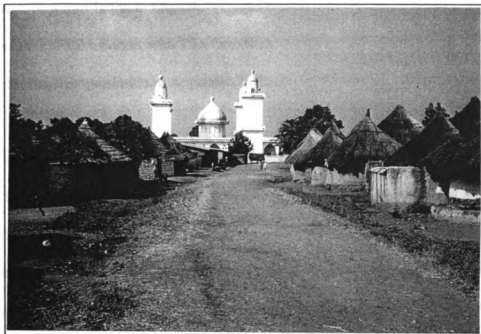


Figure 22 Road leading to the main mosque, Musadu, 1992

Baba Dole confused Zo Musa with Foningama when I returned to Musadu a year later. This was the only time that he talked about the Kamara ancestor. On this occasion, Baba narrated some helpful information about his clan's history, Doofatini, and the geographical, faunae and vegetation history of the area.

Alifā Konè

Recorders: Tim Geysbeek, Muhammed Oppong Sanoe and Majôngbè Muhammed

Chèjan Kromah

Place of Recording: Beyla, Guinea

Date of Recording: 28 July 1992

Length: 470 lines

Number of story elements: 16

Form: Linear translation in English

Translators: Faliku Sanoe, with Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation in Appendix 7.31.

We went to Beyla the following afternoon to interview Alafã Konè. Traditionists claim that Beyla is one of the ‘five towns of Konya,’ and seem to be nearly as old as Musadu. I wanted to record at least one oral tradition from Beyla. We first visited a Bèrètè elder whom Oppong knew. The elder was sick, so we eventually went to see Alafã Konè. Alafã Konè contributed a new episode to the story of Musadu’s founding. He said that a fire was lit to a white cloth that was wrapped around a stick, and the fire was taken from Kalala to Chèwa and finally to “Misadu.” Musadu was built after the land was burned. Mr. Konè then told the common story about how Musa moved to the Dion to fish and founded Musadu. When Musa’s medicine started to create too much unrest, “Fèngama” contacted a cleric. This cleric put a message in the mouth of a crocodile, and the crocodile swam upstream where the message was delivered to a Kanè. The Kanè returned to Musadu and evidently made the ingredients that destroyed Musa’s medicine. Musa went and settled in Zota.

Unfortunately, I made two mistakes that are inexcusable for anyone conducting dissertation research. First, I did not make a copy of the interview before we started the translation. During the translation process, one of my assistants mistakenly erased three minutes and forty seconds of the portion of the tape that probably explains how a Kanè cleric destroyed Zo Musa’s talisman and Zo Musa left Musadu. Second, and more unforgivable, was that I relied on my memory instead of making a note of which

interview was partially erased. I thought that we erased part of Alhaji Kabine Kromah's interview when we returned to Guinea in 1993, so that is why I interviewed him the second time. I thus missed my only opportunity to re-interview Konè because he died in 1993.

Alhaji Makula Mammadi Kamara, Moliké Sidibé and Blaima Toligbè Kamara

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek and Blaima Toligbè Kamara

Place of Recording: Kankan, Guinea

Date of Recording: 2 December 1993

Length: 284 lines

Number of story elements: Alhaji Kamara - 2, Sidibé - 57, Blaima Toligbè Kamara - 2

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcriber: Ansu Cissé

Translators: Faliku Sanoe, with Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation in Appendix 7.33.

I returned to Guinea at the end of 1993 and conducted two interviews with the Damaro Kamara of Kankan. As I explained above, I recorded the first interview with Moliké Sidibé one day earlier. In this instance, I wanted Alhaji Makula Mammadi Kamara to speak, but he left shortly after he said that the Kamara immigrated from Sibi. Blaima Toligbè Kamara was a mechanic who had worked in Monrovia, and assisted as my translator both times. Blaima was also informed about this history, so he contributed to the discussion. Blaima Kamara and Moliké Sidibé talked about the relationship between

traditional Manding religion and Islam. Sidibé spoke as well about the Kamara's leopard taboo and the origins of the Kamara and Kromah. He claimed that the Kamara were the first Maninka clan.

Alhaji Bintu Ibrahim Béété

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek and Mèsi Baba Dole

Place of Recording: Musadu, Guinea

Date of Recording: 9 December 1993

Length: 344 lines

Number of story elements: 33

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcriber: Faliku Sanoe

Translators: Faliku Sanoe, with Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation in Appendix 7.35

I arrived in Musadu a few days after leaving Kankan and met Baba Dole again. The first person whom Baba took me to interview was Alhaji Bintu Ibrahima Béété (Bèrèté). Yaya Dole mentioned, in his 1986 interview, that Alhaji Béété was one of his friends.¹¹⁴ The similarity in some of the information in the two accounts is a testimonial to their friendship and the stories that they shared. Alhaji Béété was also the third imam of the Musadu mosque, and imam who had come to our house one morning after the first prayers and blessed us.

¹¹⁴App. 7.8.

As a religious leader of Musadu, Alhaji Béété offered some details about the epic that are generally not known or at least not spoken of by those not from the area. He voiced an earlier story that the town near Nèlèkòlò creek at Musadu's current northern edge was named Dolela in honor of "Fuomuo Dole" after Foningama said that Tumaningèmè should be chief.¹¹⁵ Their slave, "Zo Misa Kòma," subsequently founded "Misadu." Zo Musa eventually fled because the new Muslim religion that the clerics introduced was too strong for his *kòma* or the Kòma society that he led. Béété also said that Foningama executed four of his sons for breaking a law while he was chief and buried their heads under a rock. This may be the same rock near the mosque about which people always refer, but the speaker did not make this connection. After Foningama left Musadu, Tumaningèmè became the *mansa* and Foningama's descendants were instructed to protect Musadu.

According to Alhaji Béété, all of the *lasiliya* or 'binding relationships' in the area were made in Musadu. Béété's statement supports those who claim that many of the relationships between lineages, clans, and ethnic groups in Konya-Mani can be traced to some event that is related to the founding of Musadu or events that occurred thereafter.

Bintu Mammadi Donzo and Miamè Morifin Dole

Recorder: Tim Geysbeek and Mèsi Baba Dole

Place of Recording: Musadu, Guinea

Date of Recording: 9 December 1993

Length: Donzo - 89 lines, Dole - 4 lines

¹¹⁵Ch. 4.

Number of story elements: Donzo - 19, Dole - 1

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcriber: Bangali Kamara

Translators: Bangali Kamara and Faliku Sanoe, with Amara Dole and Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation in Appendix 7.36.

At Baba's suggestion, we also interviewed Bintu Mammadi Donzo (Fofana). Baba's father's brother Mami Morifin Dole was visiting Mr. Donzo, so he also contributed. Like the other speakers from Musadu, Mr. Donzo was most conversant with the earlier aspects of the story that concerned Musa. Most unique was his description of how people placed offerings at the front of a cave at Koniya Mountain near Musadu. He said that the rock that covered the cave's entrance opened if it accepted the offering, and remained closed if it did not. Dole added that Musadu's founder Musa died in Musadu, and that his descendants were the ones who migrated into the forest.

Wata Mammadi Kamara

Place of Recording: unknown, tape purchased in Monrovia on September 18, 1992

Date of Recording: unknown

Length: 920 lines

Number of story elements: 109

Form: Linear translation in English

Transcriber: Kèlèti Fofana

Translators: Faliku Sanoe, Bangali Kamara, and Boakai Yamah, with Ansu Cissé and

Tim Geysbeek

Source: English translation in Appendix 7.38.

Amara Cissé found this tape for me in Monrovia in 1992. It is difficult to determine authorship, date, place and situation when one acquires tapes in this manner. Fortunately, the speaker stated his full name early in this story. The problem with this tape is that I apparently did not ship a copy to the States when I was in Monrovia as I did with all of the others. When I later went to check the translation in Michigan, I discovered that the tape labeled “Wata Mammadi Kamara” was the identical to one of the Vase Kamala variants that I had purchased. Though I do not understand how this happened, I am certain that Wata Mammadi Kamara is the speaker, not Vase Kamala.

Wata Mammadi’s interview ranks second in the highest number of episodes after Vase Kamala. This is partly because much of Wata Mammadi’s story is similar to Vase Kamala’s.¹¹⁶ While there is agreement between most of the episodes, there are some notable differences. Wata Mammadi stressed different aspects of the stories about the Kamara in the Manden and their southern dispersion, and he claimed that the Kièlè, Fofana, Cissé and Dukule were the clerics who blessed Foningama’s ‘sacrifice of one thousand.’ This version also shows Foningama giving the banana seeds to these clerics - not to the Sware who Kamala consistently identified, and is similar to Kèwulèn Kamara’s account.¹¹⁷ Kèwulèn Kamara lived in Kuankan. Wata Mammadi hinted that he was from the Kuankan area, and spoke a western dialect of Maniyakã called Busekã that is centered in Kuankan. Vase Kamala spoke Kalagbakã, the dialect of Maniyakã that is prominent in

¹¹⁶App. 7.6.

¹¹⁷App. 7.5.

Fombadu in the Kalagba region.

“Connaissance de la Region Administrative de Beyla”

No date, place or name accompanies this nicely handwritten report that I acquired in Kankan in 1993. The report comprises information about the founding of Beyla and Diakolidu, a description of the Kamara migrations based on the Beyla monograph, nineteenth century events related to Samori and the French, and information about the organization of Beyla province up to 1958.¹¹⁸ One paragraph explains how the Kromah migrated from the Manden to Beyla, and states that the Kromah were the ones who drove the Kpelle from Diakolidu.

Vai sources

Most Vai claim that their ancestors immigrated from the north through the land that covers the current borders Liberia and Sierra Leone. However, a genre of Vai traditions claim that one group of Vai, led by the Fahnbulleh and Kiatamba, came from “Mani” or Musadu more from the east.¹¹⁹ Some accounts hint or state that this move was precipitated after one or more sons of Musadu’s “king” broke a law. This link to Musadu and breaking of laws by Musadu’s royalty resemble, to some degree, Maniyaka descriptions of Foniŋgama’s sons breaking the laws of Musadu and deserve to be evaluated in this context.

¹¹⁸App. 4.8.

¹¹⁹Holsoe 1974.

Sigismund W. Koelle

Narrator: unknown

Recorder: Sigismund Wilhelm Koelle

Place of Recording: Freetown, Sierra Leone

Date of Recording: 1849-1851

Length: (#1) 1 typed paragraph; (#2) 3 typed pages

Number of story elements: 5 total

Form: English prose

Sources: Koelle, S.W. 1849a; 1854a/1968:ii-v,11.

Sigismund Wilhelm Koelle was the noted missionary linguist of the Church Missionary Society who worked in West Africa for five years. Koelle started to study Vai while living in Freetown in 1848. He visited Cape Mount in 1849, and lived in the Gallinas for a few months until 1851.¹²⁰ Koelle published a “narrative” of his “expedition into the Vy country” in 1849. In 1854, he published his grammar and vocabulary of Vai, and the monumental *Polyglotta Africana* which compared the vocabularies of several African languages. In these first two works, Koelle recorded some oral traditions that he collected.¹²¹ Koelle did not name Musadu or mention the breaking of laws. He did, however, claim that “two brothers, Fabule and Kiatamba,” left “Mani country” and “conquered part of the coast... some centuries ago.” A later Vai source equated “Mani” with Musadu.¹²²

¹²⁰Hair 1963.

¹²¹Koelle 1849; 1854a.

¹²²Smith 1893 (infra.).

H. C. Creswick

Narrator: “an old chief”

Recorder: H.C. Creswick

Place of Recording: Gallinas

Date of Recording: mid-1860s

Length: 3 typed pages

Number of story elements: 9

Form: English prose

Source: Creswick 1868:354-357,360

In 1867, H.C. Creswick sailed from Liberia to England and presented a paper before the Ethnological Society of London about his “life amongst the Veys.”¹²³ Creswick read a “legend... from the mouth of an old chief” that was translated into English. According to this account, “Faibule and Kiatambah,” two sons of the “king” who lived far to the east in “Mani country,” broke some laws that demanded the death penalty. The king, however, only banished his sons from the land, so they fought their way to the coast. Creswick speculated that the men left “Mani country” about two and one-half centuries earlier. Creswick connected his stories with the ones that Koelle collected, but wrote that Koelle did not hear (or at least did not record) the account that explained why the king’s two sons left Mani.

¹²³This is Henry Charles Creswick from London who received a concession from the Liberian government in 1878 to build a railroad from Monrovia to “Musardoo.” Several sources from the late-1870s spell this person’s name Creswick, not Creswick (e.g., “The Railway Scheme” 1878:81).

Ezekiel E. Smith

Narrator: unknown

Recorder: E.E. Smith

Place of Recording: Liberia

Date of Recording: early 1890s

Length: half typed paragraph

Number of story elements: 7

Form: English prose

Source: Smith 1893

The United States Minister to Liberia, Ezekiel E. Smith, claimed that the Vey were descendants of the son of the king of “Masadu” who fled with his father’s help after he broke a law. This is another version of the stories that Creswick and Koelle published. Smith identified “Mani” of the previous Vai accounts with “Masadu” or Musadu. He thus linked the breaking of the law to Musadu, but did not name Fahnbulleh or Kiatamba.

Ernest Lyon

Narrators: “a number of aged chiefs and scholars”

Recorder: E. Lyon

Place of Recording: Vonzua (Vanwah), Liberia

Date of Recording: January 1906

Length: one-half handwritten page

Number of story elements: 2

Form: English prose

Source: Lyon 1906

Thirteen years later, the American Consulate to Liberia, Ernest Lyon, toured Cape Mount. He included a three paragraph description about the origin of the Vey in his report to U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Robert Bacon. Lyon collected this information from “the elder statesmen” during a “great feast” at the Vai “capital” of Vonzua. According to Lyon’s report of this meeting, the Vai came from a contingent of warriors who “split from” their fellow “Mandingo” at “Musahdu.” “Fahnbooreh, Caretambah, and Malinga” led this “rebellious crowd” to the coast “more than three hundred years ago.” Lyon did not specifically say that Fahnbulleh and Kitamba broke a law, but the fact that the Vai elders said that their own ancestors were rebellious indicates that they did something wrong.

Momolu Massaquoi

Narrator: not identified

Recorder: Momolu Massaquoi

Place of Recording: Gallinas, Liberia

Date of Recording: pre-1911

Length: 2.5 typed pages

Number of story elements: 5

Form: English prose

Source: Massaquoi 1911:560-462

The next author was Momolu Massaquoi, the famous Liberian diplomat, politician, and writer who lived from 1870-1938. Massaquoi wrote about the origins of the Vai in an article that he published about the Vai and their system of writing in 1911. He submitted the article from Sierra Leone at the end of a long stay in the British colony. Massaquoi's Vai kinsfolk had forced him to flee from the Gallinas five years earlier where he had been enthroned as the ruler of the Vai.¹²⁴ Massaquoi wrote that the Vey migrated from "Mani country" or "the great plain from Tuba to Musardu and beyond." The first people who traveled from Mani to the coast were hunters who returned with glowing reports of the land and salt. Later, "a distinguished prince named Kamara" from Mani led "the grand march to the West." They first went where the "Konnoh" or Kono lived, and then broke south for the ocean. Other leaders who migrated to the coast and who might have been "greater than the Kamara" were the ancestors of the "Fanbule" and "Kia-Tamba." Massaquoi emphasized the Kamara element in these migration traditions and recognized the importance of the Fahnbulleh, Kiatamba, and others, but did not speak of any laws being broken.

Esu Buji

Narrator: unknown

Recorder: Esu Buji

Place of Recording: Liberia

Date of Recording: 1911 or earlier

Length: about 800 words

¹²⁴Smyke 1983.

Number of story elements: 5

Form: English prose

Source: Buji 1911:43

In the same year that Massaquoi's article was published, Esu Buji wrote an article in the Sierra Leonian press where he partly answered the question - "Who are the Veis?" Buji wrote that "Fa-bu-le" and "Kiatamba" came from the east to about Timbuktu. In Buji's estimation, Fahnbulleh and Kiatamba represented "two rival dynasties" who broke from the "original stock" and respectively settled in Jaiaro and Wakoro on either side of the Sierra Leone and Liberian border.

George W. Ellis

Narrators: "numerous chiefs"

Recorder: George Ellis

Place of Recording: "Vai country"

Date of Recording: before 1913

Length: about 100 words

Number of story elements: 4

Form: English prose

Source: Ellis 1913:169-170; 1914:27-28

George W. Ellis worked as the "Secretary of the United States Legation in Liberia" for eight years, and published duplicate accounts about the origins of the Vai in an article and

in a book. Ellis wrote that S.W. Koelle's oral traditions about the migration of the Vai under the leadership of "Fabule" and "Kiatamba" were highly probable and well known among those to whom he spoke during a trip through "Vai country." Ellis was the only person to link the migration of these two leaders from Musadu to the breaking of laws. Ellis attributed the source of his information to "numerous chiefs and Vai scholars" in Vai country, but did not give specific names, places, or dates. Ellis wrote that Kiatamba, Fahnbulleh, and their sons Cassu and Manoba broke a law in "Musardu" and fled to the coast to escape death. Kiatamba and Fahnbulleh's father, "the Mandingo king of Musardu," also went with them. In a footnote, Ellis noted that some elders maintained that their departure from Musadu occurred during the aftermath of "rival brothers" who fought for the "Mandingan throne."

"Krus and Veys"

Narrator: unknown

Recorder: anonymous

Place of Recording: Liberia

Date of Recording: during or before 1917

Length: one paragraph

Number of story elements: 5

Form: English prose

Source: "The Krus and Vais of Liberia" 1917:557

In 1917, an anonymous correspondent wrote an article in *West Africa* about the Kru and

the Vai. In four lines, this person reported that the Vai had a tradition that they came from “Mandingo, or Mani country... under the leadership of two brothers, named Fabule and Kiatamba.”

“Who are the Massaquois and Zoludumah’s?”

Narrator: unknown

Recorder: unknown

Place of Recording: Liberia

Date of Recording: during or before 1930

Length: 2 typed pages

Number of story elements: 4

Form: English prose

Source: “Who are the Massaquois and Zoludumah’s?” 1930:4-5

Several years later, another unnamed writer published an article about the history of the Vai. This is the most fanciful story of all, which leads the reader from the “great Ethiopian Empire” of East Africa, through the “Mali Empire,” “Musahdu” and the “Chiefdom of Konoma,” to the coast. The core of this 900 plus word tradition, however, claimed that “the Houses of Massaquoi, Valinger and Kiatamba, and Farhn Buley,” who represented the “Western Division of the Malistan Empire,” traveled west towards the coast with a great cavalry. They rested in Musadu for one year, and continued to the coast where they fought the Gola and Mende. After suffering heavy losses, they sued for peace and established their “new Empire” between Rivercess or the St. Paul River and the

Rokel River in Sierra Leone.

K. Senessee Kromah

Narrator: K. Senessee Kromah

Recorder: K. Senessee Kromah

Place of Recording: Liberia

Date of Recording: 1961 or before

Length: about 200 words

Number of story elements: 6

Form: English prose

Source: Kromah 1961, partially excerpted in Massing (1985):37.

While conducting fieldwork in Sierra Leone, Adam Jones collected a manuscript that the Vai writer K. Senessee Kromah wrote in 1961. Andreas Massing, who published part of this account, said that the writer was, as the title suggests, “of Massaquoi and Kuruma (Kromah) descent.”¹²⁵ Kromah wrote that “Fakoli Kromah,” “Feni Kamara” and “Filomo Totte [Filimo Dolle?]” fled from “Many” to “Musadu” after “Manisonjala” (Sunjata) defeated “Sumawulo” (Sumaworo). “Zomusa,” the herbalist who founded the town, welcomed these “refugees,” and Foningama later became the “outstanding landlord” or chief of the Manden migrants.

This story is unlike any of the other “Vai” traditions that are known to exist. In fact, it reads like many of the Maniyaka variants that have been collected since the time of

¹²⁵Massing 1985:37-38.

Captain Dauvillier.¹²⁶ Did Kromah identify himself as “Vai,” at least in some contexts, but draw from the repository of Maniyaka traditions about Musadu which are certain to exist among the Maniyaka who live among the Vai? Or, is this only one of a genre of Vai stories that has been recorded? The former seems to be the most likely, given the evidence presently at hand, but more research into Vai origins from Musadu and the examination of traditions among the Maniyaka who live in Cape Mount and Gallinas needs to be conducted to answer these questions. While this source is labeled “Vai” here, the characterization of Kromah as “Vai” and Kromah’s statement in the title that this is a record of Vai history demonstrates the fluid nature of “tribe” or “ethnic group.” The problem of identity is repeated in many of the traditions that derive from Loma traditions.

Kpelle sources

The accounts in this section detail how the Maniyaka ousted Zo Musa and his companions from Musadu and migrated south. The Kpelle do not tell how the Maniyaka migrated from the Manden to Musadu, or explain how Musadu was founded.

Lieutenant Lamole

Narrator: not known

Recorder: Lt. Lamole

Place of Recording: Guecke, Guinea?

Date of Recording:

Length: about 350 words long

¹²⁶App. 3.

Number of story elements: 9

Form: French prose

Source: Lamole 1909:522-523. The English translation is in Appendix 4.2.

Lieutenant Lamole was a member of the 'colonial infantry' which was probably stationed at the military post at Guecke, Guinea. He wrote one of the first comprehensive French reports about the Kpelle. Lamole wrote that "Malinkes" from Bamako migrated to "Moussadougou" and drove away chief "Zogomoussa Kòma" and his people. When Zo Musa Kòma departed for the forest, he took samples of water from one branch, one rock near Musadu's 'fetish hut' where sacrifices were made, and three creeks. The second half of Lamole's story chronicles Zo Musa's southern journey and his supposed founding of Zota. Lamole was a contemporary of Dauvillier and Liurette; they all wrote their accounts within a half-dozen years of each other. Lamole's version from a Kpelle perspective complements the Maniyaka views of Dauvillier and Liurette. I thank James Fairhead and Melissa Leach for sending me the portion of this article that discusses Musadu's history.

Jacques Germain

Narrator(s): unknown

Recorder: Jacques Germain; other French administrators or African employees?

Place of Recording: N'Zerekore province, Guinea

Date of Recording: 1946-1947

Length: 2 typed pages

Number of story elements: 22

Form: French prose

Source: Germain 1984. The English translation is in Appendix 4.5.

Jacques Germain was a French civil servant who lived in N'Zerekore from 1946 to 1947 where he served as the chief advisor to the "Commandant." In 1984, when Germain was the chief administrator of Outre-Mer, he published his work on the forest region of Guinea. About sixty-five pages cover of the history of the region before the French arrived. Much of this material consists of oral traditions and oral histories that Germain and probably other French personnel and their African workers gathered on the field. Many of the publications that he used were dated, and he was selective in the use of some sources and topics. He, however, presented information about the past and other aspects of life that are valuable to researchers studying the Maniyaka, Kpelle, Kono, Mano, Dã and other peoples who live in southeast Guinea.¹²⁷

Germain went one step further in his study of the Kpelle than Lamole. Lamole asked about the origin of the Kpelle, which he determined to be Musadu. Germain realized that the question was not simply a matter of "Kpelle" verses "Malinke" and so on, but understood that hostility could develop among people who belonged to the same group. Working from Lelong and Bouyssou, Germain stated that "Falikaman" founded "Missadougou," and that members of Foniŋgama's family were expelled from Musadu. Germain may have been led astray by Bouyssou's statement that Foniŋgama founded Musadu.

According to Germain, two "Malinke" 'brothers' named Zo Musa left Musadu.

¹²⁷See Ford (1991) for a review of Germain's book.

Tensions generated between the animist “Zoho Missa Coma” (Zo Musa Kòma) and the Muslim “Zoho Missa Koro” (Zo Musa Kromah) who caused the problems which led to their exile. Germain wrote that Zo Musa Koro was a ‘great magician’ of ‘unpure Islam’ who used a ‘ram horn’ to make ‘powerful spells.’ Zo Musa Kòma was the ‘great fetish priest’ who started the Poro and countered Zo Musa Kromah with his power. Germain told stories about things that happened to Kòma and Kromah after they left Musadu and respectively settled in Zota and Lola. He also stated that the descendants of Dole immigrants later became the chiefs of Lola. Alhaji Kabine Kromah similarly said that Jufa Konè broke from Zo Musa because Zo Musa was so involved in the *doo* or initiation associations. Zo Musa stopped in Zota, and Jufa Konè traveled more to the southeast to Lola.

Konor sources

Bohumil Holas

Narrator: Dole, Soromou, and Soromou family members

Recorder: Bohumil Holas

Place of Recording: Lola and Kooulenta in southeastern Guinea

Date of Recording: late-1940s to early-1950s

Length: 4 typed pages

Number of story elements: 8

Form: French prose

Source: Holas 1952a:19-24. The English translation is in Appendix 4.7.

Bohumil Holas was the “assistant d’ethnologie a l’Inisitut Français d’Afrique Noire” in Abidjan. He traveled in Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea and Liberia, and wrote extensively about the Kono, Dã and other peoples. In 1952, Holas publish a book about Konor religion wherein he included traditions about the origins of the Konor. According to the story, “Zoumoussakro” (Zo Musa Kromah) was a “Malinké” Muslim from “Moussadougou” who had a Qur’an, prayer beads and ‘ram horn full of strange magical substances.’ When he decided to leave Musadu because of the tension that developed between himself and his ‘jealous’ brothers, his brothers placed an ‘impure’ toad on Zo Musa’s ‘magic’ ram horn and destroyed its power. Still having magical abilities because of his Qur’an and beads, Zo Musa took the branch of a tree from Musadu and went into the forest with his family and close friends. After experiencing many things along the way, he settled at Lola and planted the tree branch. Holas did not mention Zota who is commonly identified with Zo Musa. Germain partly explained this. Germain identified Holas’s “Zoumassakro” as his Maniyaka Muslim ‘magician’ “Zoho Missa Koro” who bypassed Zota and went to Lola. Both men, respectively drawing their stories from Kpelle and Kono sources, claimed that Zo Musa was Maniyaka, not Kpelle.

Loma sources

Loma sources about Musadu’s history come from a knowledge base that is “Loma” and “Maniyaka.” The distinction between the Loma and Maniyaka is sometimes not very distinct in Guinea and Liberia; this situation extends to our sometimes superficial attempts to label sources.

Chief Ngallima and Sarbo-Garbo Ballah

Narrator: Chief Ngaliema and Sarbo-Garbo Ballah

Recorder: District Commissioner V.J. Fahnbulleh

Place of Recording: Voinjama, Liberia

Date of Recording: 2 December 1936

Length: 2.5 typed pages

Number of story elements: 4

Form: Court transcript in Liberian English

Source: "Investigation and Decision of [the] 1936 Local Boundary Dispute between Wonnegomai Chiefdom and Wubomai Chiefdom of Bondi-Wubomai Chiefdom"

1936:3,4,6-7,18. Some passages are in Appendix 1.

In 1990, Djobba K. Kamara mailed me a twenty page court case that involved a dispute over land between Wonnegomai and Wubomai near Voinjama. The District Commissioner of Voinjama who supervised this case was V.J. Fahnbulleh. Chief Ngaliema and Sarbo-Garbo Ballah were witnesses for Wubomai. One story that they told was about Fala Wubo's youth and how he became Loma. This story did not deal directly with the boundary being disputed, and was not contested by Wonnegomai's representatives. The speakers gave unique accounts about how "Farhn Wubar" was born, how Fala Wubo and his brother "Vra Missa" were disowned by the "Mandingo" and became "Buzi" after they ate Poro food, and how they later returned to Musadu and "fought for Feringamah's property."

“Liberian Bureau of Folkways”

Recorder: “Liberia Bureau of Folkways”

Date of recording: Late 1950s - early 1960s?

Length: one paragraph

Number of story elements: 3

Form: English prose

Source: In Pinney n.d./1973:15a/27

Peter Pinney included a story about “Falingama (Fonikgama)” being born in Mecca by his father Adam and mother Mawah in his story about “the origin of the Wubomai.” In this account, Foningama migrated west, fought the Kissi, and captured a Kissi woman who became the mother of the primordial ancestor of the Wubomai Loma, Fala Wubo. The Muslim elements in this version are probably influenced by the Maniyaka rather than the Loma. Pinney dedicated his manuscript to President Tubman, so it was written no later than 1971 when Tubman died. The Liberian Bureau of Folkways was transferred from the Interior Department to the Ministry of Information in 1962. Pinney did not state the branch of the government under which Folkways operated at this time, so it is not possible to determine whether he wrote his book before or after 1962. This manuscript was first mimeographed in 1972, and a second edition was produced in 1973 (Dunn 1995:147).

Soko Konneh

Recorder: Paul Degein Korvah

Place of Recording: probably Lofa County, Liberia

Date of Recording: 1960 or earlier

Length: 370 or more words

Number of story elements: 17

Form: English prose

Source: Korvah 1960/1994:55; 1971:31; 1995:11-14

Paul D. Korvah is a Loma historian and retired civil servant from Voinjama, Liberia.

Korvah spent several years collecting information about the history of the Loma people, and started writing as early as 1960 (see next section). Korvah claims that the progenitor of the Loma was Fala Wubo. Fala Wubo came from the union of Foningama and a Kissi slave. Korvah sometimes begins his stories by explaining how Foningama migrated from the Manden to Musadu, and often tells how Musa founded Musadu and the Poro society. Korvah then describes how Fala Wubo and others left Musadu and started to settle around the current town of Voinjama in Liberia after they ousted the Kònò.

Our interest in Korvah's work are his initial discussions about Foningama and Musadu. In 1960, Korvah noted that "Fanigama" was Fala Wubo's father, and that he had a leopard taboo. Robert Leopold kindly sent me a copy of this paper which was eventually published in 1994. Korvah went on, however, to explain how Musa left the Maniyaka with whom he was living "to avoid confusion and disturbance" over religious matters. Zo Musa then founded Musadu and used the power that he derived from his "sheep horn" to heal people. His followers formed the nucleus of what became the Poro society to "override that [religion] of the Mandingoes." Korvah credited "one Mandingo elderman"

as being one of his three sources.¹²⁸ Since this story is similar to many of the Maniyaka accounts that have been collected, it seems probable that this Maniyaka elder provided the information about Musadu. In Korvah's second history that he wrote in the early-1960s, he added that "Fali Kama" was a prince from the Mali empire who fled from "Songaini" to "King Musa" in Musadu to escape execution.¹²⁹

In Korvah's 1995 book, he elaborated on "Fali Kama's" exodus from the Mali empire. While not mentioning Songaini, he added how Foningama made Musadu into a large and prosperous town. Korvah failed to say anything about Musa, Musa's sheep horn, Musa's conflict with Islam, or the Poro society. Korvah did, however, identify Soko Konneh as the source of his stories of how "Fali Kama" migrated to Musadu and became the chief. Korvah wrote, "I wish to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Soko Konneh of Lawalazu, may he rest in peace, who consistently narrated to me the stories that are contained in the first chapter."¹³⁰ Is Soko Konneh the same "Mandingo elderman" about whom Korvah referred in 1960? One can not say conclusively without communicating with Korvah, but this seems possible given Korvah's statement that he discussed these materials with Konneh many times. We only know with certainty that Konneh is the source for Korvah's last version, so identifying Konneh for the material in Korvah's earlier writings is only tentative.

¹²⁸Korvah 1960/1994:54-55. In 1971, Richard Fulton merged and published Korvah's 1960 history and "A Brief Historical Survey of the Lofa County from Province to County" that Korvah wrote during the early-1960s (Korvah 1971). Though the author has not obtained a copy of Korvah's "A Brief Historical Survey....," it is easy to determine its contents by comparing it with the 1960 account.

¹²⁹Korvah 1971:31. See the previous footnote for information about this source.

¹³⁰Korvah 1995:8. Korvah completed the manuscript for *The History of the Loma People* on April 11, 1988. He sent a copy to his Peace Corps volunteer friend Tom White who published the book in 1995 (1995:115). Djjobba Kamara fortuitously sent me a copy of Korvah's 1988 draft manuscript in 1990.

Paul Degen Korvah

Narrator: unknown

Recorder: Paul D. Korvah

Place of Recording: Upper Lofa County, Liberia

Date of Recording: 1950s - late 1980s

Length: 5 typed pages

Number of story elements: 3

Form: English prose

Source: Korvah 1960/1994:55,60; 1995:11-14.

Paul D. Korvah was just mentioned for his reliance on Soko Konneh as the Maniyaka source for some of his information. Korvah printed two other stories that are relevant for this study. He provided a variant of one tradition that explained how Fala Wubo became a member of the Poro and how he got the name Loma. In works that Korvah wrote in 1960 and 1988 which were respectively published in 1994 and 1995, Korvah wrote that Fala Wubo had to 'join' or *loma* the Kissi Poro from his mother's side in order to defeat the Wònò or Kònò who were living in the area that he wanted to settle. Korvah also wrote, in his 1960 paper, that the "Lorma devils" call "Mosadu's" name whenever they enter a new town to honor the name of the town where the Loma originated. While this is not an oral tradition of the Poro, this does demonstrate, if Korvah's information is reliable, that Poro elders continue to transmit information about their past.

“Lorma Folktale”

Place of Recording: Liberia

Date of Recording: unknown, 1960s?

Length (lines, words, pages, time): 54 words

Number of story elements: 6

Form: English prose

Source: “Lorma Folktale” n.d./1994:52

Gerald Currens kindly sent me a copy of this one page story. Most of the tale is about “Fali Kama’s” alleged son “Fala Wuboh,” but the first paragraph explains how “Fali Kama” fled from the Mali empire to Musadu after being defeated in battle. This is similar to Paul D. Korvah’s writings and may have been penned by or copied from him.

Mamdi Kumala and Zeze K. Roberts

Recorder: Karin I.S. Weisswange

Place of Recording: Probably Bokesa, Liberia

Date of Recording: late 1960s

Length: One sentence each

Number of story elements: Kumala - 5; Roberts - 3

Form: English prose

Source: Weisswange 1969:59

Weisswange explored some of the historical aspects of their co-residence, and wrote:

“According to the report by Mamdi Kumala, Musadu could have been a Kpelle settlement named by the founder after his son Misa. Zeze K. Roberts calls Misadu the town of the Kpelle.” Others elaborate on these themes in greater detail. One point worth noting is that Kumala said that “Misadu” was named after the founder’s son and not the founder himself. This is the first of a few versions where a source differentiated between Zo Musa and another “family” member. Svend Holsoe gave me a copy of Karin Weisswange’s 1969 M.A. thesis, and Robert Leopold sent Ronald Fleischer’s translation of Part 3. I thank both men for extending this courtesy to me.

Siafa Beavogui

Narrator: Vola Koly Beavogui, for some of the information

Date: early-1980s?

Recorder: Siafa Beavogui

Length: c. 825 words

Number of story elements: 19

Form: French prose

Source: Beavogui 1973-74

Siafa Beavogui wrote about the historical relations that developed between the Maniyaka and Loma. He included information about the Kamara and Kromah migrations, and “Fonikaman’s” victory over ‘the chief Kpelle fetisher’ of “Moussadou” “Sogho Missa Kòma.” Beavogui did not explain where he acquired this information, though he could have gotten most of it from Yves Person and several Guinea theses. Beavogui’s major

contribution, however, was listing eleven generations of Beavogui. Beavogui said this was ‘part of the lexicon of the Poro initiation society’ that was given by Voloa Koly Beavogui of Koluma. Siafa Beavogui also wrote about the Loma migrations from the Toron to Konya-Mani, and provided the names of the first Loma who settled in present-day Loma areas. These are rare instances, along with the information from Paul D. Korvah mentioned above, where a claim is made that the Poro passed down information that was reputed to have been historical. Siafa also wrote that the Loma and Kpelle pay the same tribute to Musadu in their proverbs.

David Pepe Sakou

Date: early 1980s?

Length: c. 170 lines

Number of story elements: 6

Form: French prose

Source: Sakou 1983:11-13

In his pre-colonial section about the establishment of French rule where the Loma live, David Pepe Sakou took some of his information from Siafa Beavogui’s thesis without citing him. Sakou also chronicled information about early Loma and Kpelle migrations to “Missadou,” speculated about early forest cover, and discussed some of the connections that may have once tied the Loma, Senufo and Kissi Poro initiation societies.

Zonébhala Koivogui

Narrator: Zonébhala Koivogui

Recorder: unknown

Place of Recording: unknown

Date of Recording: unknown

Length: about 50 words

Number of story elements:

Form: French prose

Source: A student's paper.

A student from Guinea wrote a paper which had a sub-heading "Quelques donnees historiques sur l'origine les Loma." The title page is missing, so the author and title of the paper are not known. The teacher who graded the paper lined out most of the sections where the writer quoted extensively from other sources, apparently wanting the student to learn how to rework information from other sources into one's own words. The teacher was correct, but the student's error is our good fortune if he or she copied correctly. In one instance, the student quoted a tradition from an informant named Zonébhala Koivogui. Zonébhala Koivogui named several Loma clans which left "Missatazu" at what he said was the beginning of the fifteenth century. He also said that they traveled down the Diani River, and that a Benya Massa Gzovogui founded Bitenya. This information is limited, but again indicates that the Loma retain memories of clans and people who immigrated from the east. With the exception of Karin Weisswange and Christian Højbjerg more recently, the few westerners who have worked on the Liberia Loma have

primarily focused on the twentieth century.¹³¹

Mano and Dã sources

Kjell Zetterström

Narrator: not identified

Recorder: K. Zetterström

Place of Recording: northcentral Liberia

Date of Recording: early-mid 1970s?

Length: (#1) - c. 400 words; (#2) - c. 60 words; (#3) - 2 sentences

Number of story elements: (#1) - 2; (#2) - 2; (#3) - 2

Form: English prose

Source: Zetterström 1976:18-19.

Kjell Zetterström published two traditions about Mano origins that harken to “Misadu.” He also linked one of Von Eberhard Fischer’s traditions about the origin of the Dã to “Misalu.” Fischer reported a “Gio” creation story which claimed that “the first people were sent down from heaven in a brass bucket hanging in a chain.”¹³² Zetterström wrote that this happened at “Misalu.” According to Zetterström, the most well known Mano accounts claim that the name of the first Mano man was “Zo Masakolo.” Some said that Zo Masakolo or Zo Musa Kromah was “Manding.” Zo Musa became wealthy, and his sons fought over his possessions after he died. The rest of the story talks about Zo Musa’s son “Gao” who traveled south. A less common variant says that “Zo Masakolo’s” father

¹³¹Højbjerg 1999; forthcoming.

¹³²Fischer 1967:704, in Zetterström 1976:19.

“Mini Wo” lived in the town of “Macka” in Guinea, but that he fled so the “Mandingo” would not make him pray to their “god.” He founded the town of Wai in today’s Côte d’Ivoire, and his son Zo Musa later established “Misalu.” Musadu and environs once belonged to the Mano, but the “Mandingo” later came and used some “medicine” to conquer the town. Zetterström associated the traditions that he collected about Zo Masakolo with the wider stories of Zo Musa that circulated in the area writing that “the traditions about Zo Masakolo are obviously widely known in this region.”

Gola sources

Dua Jei Kpo Asmana

Recorder: Warren d’Azevedo

Place of Recording: Zui, Liberia

Date of Recording: 24 April 1967

Length: c. 700 words

Number of story elements: 7

Form: Interview format in English

Source: Appendix 2.1; summarized in d’Azevedo (1969a:6-7).

Warren d’Azevedo has conducted considerable research on Gola history, and collected the only material that links the origins of some Gola to “Musadu.” In 1994 I asked d’Azevedo if I could examine the field material that he referred to in a paper that he presented at Stanford University in 1969. d’Azevedo responded by kindly sending a two-page typescript account from Dua Jei Kpo Asmana and a cover letter that discussed the

author, the circumstances of the recording, and his analysis of Kpo's testimony. These appear in Appendix 2.1. In short, Kpo said that the Gola migrated to their present location from "Dji-Dâ" (Jida) near Mecca to Musadu, to Mana, and finally to Kongba. A "Gola man" named "Musa" founded Musadu, but a powerful Gola man named "Gui" moved to Mana after the "Mandingo" took control of Musadu.

Oral Traditions: Methodological approach

I have collected about one hundred oral traditions that deal with various aspects of the Musadu epic. Some of the information only represents fragments of much longer traditions, such as Lt. Blondiaux's statement in 1897 that 'the village of Koro was founded by M'fa Moussa Bakaïoko.'¹³³ In about 1905, Capt. Dauvillier collected the first substantial account of Musadu's history in Guinea.¹³⁴ Many years later, I worked with colleagues such as Djobba Kamara and Mohammed Chèjan Kromah to record some versions that were several hundred lines long. The English translations of these primary sources appear in Supplementary Appendix. Twenty-first century historians face the problem of trying to use relatively recent oral traditions to make historical statements about people who lived many generations ago. Fortunately, scholars are in the process of developing solid methods to extrapolate evidence about the past from oral traditions.

I argue, like Jan Vansina, Joseph Miller, David Henige and other historians, that oral traditions are "representations of the past and the present at the same time."¹³⁵ Traditions are "documents of the present;" they are told in the present, and provide

¹³³Blondiaux 1987:371.

¹³⁴App. 3.

¹³⁵Vansina 1985:xii.

insights into how societies operate. People use history to justify political, social, economic and cultural actions in the present.¹³⁶ Oral traditions are also “expressions of the past” because they contain some information that comes from the past.¹³⁷ People usually do not preserve history for history’s sake, nor simply argue about the “raw events” of history. Individuals preserve information that is important for them at the time, and revalue the meaning and importance of that information as they encounter new situations.¹³⁸

Even though people do not usually record or use history for purely platonic reasons, historians can learn about the past by critically analyzing oral, written, and material sources. Although historians cannot learn everything about the past because people do not preserve records of everything that happened, they can make statements about what happened or might have happened given the evidence that is available. Evidence, however, is not isolated. Evidence is information about the past which has been “altered.” Even though the basic form in which the original stories has changed, and may be several times removed from the original event, the useful information that the historian can distill from the oral tradition is still evidence.¹³⁹ Oral traditions, then, are primary sources because some of the information that they contain is historical.

Historians interpret the evidence that they select, and learn more about the past as they gain more evidence. Historians should strive to be “truthful to the evidence;” their interpretation, which is subjective because it “refers to the way a person understands or conceives of a situation or event,” should not contradict other known evidence. Scholars

¹³⁶E.g., Hopkins 1972:1; Henige 1974:6; Curtin 1975:189; Kopytoff 1987:60; Johnson 1986:6.

¹³⁷Vansina 1985:xii; see Feierman 1974:3; Kenny 1977:280; Belcher 1999a:188.

¹³⁸Henige 1974:11; Irwin 1981:162; Kopytoff 1987:60; Sahlin 1985:vii.

¹³⁹Vansina 1985:29-32; Miller 1980:49-50; Tonkin 1986:207-209.

sometimes interpret the same evidence differently.¹⁴⁰ Leading scholars, for instance, hold entirely different positions about whether Sunjata existed. Most historians argue that he was historical. Folklorists and a few historians, however, contend that Sunjata never lived because no contemporary evidence proves his existence.¹⁴¹

Jan Vansina and Joseph Miller (one of Vansina's students) have worked in Central Africa and pioneered many critical methods to analyze oral traditions.¹⁴² They have examined how cliches, episodes, structures, epochs and anachronisms transform personal reminiscences into oral traditions, and identified ways that historians can analyze these elements to interpret oral traditions. Vansina and Miller explain that oral traditions are limited in at least three ways: they are less reliable than written documents with regard to the way that information is recorded and preserved; they have less potential than written documents to provide independent evidence; and their claims to explain anything that happened more than one to one and one-half centuries ago are fraught with chronological and factual difficulties that derive from the way people distill and transmit information over long periods of time. These kinds of traditions do, nonetheless, contain some data about what happened, but historians must understand the limitations that are inherent in oral traditions before they begin to analyze and interpret them.

Vansina and Miller's studies are germane to this work. In the pages that follow, their ideas are summarized and applied to the Musadu epic. The traditions, however, that they worked with in Central Africa, generally contain less information from the past than the Maniyaka accounts that tell about the founding of Musadu. The Maniyaka have the

¹⁴⁰Vansina 1994:237-239.

¹⁴¹E.g., Austin 1999a:3.

¹⁴²E.g., Vansina 1985; Miller 1980.

potential to transmit more historical data than the peoples with whom Vansina and Miller worked for two important reasons. First, the Manding had a highly stratified society that included, amongst its class of occupational specialists, bards who were charged in part with learning and disseminating history. Manding society was also centralized, which enabled its political and religious elite to sponsor its bards. Second, Arabic impacted the oral culture of the Manding in many significant ways. The Manding became a society with “restricted literacy” that revolutionized its trade, religion and the way that bards stored and narrated historical information.

Arabs and Berber Muslims introduced literacy to West Africa at the beginning of the second millennium, and started to teach traders and clerics how to read and write. While most clerics learned how to write at least a little Arabic and read easy documents, some became proficient. Traders mainly used Arabic to communicate information about the market to their partners, brokers and customers. Most clerics learned how to write in Arabic and read easy documents. Muslims and non-Muslims valued clerics for the way they used Arabic to divine and make amulets. Only ‘scholars’ (*kaamòò*) or more highly ‘clerics’ (*morilu*) could read classic texts on grammar, theology, jurisprudence, philosophy, commentaries on the Qur’an and the traditions of Muhammad and the prophets. Historical writing was not the basis upon which clerics developed their reputations, so few wrote book-length chronicles. The Manding, like their Fulbe neighbors, developed *ajami* or the writing of their language in Arabic script. Clerics did not encourage the widespread use of *ajami*; they mainly used it to teach the largely illiterate masses how to recite prayers and the Qur’an.¹⁴³

¹⁴³Goody 1971/1987:125-132; Robinson 1985:9-10,13-14; see Knappert 1972.

Literacy had a “halo effect” on the way that the Manding and Soninke transmitted history and did many other things, even though most of the people could not read Arabic.¹⁴⁴ Writing enabled people to acquire information in new ways, and altered the “form and content” of the stories that were transmitted. Arabic gave people a new means to accumulate knowledge. Some clerics recorded dates, genealogies, major battles, lists of chiefs and imams, and short biographies.¹⁴⁵ Bards or *jèlilu*, the repositories of oral tradition, were not isolated from literate clerics. The way that bards and clerics interacted in the Fulbe context applies to the Manding and Soninke in many regards. Clerics communicated with bards, attended some of their performances, and advised the ruling class. Bards interacted with clerics in chief’s courts, represented the outlook of the elite like clerics, listened to clerics translate Arabic writings, and learned about Islam from clerics. Some bards who became Muslims learned how to read and write Arabic.¹⁴⁶ *Funé* or bards who accompanied clerics specialized in learning and reciting Muslim literature. Some bards also seem to have collaborated with clerics to “conserve” oral texts.¹⁴⁷

Arabic-based literacy affected that way that *jèlilu* narrated history and the information that they disseminated. The simple note-taking of genealogies, lists, events and people helped bards remember what happened and enabled them to narrate longer stories. According to Jack Goody, “The very existence of writing leads to the creation of verse forms which would be inconceivable in a purely oral society... Once learnt, such a verse form may appear as part of the ‘oral tradition,’ or at least part of oral

¹⁴⁴Goody 1971/1987:126.

¹⁴⁵Robinson 1985:13; Goody 1987:106.

¹⁴⁶Robinson 1985:14-15.

¹⁴⁷Conrad 1995:94-94.

manipulation.”¹⁴⁸ Writing also helped bards narrate more “coherent” and “fixed” epics.¹⁴⁹ This was particularly true for Vase Kamala whose narratives of the Sunjata, Musadu and Samori epics were remarkably similar. Yves Person wrote that “the organic character and the fixity of the ‘Malinke’ historical tradition is remarkable.” He was struck by the minor differences in the different versions of the Sunjata epic that he encountered.¹⁵⁰ Scholars who have since conducted systematic analyses of the Sunjata epic support Person, noting that the core components of the epic have remained stable for the last century.¹⁵¹ Comparisons of all the versions of the Musadu epic beginning with stories which Dauvillier reported in 1905 show that the main episodes of the Musadu epic have remained steady for almost one century.¹⁵²

In addition, Islam contributed to development of a deeper sense of history by exposing the Manding to a greater awareness of space and time. The Manding’s sense of space widened because people learned how to use writing to measure, number, document observations, chronicle itineraries and make maps. Such advancements made people more aware of the world that existed beyond their own temporal boundaries. Islam also gave people a longer view of time, and thus a more linear sense of history. Muslims calculated daily time by the hours of prayer. They also had a calendar which marked days of the week, months of the year and eras.¹⁵³ Islam gave clerics and bards alike the means to establish chronology and write history. Although most Manding and Soninke bards did not know how to read and write, they lived within an environment of limited literacy that

¹⁴⁸Goody 1987:100,107.

¹⁴⁹Goody 1987:100.

¹⁵⁰Person 1972a:4.

¹⁵¹E.g., Bulman 1989:172; Belcher 1999a:92.

¹⁵²App. 3.

¹⁵³Goody 1971/1987:133-135.

helped them foster longer and more coherent epics which incorporated a broader sense of time and space.

Bards shift from being historians to praise-singers and performers as one travels toward the forest. Oral traditions are largely the preserve of families in these more southern areas; the best persons who narrate these stories are political leaders or elders known for their knowledge of history.¹⁵⁴ Vase Kamala, Tènu Kamã Kamara and Mammadi Kènè are a few of several examples from this study.

The Manding do have a better “historical sense” than their southern neighbors because “their social structure” with its bards and informed elders “lends itself better to the preservation of historical data.”¹⁵⁵ People in less-centralized societies base their notions of time on incidences that occurred in their villages and with their neighbors within the last century, and on events and markers that they associate with shrines and rituals. They do not focus on more political matters such as lists of chiefs and kings like people in more centralized societies.¹⁵⁶

The Kpelle, Loma, Konor, Mano and Dã are largely typical of peoples who are less centralized than the Manding. Their memories about their ancient links to Musadu, however, represent instances where their sense of the past extends beyond their villages and immediate ancestors. These non-Manding have good memories about this part of their history because their stories about Zo Musa and his exodus from Musadu are central to who they are and why they live in the places where they now live. They maintained

¹⁵⁴Person 1972a:6; Ford n.d. Person added that the Kamara traditions from Konya-Mani, Mau, and Worodugu are “not very coherent” when compared with the Sunjata accounts (1972a:6, fn. 9). The traditions that the Maniyaka narrate in the south are not as long as the Sunjata renditions that bards tell in north and northwest, but it is premature to say that they are not as coherent.

¹⁵⁵Person 1972a:5; see Jones 1985:156.

¹⁵⁶Goody 1971/1987:133-135; d’Azevedo 1989:110; Baum 1999:13.

political and commercial contact with the Maniyaka, and were influenced by the literate culture of the Maniyaka.

Oral traditions and rules of evidence

When scholars seek to interpret evidence that comes from oral sources, they must first follow the standard rules of evidence to judge the authenticity and background of each source. For written documents one must ask: is the source authentic; who wrote it; where was it written; when was it written; why was it written; and for whom was it written? One must ask the same questions of oral sources, but inquire further because oral sources are different from, and more difficult to evaluate than, written documents. The notes, recordings, images, genealogies and written texts that tell what oral traditions say are only records of the traditions and not the traditions themselves. The relationship between researchers and traditions is also often different because researchers often help create the record. This is true in the case of this dissertation where many of the sources come from interviews that I conducted with several people throughout southeastern Guinea. Lastly, one needs to ask how the text relates to a particular performance and to the narrative tradition as a whole.¹⁵⁷ Questions about the nature and context of oral traditions are more difficult to answer when dealing with narratives that have been purchased in local markets. There, most of the clues about the background of interviews usually come from tape vendors, things that the speakers say, and anything else that can be heard on the tape.

¹⁵⁷Vansina 1985:xiii,33-34.

Oral traditions and independent testimony

Oral traditions cannot internally provide independent testimony of themselves, so the evidence that historians extract from traditions “must remain tentative.” The testimony of two or more independent sources is necessary to establish validation or a high probability that something occurred “because the chances of two accounts relating the same event or situation are almost nil.”¹⁵⁸ Written documents and oral traditions confirm that something happened in the past when they independently provide the same information. When two or more people “from the same community or even society” tell the same story, the historian must assume that the stories are different variations of the same tradition. “Feedback” or the generally free transfer of information in society from peers, elders and written materials discount the probability that any of the information is independent. While it is easy to find feedback that comes from written sources, one can also detect feedback that derives from oral sources.¹⁵⁹

There are different levels of independent information. When people who now speak different languages and live in separate geographic locations tell their own versions of the same story, one can minimally argue that their stories are more independent than those who speak the same language and who live in the same area or whose connections over large areas has not been disrupted over time. For instance, most of the information about Musadu’s pre-nineteenth century history derives from nearly one century of reports and interviews from Maniyakā speakers who lived or live in southeast Guinea and central and western Liberia. None of these Maniyaka versions are independent because they flow from the same basic tradition. There are, however, several peoples from different

¹⁵⁸Vansina 1985:158-160.

¹⁵⁹Henige 1982: 81-87; Vansina 1985:155-160; see Austin 1999a:3.

language groups and scattered locations who recall aspects of the Musadu story that mainly focus on the roles that their ancestors reportedly played. These are the Kpelle and Konor of southeast Guinea, the Loma of southeast Guinea and northwest Liberia, the Dã and Mano of southeast Guinea and northcentral Liberia, the Gola of western Liberia, and the Vai of western Liberia who live near or along the coast. Some Loma narratives about Musadu are part of the same body of Maniyaka traditions because the Loma and Maniyaka have had intensive contact in the past. Other Loma traditions are qualitatively different from the normal stock of Maniyaka traditions because they may come from information passed down in initiation societies and are thus one step removed from the Maniyaka traditions.

Kpelle, Konor, Dã, Mano, and Gola accounts, are, like some of the society-based Loma traditions, slightly more independent than stories that the Maniyaka tell. They claim to remember when their ancestors lived in Musadu, and explain why they left. They do not recall any of the events that do not pertain to their ancestors such as the stories about Foningama, and only remember how they believe Musadu was founded and how the Maniyaka forced their ancestors to leave Musadu.

Vai stories about the migration of some of their ancestors from Musadu are even more removed from the Maniyaka traditions because the ancestors of the Vai started to become separated from their Maniyaka relatives during the sixteenth century Mane invasions.¹⁶⁰ Although there was probably always some contact between the Manding or proto-Vai on the coast and the Manding from the interior to help retain some continuity in culture and traditions, communication between the coastal and interior Manding became

¹⁶⁰Hair 1968a:53; Jones 1981; Massing 1985:34-39.

weak enough so that the Manding along the coast started to develop a new language, a different culture, and some distinct oral traditions. In time, these coastal Manding became known as Vai. There has thus been less opportunity for feedback between the Vai and Maniyaka than between the Maniyaka and the Loma, Kpelle, Konor, Dã, Mano and Gola. There are enough similarities between some of the Vai and Maniyaka stories to indicate that they originally came from the same milieu of traditions, but the Vai stories differ in some key aspects from the Maniyaka narratives. The Vai accounts thus may offer more insights than the other sources about what might have happened because they are the most independent of all the oral traditions and because some of the events that they recall differ markedly from what the Maniyaka say. Conflicting stories that come from peripheral zones often have more potential to speak about the historicity of a subject than mainline accounts which come from core areas.¹⁶¹

When little writing is available as is true for the Sunjata epic, and especially true for the Musadu epic, historians have two choices: they can either take an orientalist approach and ignore and/or disparage oral traditions because none of its information can be substantiated by written documents, or consider the possibility that oral traditions do contain some historical information and face all of the problems that are involved analyzing oral traditions.¹⁶² Oral traditions are limited because they cannot independently validate like written sources, so its evidence is ““on probation.””¹⁶³ Although historians cannot singularly use oral traditions to reconstruct what actually occurred, such evidence can have a historical basis and may be plausible. Oral traditions help historians ask the

¹⁶¹Henige 1982:72; Belcher 1985:265; Misiugin/Vydrine 1994:100.

¹⁶²Vansina 1985:199-200; Conrad 1992:147-148.

¹⁶³Vansina 1985:160; Bulman 1990:16.

right questions, focus on themes, and formulate hypotheses. Historians can increase the reliability of their conclusions by collecting as much outside evidence as possible from linguistics, archeology, anthropology, art history and regional history to substantiate their work. Painstaking research and analysis takes considerable time, but can be rewarding and help prevent historians from creating their own myths.¹⁶⁴

Elements that compose oral traditions:

personal reminiscences, cliches, episodes, structures, epochs and anachronisms

In addition to the fact that oral traditions cannot provide independent confirmation about things that happened in the past like written documents, the chronology that oral traditions establish for “anything beyond 100-150 years is vague and unreliable.”

Individuals and communities cannot remember detailed accounts of every story forever, and historians should not expect to find “oral archives.”¹⁶⁵ It is difficult for oral traditions to keep deep chronologies and recall extended details about things that happened long ago because of the manner in which communities make traditions. As people convert personal stories into oral traditions, they transform some of the information into cliches and structure their stories into episodes that can anachronistically move from one epoch to the next over time. Historians need to identify structures, epochs and anachronisms to help determine the basic sequence of events and try to distinguish historical from non-historical information.¹⁶⁶

People use “personal reminiscences” or stories about the recent past to make “oral

¹⁶⁴Moraes Farias 1974:484; Vansina 1985:199-200; Bulman 1990:10,449-452; Austin 1999a:3.

¹⁶⁵Vansina 1985:109.

¹⁶⁶Miller 1980:49.

traditions.” Personal reminiscences do not usually last much longer than the lifetimes of the individuals who were involved in the original story, though sometimes the process whereby people begin to transform current recollections into oral traditions can start only a few months after the event occurred. Some recollections are eyewitness accounts, or are hearsay that can be second-hand or may be more removed from an event that took place. Others still are fabrications that people try to pass off as historical events, so one is not to presume that statements are reliable just because they are said to be recent. In the first decade of the early twenty-first century, one can only rarely record good personal recollections that date before 1920. Oral traditions claim to describe things that usually happened before the lifetime of the oldest generation of people who live in a certain community.¹⁶⁷

Joseph Miller and Jan Vansina’s descriptions about how some private recollections become oral traditions are useful and largely similar.¹⁶⁸ Vansina has less of a tendency than Miller to divide how oral traditions develop by stages. According to Miller, “personal reminiscences” start to become transformed into “oral traditions” when people verbally pass on stories about notable events to the next generation. Vansina writes that stories about marriages, genealogies, migrations, the environment and the foundation of towns represent the kind of “reminiscences,” “historical gossip” or “personal tradition” that people easily recall in certain situations.

Miller argues that contemporary reminiscences become “extended personal recollections” one to three generations after an event takes place as first-hand witnesses

¹⁶⁷Hopkins 1972:2; Miller 1980:8; Vansina 1985:12-13; Baum 1999:12; Belcher 1999a:4. Henige makes a distinction between “oral history” or recent history and more dated “oral traditions” (1982:2)

¹⁶⁸The following discussion is based on Miller (1980:10-13,21-23) and Vansina (1985:17-24).

and others select what they believe are the most important details of the best stories; they effectively forget everything else that happened. The major details of these stories often last for 120-130 years. Vansina similarly explains that reminiscences start to become “family traditions” when one or more persons tell a story after the subject of the story dies. Family traditions only continue to be told in certain settings as “jokes or historical gossip” when people are cued to remember them. These traditions simultaneously start to acquire a more “stable form” and lose their importance. Most of the family traditions that eventually meld into longer held “group accounts” center around community leaders. Most of the other stories that have been told up to this time, especially about commoners, become forgotten within one or two generations.

Miller suggests that four to five generations after an event occurs, “professional oral historians” gradually shift significant stories from the private sphere to the public domain of “cliche-based narrative episodes.” Here, traditions start to “structure” accounts into logical patterns of events as they slowly change and adapt to the traditions that already exist. Miller cites one of Vansina’s articles about memory and history to note that “once perceptions of a happening have been coded and stored in memory,... that recollection will always exist... The individual recollection becomes standardized, streamlined, and edges closer and closer to a shared cultural norm approximating ‘what must have happened.’”¹⁶⁹

Vansina calls “oral traditions” - “group accounts.” He uses the word “group” because these type of accounts tend to focus on stories about “villages, chiefdoms, kingdoms, associations, and various kinship groups,” and “resources, women, office, and

¹⁶⁹Vansina 1980.

herds” that impact and reflect the identity of the group. Group accounts are more formal and institutionalized than family traditions, and become part of the overall oral history of the said group. Vansina correctly challenges Miller’s contention that all oral traditions are “conscious historical statements” that center around “cliches.” While some traditions are conscious cliché-driven statements, people sometimes remember historical details which are not clichés that become part of public traditions. Such information “makes them more reliable precisely because they are unconscious contributions.” Vansina also explains that personal recollections can change into group traditions in less than three decades.

Miller implies that two to three generations after local historians turn personal reminiscences into clichés and effectively make them community property, people start to stress why things happened rather than what happened. At this point, roughly 150-250 years after the event, story-tellers start to fabricate details around a stable cliché at the center of the story that fits what might have happened. The historian needs to identify the cliché and try to determine what it means. Although each telling of a story will be different, all of the stories will “converge on a single central point.” By the tenth generation, or about three hundred years later, the story will “begin to drift from one epoch to another in the past,” people and groups will merge into one personage, and the actions of one person will be attributed to another person and vice versa. People and actions do drift in some versions of the Musadu epic. Yet, it is usually possible to sort out much of the information by comparing it with other stories. Vansina notes that “details” can become “sharpened, altered, or left out” to such a point where accounts ultimately “are lost or fused into each other beyond recognition.” Miller notes that although political unrest can speed up the process of change, “there are cases where highly stylized and

fragmentary stories have kept fairly accurate records that date back to the sixteenth century and before.” The advent of literacy which gave clerics and bards the ability to record dates, ancestor lists and events helped the Manding and Soninke retain more accurate records of the past.

According to Vansina, the oldest type of group accounts are “traditions of origins and genesis.” These are the kind of stories that the non-Manding tell about Musadu. People condense group accounts into clichés about migrations and culture heroes; they explain how the world was made, how people were created, and how communities were established. Although anthropologists call such accounts “myths,” one should not simply reject them out of hand as figments of the mind because some of what they say may derive from the past. Vansina challenges historians to “separate logical constraint and cosmological orientation from what may be historical accounts condensed beyond easy recognition... as best as one can.”

Epics are another form of oral tradition, separate from group accounts.¹⁷⁰ “Epics are,” to cite John William Johnson,

poetic narratives of substantial length, on a heroic theme (so far we are on familiar territory); they are also multigeneric and multifunctional, incorporating more of a community’s diversity than might have been expected; and they are transmitted by culturally “traditional” means.¹⁷¹

Johnson also explains that narrators or their musicians deliver set lyrical patterns when they perform epics.¹⁷² Maninka narrators are usually *jèlilu*, professional musicians and story tellers. *Jèlilu* do not memorize their epics, but incorporate set formulas into their

¹⁷⁰Vansina 1985:25.

¹⁷¹Johnson, Hale, Belcher 1997:xviii.

¹⁷²Johnson 1986: ch. 3.

narratives which are familiar to their audiences. Each epic can be divided into lines, and epics can be several thousand lines long. Scholars have divided many orations of the Sunjata epic into lines, and I have done the same for each of the Maniyaka renditions of the Musadu epic.

Johnson and his colleagues warn that “readers need to keep in mind that the peoples who produce these African epics have their own words and generic boundaries for this genre.”¹⁷³ The epic tradition is not as developed in the south where Musadu is located.¹⁷⁴ Some of the accounts that the Maniyaka told meet all of the criterion of an epic, except for the rendition of the story by a bard and the lack of musical accompaniment. There are some *jèlilu* in the south; the one bard who narrated Musadu’s history for me did so without any music.¹⁷⁵ The other informants, however, were not *jèli*. Most were elders and acknowledged historians of their clans, towns or regions who narrated Musadu’s history without music. One of the most prolific story-tellers, Vase Kamala, narrated some of his accounts while he or someone else sporadically played tape recorded music in the background. Kamala’s performance sounded similar to the presentations that bards make when musicians sing while they narrate history. A few of the Maniyaka versions and all of the Kpelle, Loma, Konor, Dã, Mano and Gola stories are “group accounts” of which Vansina speaks. One can thus speak of the “Musadu epic,” but its usage technically only applies to the longer Maniyaka versions.

The Musadu tradition abounds with cliches, episodes, structuring, epochs and anachronisms. They are mentioned in the above summary of how people develop oral

¹⁷³Johnson, Hale, Belcher 1997:xix.

¹⁷⁴Person 1972a:5-6.

¹⁷⁵Fata Musa Kièlè (1990, App. 7.12; 1992, App. 7.21).

traditions, but are explained below to provide the basic tools needed to analyze the Musadu epic and gain more insights into some of the things that might have happened several generations ago.

“A cliché is a highly compressed and deceptively simple statement of meaning that refers to a much more complex reality, sometimes in the past.” Cliches are the main way that traditions retain information from the past because they are usually short, formulaic, action packed, and are often based on events that are familiar to listeners and easy to remember.¹⁷⁶ Cliches start out as statements, proverbs, songs, short stories, or long narratives. They address genealogies, migrations, settlement stories, relationships between peoples, and important events that people associate with the spirit world, ancestors, animals, and the environment. As local historians develop cliches to help them recall things that happened in the past, they transmit them to the next generation and gradually simplify them into phrases, sentences, or episodes that usually cannot be taken literally.¹⁷⁷ Cliches can remain fairly fixed or can continue to change and meld with other cliches until they become totally unrecognizable.¹⁷⁸

Historians must strive to interpret the deeper “implicit” meaning of cliches if they want to use oral traditions as historical evidence. It is not good enough to simply accept the “intended” or literal meaning of cliches. Historians must explain the “logical process” that they use to make the interpretations that they offer. Is the narrative unit being analyzed a cliché and not just something that speakers intend for the audience to take literally? What is the “core plot” or “gist” of the tradition? How do speakers expand the

¹⁷⁶Miller 1980:7,25,50-51.

¹⁷⁷Miller 1980:8; Henige 1982:87; Conrad 1985:34; Vansina 1985:139.

¹⁷⁸Vansina 1985:21.

plot? Is the cliché consistent with ethnographic customs or reasonably accepted knowledge about history? How many ways can the cliché be interpreted? Which interpretation is the best? Why? Does any independent evidence confirm the interpretation? Is the interpretation historically plausible? Some clichés are so vague and ambiguous that it is not possible to interpret them.

Interpreting clichés “is the most difficult task that students of oral history face” because people can interpret them so many ways and at so many different levels. Anthropologists, sociologists and folklorists usually argue that clichés only reflect present reality, so they use present circumstances to explain clichés. Historians often maintain that many clichés are based on things that happened in the past, so they attempt to reveal their implicit meaning. Historians need to analyze clichés from the vantage points of anthropology and history to derive optimal interpretations. In many cases, one can never be sure that the explanation which is offered even closely approximates what might have happened because the symbolism is so obscure. In other instances, it is impossible to guess what a certain cliché might mean, let alone offer unnecessary speculation. Clichés that are more transparent or have been explained in certain ways in other contexts can be easier to interpret.

A people’s consistent use of a certain cliché to explain how something happened is one of several indicators which signify that a cliché may derive from a historical event. Marked differences of opinion indicate that a cliché is complex. One is able to use the multiple and divergent elements in a complex cliché to reconstruct some of their finer points and use that information to develop a better hypothesis about what happened. One also has a better chance to interpret a cliché when many variations exist because multiple

versions help one see similarities, differences and changes. One is less able to identify a core idea or determine its meaning if there are only one or two versions. When working solely with cliches that derive from oral traditions, one can argue that their conclusion ranges from very speculative to highly probably; one cannot state that a particular interpretation is historical unless outside evidence confirms the cliche.¹⁷⁹

Episodes are another component of group accounts. According to Miller, narrators tellers develop “episodes” or “narrative stories” to “explain historical cliches in the present.” A historian must study “the cliche at the center of the episode” to deduce anything that might have happened in the past, not the episode that explains the cliche. When speakers combine many episodes that deal with one historical person, one cannot automatically conclude that the episodes “infer historical sequence.” Combined episodes may infer sequence, but historians need to critically assess each link that a narrator makes.¹⁸⁰

Lastly, “structuring” is another important feature of oral traditions. “Structuring” is the process that the mind uses to standardize and streamline events into a logical sequence that follow assumptions about the way things generally happen. Structuring is the result of “the collective aspect of memory working on historical data” as the public converts private reminiscences into the public domain of oral traditions. People in oral societies tend to remember controversies, great or infamous people who dramatically changed the destiny of an area, or striking events which occur quickly. Oral peoples likewise tend to forget accounts which reflect slow and routine change like the peacetime rule of most leaders or the normal migrations of small groups of people who do not effect

¹⁷⁹Miller 1980:24-28; Vansina 1985:90,139-145.

¹⁸⁰Miller 1980:8-9.

dynamic change. Over time, traditionists increase the dramatic elements of their stories and sometimes add supernatural components to help them recall what happened.¹⁸¹ People collectively regroup and fuse data together, formulate ideas into “oppositions,” and impose a “sequential order” on information to help remember what happened. It is easier for people to remember concrete cliches than the abstract concepts that the images represent. Public memory also tends to assemble information into a “coherent discourse” that is relevant and meaningful to the people who remember and recite the stories.¹⁸²

There are many signs of structuring that help historians determine whether or not accounts have been or are in the process of being structured. One mark is the presence of three major periods in a group’s overall oral tradition and history: the “recent past,” a “middle period,” and a “period of origins.” Time frames may also be associated with leaders or clusters of leaders or “as refined as calendar years.”¹⁸³ Several forms of structuring accompany this three-stage periodization - “floating gaps,” “telescoping,” “epochs,” “anachronisms,” “layering” and “culture heroes.” Scholars compare the amount of information that people remember in this periodization of history to an hourglass with its wide top, narrow middle, and broad base.¹⁸⁴

The history of Musadu can be broken up into three major segments of time: the recent past, the middle period or distant past, and the period or origins. There is considerable information about political, social and religious history in the recent period that recalls personal reminiscences and nascent oral traditions up to five generations old.

¹⁸¹Miller 1980:10-12,35; see Baum 1999:18.

¹⁸²Vansina 1985:171.

¹⁸³Miller 1980:13-14; see Vansina 1985:176.

¹⁸⁴E.g., Vansina 1985:169; Belcher 1999a:3.

This presently takes one back to the mid-to-late-nineteenth.¹⁸⁵ Here, the people of Konya-Mani still have some fairly detailed memories about Vafin Dole who became Musadu's chief in the 1860s, Saji Kamara and Blama Cissé who used Musadu as a pawn to further their own ambitions from the 1860s to the early-1880s, Vafin Dole's father who encountered Samori Turé, Samori Turé who sacked Musadu in the late-1880s, some faint reminiscences about Benjamin Anderson who went to Musadu in 1868 and 1874, and recollections about the French who started to colonize them in the late-1890s.

Accounts diminish markedly from the recent era to the "great black hole" of the distant past. People only remember a few names and events in the middle period, and usually do not recognize this great divide.¹⁸⁶ This period contains the most evidence for gradual change in oral traditions. The middle phase is a "floating gap" because the time span tends to commensurately advance with the present. As people add more information to their storehouse of present recollections, they tend to forget their oldest reminiscences or fuse them with earlier or more recent records.¹⁸⁷ Here, "Literate historians can fill in some gaps by analyzing large amounts of data from clan histories, personal recollections and the like."¹⁸⁸ Not surprisingly, the Maniyaka tell numerous traditions about their ancestors, how their towns were formed, and things that have happened in more recent times. Most of the information about Musadu during the middle period comes from accounts that explain how Beyla, Diakolidu and the other towns that surround Musadu were founded. Some data about Musadu can be gleaned from these stories.

People tend to transfer all of their stories about important changes into a single

¹⁸⁵Miller 1980:35; Vansina 1985:23; Baum 1999:18; Belcher 1999a:3.

¹⁸⁶Miller 1980:18,36; Vansina 1985:23,169; Wright 1991:404.

¹⁸⁷Vansina 1985:169; see Henige 1982:100.

¹⁸⁸Miller 1980:35.

period of origins that can yield considerable information. They tell about creation, migrations, the founding of towns and important individuals. Communities often view this as a static past; they cluster the accounts into what they believe is a fairly close chronological setting, and associate accounts that were originally not even related.¹⁸⁹ The Musadu epic is a classic example of this process. People have condensed all of their memories about Musa's founding of the town, Zo Musa's rise, Foningama's triumph over Zo Musa, and the fall of Foningama's sons into this one story. Most of these episodes are internally intelligible and can be fit into a relative sequence of events. The Maniyaka also tell a few stories that seem to have no relation to any of the other accounts. In this period of origins, people also tend to cluster several "epochs" into one "era" when epochs become too numerous. Each era is comprised of several epochs.¹⁹⁰ Thus, in the Musadu epic, there are two main eras; one where Musa founded Musadu; the second where Foningama went to Musadu, defeated Zo Musa and became a powerful chief.

Narrators usually place eras in the correct sequence, but frequently transfer episodes from one epoch to another. The movement of an event from one epoch to another is called an "anachronism." Anachronisms occur because the connections between cliches and the time frames in which they occur weaken as one becomes further removed from a situation in time. An "ascending anachronism" is the movement of an event from later to earlier times, such as the placement of the historical late-eighteenth century Sware into the Musadu epic.¹⁹¹ Ascending anachronisms occur most frequently because making events or people appear older than what they really are make them more

¹⁸⁹Vansina 1985:23; Miller 1980:15; see Conrad 1984:46; 1992:149; Wright 1991:404.

¹⁹⁰Vansina 1985:176-185.

¹⁹¹Ch. 8.

important and give them more credibility. When narrators place “dynasty founders” or “culture heroes” into a earlier epochs, they credit those individuals with the things that they and some of their successors accomplished. For instance, some of the actions that narrators ascribe to Foningama seem to have been done by one or more of his successors.

A “descending anachronism” is the transposition of an event from earlier to later times. Such is the case of those who claim that the Kamara who fled from the Manden was the same person who went all the way to Musadu and defeated Zo Musa. Descending anachronisms are not as common as ascending anachronisms. Narrators sometimes do, however, attribute the deeds of earlier individuals to heroes, and thus increase the stature of the said individuals by crediting them with greater and more time-honored accomplishments than what they deserve.¹⁹²

The presence of culture heroes like Sunjata and Foningama in oral traditions are another sign of structuring.¹⁹³ Culture heroes are individuals who have become so elevated in oral traditions that they, according to Henige, personify “great cultural processes” because they are “thought to be responsible for introducing new political, social, or economic skills to a previously ignorant people.”¹⁹⁴ Most evidence about culture heroes comes from oral traditions, not from contemporary written sources. Culture heroes, therefore, may be real or imagined. Henige cautions that culture heroes are the products of collective memory, and that historians should only regard them as “obscure images of a long-forgotten reality that may suggest to him some sequences of actual

¹⁹² Miller 1980:15-16; Vansina 1985:177; see Moraes Farias 1989:153; Conrad 1992:153.

¹⁹³ Vansina 1985:169.

¹⁹⁴ Henige 1982:88; see Vansina 1985:106,131; Johnson 1986:41-45.

events or cultural influences.”¹⁹⁵

“Layering” is another form of structuring which relates to the way that collective memories compose eras and epochs. Layering “gives the past the appearance of a layered composite of elements.” There may be several ranked layers of history in one epoch or during the reign of one dynasty. States, for instance, that come to rule over smaller-scale societies, need to keep the memory of their predecessors alive to justify their rule; their legitimacy stems from the notion that their former rulers paid them tribute or some other form of obeisance. Newcomers sometimes also modify oral traditions to reduce the status of those whom they succeeded. They might not remember them as “chiefs and kings,” but as “prophets and priests.”¹⁹⁶ Zo Musa, for instance, who now appears as a powerful sorcerer in the Musadu epic, might have also been Musadu’s chief.

Structuring greatly alters private recollections. When information is structured: “Data are discarded, meaning is added to other data, secondary causations are denied, and time sequences severed. Material can be transposed from one setting to another, rearranged ‘logically’ by topic, or condensed... Fusion prevents one from disentangling

¹⁹⁵Henige 1982:88-89; see Vansina 1985:108. Foningama compares favorably with Sunjata on lists that folklorists have developed which show the character traits of heroes, scoring on about half of the items that are listed (see Johnson 1986:70-72). Foningama, for instance, is said to have been the son of a leader or of distinguished parents (von Hahn 1876; Rank 1909; De Vries 1963), had an unusual conception (Raglan 1934), gone to a future kingdom (Raglan 1934), been prophesied to rise in power (von Hahn 1876), been abandoned (van Hahn 1876), found distinguished parents (Rank 1909), been fed by animals (De Vries 1963), been saved by animals or people of low status (Rank 1909), been raised by foster parents (Raglan 1934), escaped assignation attempts (Raglan 1934), been high-spirited (van Hahn 1876), been recognized and honored by people (Rank 1909), sought his fortunes abroad (van Hahn 1876), founded a kingdom (van Hahn 1876), defeated a king or beastly creature (Raglan 1934; De Vries 1963), received a woman as a reward (De Vries 1963), married the daughter of the preceding ruler (Raglan 1934), become a ruler (Raglan 1934), issued some laws (Raglan 1934), lost favor with his subjects for a time (Raglan 1934), died an extraordinary death (van Hahn 1876; Raglan 1934; De Vries 1963), and had a sacred object attributed to him (Raglan 1934). Although some claim that these kind of “heroes” are “purely mythical” because the stories told about them are “remarkably similar” (e.g., Raglan 1965:144,156; see Innes 1974:26), one should not just summarily dismiss their possible historicity; historical figures like George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and Napoleon Bonaparte rank high on these lists (Bulman 1990:223).

¹⁹⁶Miller 1980:39-40.

the original elements that were fused.”¹⁹⁷ Given that structured information only refers to a fragment of a past that is much more detailed and multifarious, how can historians use oral traditions to elicit any history?¹⁹⁸ First, not all information is structured. Second, the degree to which stories are structured can vary from era to era, epoch to epoch to epoch, and episode to episode. “Irregularities” in the structuring process do “survive:” not all data is discarded; completely new meaning is not added to the data that remains; not all secondary causations are denied; not all time sequences are severed; and not all material is transposed, rearranged, or condensed.¹⁹⁹ These irregularities leave “telltale signs” that historians can use to discern how narrators have composed some of the information and come to a better understanding about what happened in the past.²⁰⁰

When historians examine oral traditions, they need to determine if some of the material is telescoped and layered, whether it appears in an hourglass, and whether it shifts from one period to another. If one recognizes patterns like these in oral traditions, then structuring exists. Historians need to examine as many variants of an account as possible to ascertain how far material has been structured. Short stories like historical gossip that derive from recent times have not been structured. Material that is patterned but still has many variations means that the structuring process has started to transform them from reminiscences to traditions. Accounts that are stable suggest that the material is well structured; people have remembered what they believe are the most important stories and discarded most of the material that their ancestors narrated in earlier times. Even though one cannot project how long material has been structured, one can safely

¹⁹⁷Vansina 1985:167,172.

¹⁹⁸Miller 1980:35.

¹⁹⁹Vansina 1985:172.

²⁰⁰Miller 1980:38; Vansina 1985:172.

argue that the memory process has done far more to structure material and develop clichés in accounts that are four to five generations old than in those that have occurred in more recent times.²⁰¹

The Sunjata and Musadu epics are examples of oral traditions that have been in their present form for at least seven or eight generations. The first versions of the Sunjata epic that were collected in the 1890s are essentially the same as they are today; the epic has not evolved since that time, and few if any new clichés have been introduced.²⁰² If the turn of the twentieth century is taken as the late date when the epics were already structured, and it roughly takes four to five generations for a story to be patterned and become part of an oral tradition, then one can reasonably contend that both of the epics have minimally been in their present forms for about 210-240 years or since the second half of the eighteenth century.

Historians are not in total agreement about when oral traditionists started to develop the Sunjata epic. Most agree that a few fixed texts were minimally recorded in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and that some of these continue to be told today. Many historians argue that most of the epic, however, was probably formed in the late-eighteenth century in the region of Mininjan. That was when Jabateh bards started to celebrate the story of Sunjata every seven years at Kaaba. Nearby Kela was the place where the Jabateh learn the Sunjata epic.²⁰³ Some theorize that the Maninka formed the Sunjata epic during the late-sixteenth century to recall Mali's glory as the last vestiges of

²⁰¹Vansina 1985:167-168.

²⁰²E.g., Bulman 1990:452-453. This is true for the variants of the Sunjata epic that were, until the 1990s, mostly collected in Mali. The "older" variants need to be compared with the "newer" versions recorded more recently in Guinea that are now being published (e.g., Conrad 1999a).

²⁰³Austin 1997:250; 1999b:70-71; Wilks 1999:47-49.

the Mali fell apart.²⁰⁴ Others argue that the core epic could have started during the mid-fourteenth century when the empire was at its height to celebrate Sunjata's accomplishments.²⁰⁵

The core episodes of the Musadu epic, like the Sunjata epic, were already developed by the turn of the twentieth century. The key elements of the Musadu epic that Dauvillier recorded in the early-1900s are similar to stories that the Maniyaka tell today.²⁰⁶ Thus, the Musadu epic minimally dates back another four to five generations from 1905 to the second half of the eighteenth century. One of the episodes that is told in song form is fixed verse that seems to be much older than most of the other information that people tell in their oral traditions about Musadu.²⁰⁷ It would be speculative to try and ascertain whether the Musadu epic was formed when the Kamara still ruled Musadu to celebrate Foningama's achievements as personal reminiscences started to fade, or after the Kamara were exiled from Musadu to remember the "glory years." In addition to the fact that the oral traditions do not give historians a good sense of when the Kamara stopped ruling Musadu, there is not enough information at the present time to answer to this question.

We now turn to the chapters of the dissertation that describe and analyze how the Kpelle, Loma, Maniyaka, Vai, Mano, Dã and Gola say that Musadu was founded.

²⁰⁴Niane 1974, in Bulman 1990:452.

²⁰⁵Bulman 1990:452-454.

²⁰⁶App. 3.

²⁰⁷Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8, l. 1124-1131; Ch. 8.

CHAPTER 2

THE KAMARA IN THE MANDEN

This chapter reviews how narrators situate the Kamara in the Manden, and examines the circumstances by which some Kamara left the Manden and headed toward Musadu. The Maniyaka claim that the Foningama who went to the Musadu was a descendant of Faran Kama Kamara, a chief who ruled Sibi or Tabon. The Kamara and/or Sunjata supposedly forced Faran Kama to leave the Manden because they believed that he had become too powerful. If there is any validity to these claims, then the Kamara were some of the people who contributed to the problems that Sunjata had to solve when he tried to consolidate the Manden. The Maniyaka also say that Faran Kama became a *funé* or Islamic praise singer after his clansmen or Sunjata defeated him. While Foningama might have been a *funé*, it is improbable that a chief of either of these powerful towns was reduced to an artisan. Rather, it is more likely that Foningama's ancestor (or ancestors) was a *funé*, and that the Kamara in the south added Faran Kama's name to their genealogy to enhance their own prestige.

This initial appraisal about what the Maniyaka say of Foningama's ancestor who left the Manden is only valid to the extent that anything in oral traditions can be deemed verifiable given the lack of independent evidence to corroborate what they say. The traditions need to be reevaluated, tested with other data, and adjusted accordingly. The historian could conjecture an almost limitless range of things that could have happened given the sometimes confused or extremely patterned information that has passed through untold numbers of individuals over several generations. The best that a historian can do is

evaluate the evidence at hand and offer what seems to be the most plausible explanation when there is enough information to do so. Sometimes, nothing of substance can be or should be extrapolated because the narratives do not offer any reasonable clues.

In several Maninka and Maniyaka oral traditions, the Kamara who lived in the Manden were sorcerers and blacksmiths who belonged to three powerful ruling groups: the ‘masters of the quiver,’ ‘noble captives,’ and the *blaw* [1].¹ The ‘masters of the quiver’ were warriors who were normally not permitted to become chiefs. ‘Noble captives’ or ‘noble warriors’ might have been descendants of slaves from Ghana who became chiefs during the unsettled decades between the downfall of Ghana and the formation of the Mali empire. They were among the first clans in the Manden who possessed the secret knowledge that was needed to maintain the land and perform rituals. The *blaw* were smiths and sorcerers who claimed Fakoli as an ancestral figure.²

According to oral traditions, the Kamara ruled in the heartland of the southern Manden in Niani and the Sibi-Tabon-Kaaba-Kirina quadrant. Although separate Kamara lineages seem to have ruled these towns and regions independently, narratives from northeast Guinea indicate that the Kamara were starting to unite the Manden when Sumaworo conquered the Maninka in the early-thirteenth century.³

In some narratives, Sunjata is said to have returned from exile and solicited the support of the Kamara and other Maninka clans to defeat Sumaworo. The Kamara were,

¹The numbers in brackets are the episode numbers (App. E).

²Moraes Farias 1989:153-156; Conrad 1992:174-181; Conrad 1995:104-110. Some of the Musadu related traditions support the more northern views of the Maninka which claim that the Kamara were warriors and conquerors (Wata Mammadi Kamara, App. 7.37; Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Kaba 1971; Fahnbulleh 1969). Some etymologies of “Kamara” also claim that Kamara were warriors. Kamara is said to mean ‘elevation’ in one instance (Humboldt 1918:539; see Sayers 1927:72), or be a contraction of *ka a mala* or ‘to control him’ (Sidibé 1993, App. 7.33, ln. 434).

³Conrad 1999a:45.

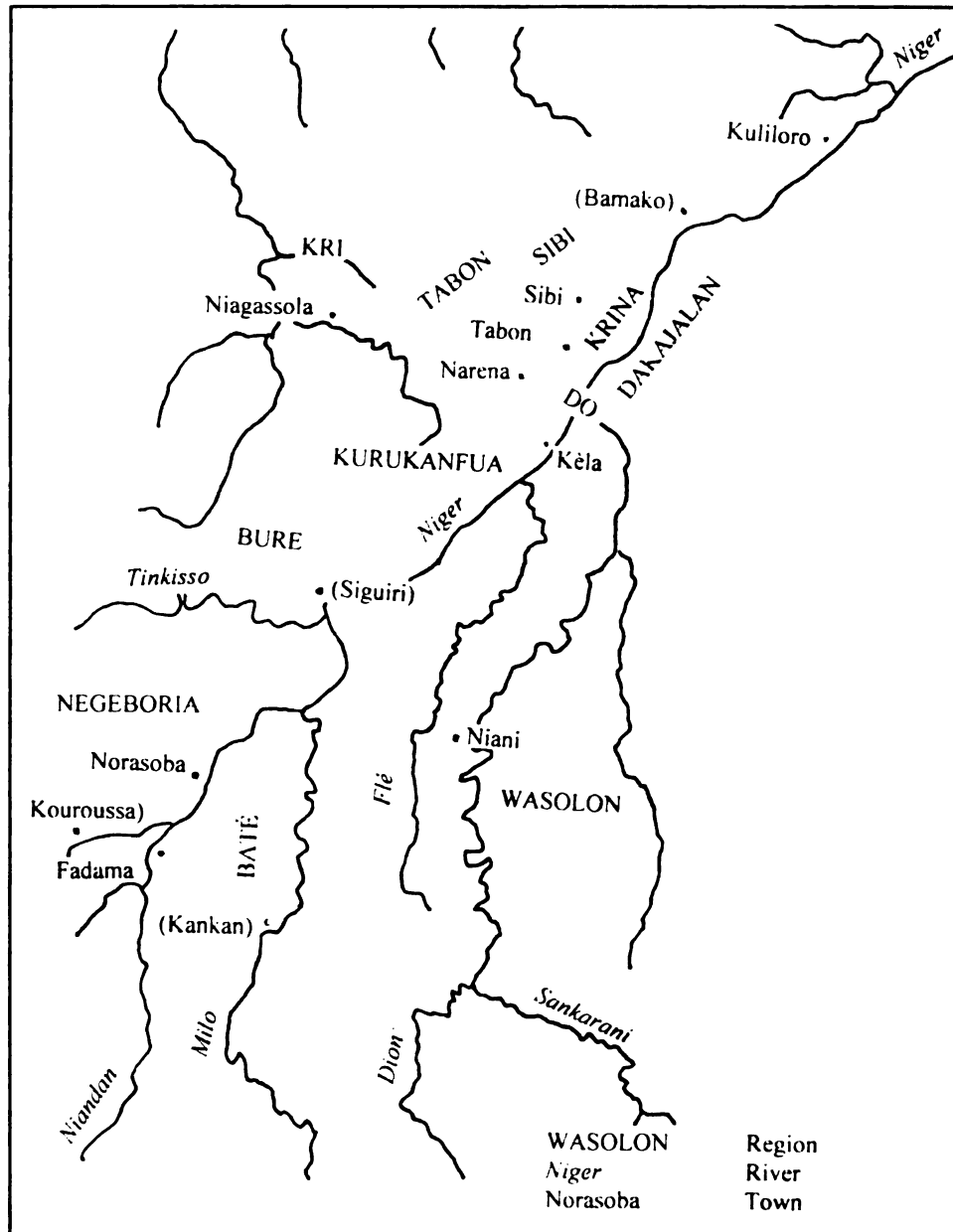


Figure 23 The Manden Heartland (Sources: Bulman 1990:18; Conrad 1999a:xvii)

according to some Maniyaka, divided about how to treat Sunjata. Some did not reportedly support Sunjata when he went into exile, and some rebelled when he returned to fight Sumaworo. Certainly, not all of the Kamara wanted to relinquish their chiefdoms to Sumaworo, Sunjata or anyone else who they feared might deprive them of their land.

Some accounts also indicate that the Kamara fought amongst themselves. These internal clan conflicts were allegedly between fathers and sons, uncles and nephews, half-siblings, and cousins.

Many oral narratives imply that the Kamara who left the Manden was the same person who went to Musadu. They call him Foningama; Foningama is a variation of Faran Kama or Foni Kama. Faran means ‘emperor’ or ‘superior king’ in Maninka, and Foni is a praise name.⁴ Kama was the individual’s personal name, so his full name was Faran Kama Kamara or Foni Kama Kamara (Foningama).⁵ Kama could have initially been called Faran Kama. Foni might not have been added as an alternative to Faran until after Kama left the Manden. A few accounts claim that Foni was added to his name after some Fulbe in the south hid him in a *fonio* granary when Sunjata or some of his clansmen were chasing him.⁶ The name Foningama does not seem to be widely used any further north than modern Kerouane and other towns in Sumandu. It is also necessary to indicate that Faran Kama or Foningama represents at least two persons; the Kama in the Manden - Faran Kama, and the Kama who went to Musadu - Foningama. Some traditionists divide the name Faran Kama and say that Faran and Kama or Kamājan respectively ruled Tabon and Sibi.⁷ This distinction is retained in this work, although there is considerable

⁴Delafosse 1955:185; Hair/da Mota 1977:270, n. 179.

⁵The sources give numerous spellings and pronunciations of Foningama’s name (App. D). There are seventeen forms of Faran or Fèn Kama, and nineteen of Foningama. Some of the differences relate more to the spelling conventions of the recorders than to different pronunciations of the narrators. Differences in dialect and orthography are also factors. Some called him Kamā or Kamājan (Kamanjan), and one said Joma. The different spellings or pronunciations are as follows: (1) Faran Kama - Farèn Kaman, Faren Kaman, Farin Kaman, Faring Camara, Fangamma, Falikaman, Fali Kaman, Faingama, Fèngama, Fèngama, Fere Kama, Fèlèngama, Fekamara, Feren-Kaman, Fèren-Kaman, Fèningama, Fèningama; and (2) Foningama - Fòningama, Fonikaman, Foni Kaman, Fonikaman, Fonikaman, Fonigama, Fònjikama Kamara, Foniṅkama, Foniṅ Gamara, Fòni Kama, Foniṅkaman, Foniṅgaman and Foni-Kaman. Other variants are Foni Yama (Juku), Foni Yama Kamā, Foni Kali, Foni Kama and Foniògama.

⁶Ch. 3.

⁷E.g., Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:31; Kamala 1985, in Geysbeek et. al. 1998:28.

confusion in the oral traditions about these names.⁸

The Kamara Presence in the Manden: Power, Protest and Internal Struggle

The Kamara in Niani

Many oral traditions claim that Niani is an old Kamara town. They maintain that the Kamara warrior-chief of Niani, Niani Mansa Kara Kamara, made Niani into a formidable chiefdom before Sunjata formed the Mali empire [2].⁹ The narratives consistently claim that Mansa Kara was a powerful sorcerer and a contemporary of Sunjata, and that he was important enough to evoke stories of conflict between himself and Sunjata.¹⁰ One of the most well-known orators of the Musadu epic, Vase Kamala, noted that the first ancestor of the Kamara lived in Niani, and that his name was Wakasi.¹¹

⁸Some imply that Faran and Kama were the same person. They either combine both names to make Faran Kama (Conrad 1992:190, n. 11; Conrad 1996:208; Kouyaté 1992, in Conrad 1999a:45-47; Kouyaté 1987, in Conrad 1999a:177), or give the chief dual names to corresponded to the towns he ruled - Sibi Wana Faran Kamara and Tabon Wana Faran Kamara (Diabate, in Jansen 1995:118; Kouyaté 1992, in Conrad 1999a:46). Still others say that Faran and Kama were cousins (Kouyaté, in Niane 1984:131; see Camara 1980:30-31) or brothers (Kamala 1985, in Geysbeek 1998:28; see Kamissoko/Cisse 1975:93), or that they represented two separate lineages (Kouyaté 1992, in Conrad 1999a:61; see also Darbo 1972:2; Kamissoko/Cisse 1975:93; Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:30-31; Massing 1985:39; Conrad 1995:100; Kouyaté 1988, in Conrad 1999a:61-62). It is difficult to make a firm statement about any of this information because Faran and Kama are praise names. While Faran and Kama sometime refer to individuals, many names from this era represent geographic areas, lineages or other groups of people. Some of these persons may have lived before or after Sunjata, and probably represent composite figures who have taken on the attributes of some of their predecessors and successors.

⁹E.g., Conrad 1992. Kara might be Fara (see fn. 11).

¹⁰Vidal 1924:326; Kante 1966:14; Moundekeno/Nay 1968:9; Condé 1974:88; Kamissoko/Cisse 1975:91-101; Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:95, n. 78; Sisòkò 1986:136; Johnson 1986:220, ln. 3055; Ly Tall et. al. 1987:69-71; Bulman 1990:350-351, 368-370, 438-443; Conrad 1992:173-174; 178, 184-185; 1994:375; Diabate 1995:185-187; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.38, ln. 27.

¹¹Kamala 1985, in Geysbeek et. al. 1998:28; App. 7.6, ln. 1031. Wata Mammadi Kamara (Kamara = Kamala) similarly stated that Wata Koho (Wakasi) was the 'grandfather' of the Kama who immigrated from the Manden and went to Musadu. Kamala claimed also that a man named Brahima (See Broima) came from Niani, but he did not link Brahima with Wata Koho (App. 7.37, l. 22-32). According to Wa Kamissoko, the Kamara originated from Wagadu, and a man named Kolomba Kamara founded Niani. One of Kolomba's grandsons five generations removed was Niani Mansa Kara Kamara (Cissé/Kamissoko 1988:351; see 1975:93). A Kankan bard said that "Nianfara Camara" or Niani Faran Kamara came from "Wa'adou" or Wagadu (Kante 1963:14). On another note, Wakasi means 'lineage (*si*) of Waka.' Waka is a reference to Wagadu or the 'land of Waga,' and to the early Soninke long-distance traders called the Wangara (see Massing 2002).

In Kamala's account, Wakasi was also the forebearer of the Kamara warrior-chief class.¹² Wakasi is a shortened form of Saïd ibn Abi Wagas who is listed in early-twentieth century hagiographies of West African Islamic history.¹³ Saïd ibn Abi Wagas appears in one oral tradition as a free literate slave who migrated from Arabia during the time of Muhammed. He went to Tabon, got married, became their king, and unified the land between today's Bamako and Siguiri. According to this tradition, one of his seventh generation descendants was Sunjata's alleged contemporary Faran Kamara.¹⁴ The Arab proto-type of Saïd ibn Abi Wagas is Sa'd b. Abū Waqqās, an early Muslim who drew the first blood for Islam and fought for Muhammed in Medina.¹⁵

The Kamara in Kaaba

The Kamara and Traoré are said to have been the first Maninka clan to settle in Kaaba [3]. The Kamara became Kaaba's chiefs, but Sunjata's Keita clan later superceded the Kamara and relegated them to the status of Kaaba's ritual earth chiefs.¹⁶ According to two oral traditions, Foningama's ancestors immigrated from Kaaba.¹⁷ Given that all of the other accounts claim that Foningama's ancestor was from Tabon or Sibi, one can reason that Kaaba is more representative, in this case, of the southern Manden that includes Sibi and Tabon.

¹²D. Conrad, personal communication, 2 January 2002.

¹³Humblot 1918:539; Sayers 1927:100.

¹⁴Condé 1966, in Camara 1980:30-31, 158. Condé called him Abdul Wakas. Laye Camara published Condé's narrative in 1980, fourteen years after Condé's death (Person 1972a:5, fn. 4).

¹⁵Ishāq n.d., in Guillaume 1955:118, 281-286; see Malik c. 1300s/1985:319.

¹⁶Conrad 1992:160-165; Jansen 1999:310.

¹⁷Kante 1971-72:19; Person 1971:675.

The Kamara in Tabon and Sibi

Several sources state that the Kamara who went to Musadu immigrated from Tabon or Sibi. Tabon and Sibi are located fourteen and seventeen miles west of the Niger river, mid-way between Narena and Bamako. According to oral traditions, Tabon was a fortress that Kamara blacksmiths governed. The Kamara had slaves who farmed, hunted, made tools and fought for them.¹⁸ Some Kamara from Tabon might also have been Muslims, given that some of their lineages might have immigrated from Timbuktu and other Muslim towns in the north.¹⁹ Some say that Sibi was not a blacksmith town, although it probably had blacksmiths.²⁰ Oral traditions published from northeast Guinea indicate that “the Kamara of Tabon and Sibi had to some extent begun the unification of Mande chiefdoms (*jamanaw*),” and that the Kamara ruler of Sibi and Tabon was ‘the first *mansa* (‘chief’) of Manden.’ The Soso who later conquered most of the Manden “overshadowed the earlier dominant position of the Kamara dynasty.”²¹

The Kamara in Tabon

Three sources stated that Foningama’s ancestor immigrated from Tabon [4].²² Most variants of the Sunjata epic say that the Tabon Kamara supported Sunjata; Sunjata stayed in Tabon when he went into exile, and the Tabon Kamara sided with Sunjata when

¹⁸Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:31; Condé 1966, in Camara 1980:30-31,202; Brooks 1993:70; Conrad 1995:108.

¹⁹Darbo 1972:2; see Conrad 1995:100-102.

²⁰Camara 1980:30-31,202; see Moundekeno/Nay 1968:9; Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:59; Kamara 1982:15-16.

²¹Fanyala Kouyaté 1992, in Conrad 1999a:45-47,52, In.83; see Sanassy Kouyaté 1996, in Conrad 1999a:42, In. 1409.

²²Soko Konè placed Foningama in Tabon (App. 7.15), and Layi Kèwulèn Kamara said that he lived in Timoni (App. 7.16). Timoni might be Tabon. According to two Guinean historians, Foningama fled from Tabon because of unrest (Kaba 1971; Moundekeno 1979:19).

he returned to fight Sumaworo.²³ Some of the northeast Guinea traditions give the impression that Faran Kamara asked Sunjata to leave Tabon when he went into exile to “keep him safe from the assassination plots by Dankaran Tuman,” but then served as one of Sunjata’s advisors after he went back to the Manden.²⁴ At least one source suggests that Sunjata left Tabon because friction developed between the two men.²⁵ One account states that whereas the ruler of Tabon only hesitantly sheltered Sunjata during his exile, the ruler’s son Faran was an enthusiast of Sunjata.²⁶ These differences of opinion about whether or not the Kamara of Tabon supported Sunjata may be partly due to the fact that the Tabon Kamara were themselves divided about how to treat him. Not all of the Kamara in any other town or region would have uniformly shared the same opinion about Sunjata.

The Kamara in Sibi

Many Maninka variants of the Sunjata epic say that Kama Kamara of Sibi and Sunjata maintained close ties during and after the war against Sumaworo.²⁷ Some even claim that Sunjata forged an alliance with Sibi by marrying Nagalen, ‘the king of the

²³Bulman 1990:360,366.

²⁴D. Conrad, personal communication, 1997; see Conrad 1999a. Dankaran Tuman was supposedly Sunjata’s half-brother.

²⁵Condé c. 1981, in Conrad 1999a:123.

²⁶According to Mamoudou Kouyaté, whose testimony is sometimes infused with interpretative comments by the editor of his testimony D.T. Niane, the aging king of Tabon welcomed Sunjata and his mother when they went into exile, but ‘advised her to go as far away as possible’ because he ‘did not want to fall out of favor with whoever ruled at Niani.’ Kouyaté said that Niani’s ruler at the time was Sunjata’s half-brother Dankaran Touman from whom Sunjata was fleeing. Kouyaté added that the ‘king’s’ son Faran reversed his father’s ‘policy of prudence’ toward Sumaworo and sided with his childhood ‘companion’ Sunjata when Sunjata returned to the Manden (Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:31,48-49; see Darbo 1972:2). Ibrahima Kante said that “Faran Kamara” refused to let Sunjata enter Tabon when Sunjata went into exile (1960; see Condé 1966, in Camara 1980:216).

²⁷E.g., Conrad 1999a; Conrad, personal communication, 2000.

daughter of the Kamaras.²⁸ Yet, even some of these oral traditions acknowledge that Kama and Sunjata faced off in one or more sorcery duels to determine who was the most powerful. They were typical of powerful “hunters and warriors... [who] roamed the country seeking zones of power, matching themselves against rival chiefs and occult forces alike.”²⁹ For example, Kama is said to have outmatched Sunjata in one account of an archery contest, and was defeated by Sunjata in another version of the contest.³⁰ In all instances, no matter who won, the Maninka say that Kama eventually supported Sunjata; he helped Sunjata fight Sumaworo and played a leading role in Sunjata’s new administration.³¹

Some Maniyaka claim that Foningama’s ancestor immigrated from Sibi [5].³² They say that he left because he resisted Sunjata’s rise to power or lost an internal family struggle. Tènu Kamã Kamara’s story begins like others narrated in the north, but differs in its outcome. According to Kamara, Sunjata challenged Kama to an archery contest. Kama shot one arrow through one unfinished hoe head. Sunjata followed by shooting an arrow through seven unfinished hoe heads and warned Kama not to ‘misuse’ his power. Sunjata then enlisted Kama in his army and made him his ‘first “Prime Minister.”’ In time, Sunjata learned that Kama was going to turn against him, so he planned to kill him.

²⁸Condé 1966, in Camara 1980:125; Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:16.

²⁹Conrad 1994:361.

³⁰Kouyaté 1988, in Conrad 1999a:62; Kouyaté 1987, in Conrad 1999a:193-194.

³¹Vase Kamala likewise claimed that Kama hosted Sunjata when Sunjata went into exile (Kamala 1985, in Geysbeek et. al. 1998:41; see Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:77-78). Kamanjan then conquered Tabon and Sibi, and installed his older brother Faran as the chief of Tabon. When Sunjata returned, he went to Sibi where Kama was hosting all the chiefs of Manden, and rallied them before they fought Sumaworo. After the war, Kama prepared the meeting place at Kulunkanfua near Kaaba where Sunjata ‘divided Mande’ among all of the chiefs. Sunjata made Kama his second in command and let him rule Sibi (see Kouyaté 1988, in Conrad 1999a:62-63). Vase Kamala parted from the Maninka narratives by saying that one of Kama’s descendants left Sibi (App. 7.6, l. 1031ff).

³²Beavogui 1973-74; Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7; Amara Kamara 1986, App. 7.9; Soko Konè 1992, App. 7.15; Mammadi Kamara 1993, App. 7.33a. Inter-Kamara strife is more prominent in stories about Sibi than in those that discuss the Kamara presence in Tabon.

After an old woman named Nafadima warned Kama of the conspiracy, Kama fled to the top of the mountain near Sibi, performed three amazing acts, and disappeared into a hole that God created. When Kama's older brother Tabu (Tabon, Faran) looked into the hole and saw his brother, he praised Kama and became his *jèli*. Dauvillier's sources likewise said that Sunjata tried to kill Foningama because it was forecast that he would become the next king. Foningama fled after he learned of Sunjata's plan.³³ Thus, the rivalry or latent hostility that appears between the Kamara and Sunjata in the Maninka traditions are projected as having developed into confrontations in some Maniyaka narratives. Perhaps this is because the only people who recall any split that might have occurred between Sunjata and some of the Kamara of Sibi are the descendants of the Sibi Kamara who left the Manden.

Several oral traditions claim that the Kamara fought amongst themselves in Sibi, and that Foningama's ancestor became one of the victims. In the testimony of Moussa Kièlè, for instance, the Kamara drove Kama from Sibi because he was destined to become great and prosperous. Kama fled to the top of a nearby mountain, went into a long tunnel, and emerged in Siguiri or the Wasolon.³⁴ Seku Salifu similarly claimed that the ancestor's brothers threatened to kill him after they learned that he would one day 'shake the world,' and that he left on the advice of his mother.³⁵ Lanse Kamara asserted

³³App. 3.

³⁴App. 7.12, l. 213; 7.21, l. 21-48. Layi Kèwulèn Kamara insinuated that Foningama passed through the mountain that is 'open' in Sibi and went to Gbè (App. 7.16). Tènu Kamā Kamara's story cited above is similar (App. 7.19). For several accounts that explain how Kama or another Kamara spilt Sibi mountain with a sword or disappeared through the mountain, see Kouyaté, in Niane (1980:59), Leynaud/Cissé (1978:45), Condé (1966, in Camara 1980:195); Cissé/Kamissoko (1991:83-85), and Diabate (in Jansen 1995:118,183). All of the speakers are referring to the great natural stone archway near Sibi that has developed larger-than-life dimensions in oral traditions. Most of the Maniyaka informants have probably never seen this stone arch (David Conrad, personal communication, 2 Jan. 2002).

³⁵App. 5.1; see Leynaud/Cissé 1978:150-152.

that the younger Kamara ousted his older brother Kama from Sibi, and that Kama became a *funé*. Although such older-younger brother conflicts are repeated later on in the Musadu epic, they must usually be taken as motifs that have no historical basis. While narrators often cast problems into disputes about sibling rivalries because they make interesting stories, they usually have no clue about what really happened.³⁶

In another set of traditions, Babu Condé stated that a Frikama (Faran Kama) supported Sumaworo during the Manden war, and that he fled before Sunjata's forces captured him.³⁷ Paul Korvah from northwest Liberia said that Foningama was the son of a "Mali king" who moved to Musadu after his brother Songaini defeated him in a bid for the throne.³⁸ According to Moliké Sidibé, the ancestor of the Kamara sired Foningama, Miakèdè, Sonkoli, Soumabale and Friki in Sibi. All of his sons dispersed during a time of trouble. Foningama migrated to Siano in today's Côte d'Ivoire, Sonkoli went to Kouroussa, Soumabale went to Baleya near Kouroussa, and Friki went to Fria.³⁹ Condé, Konneh and Sidibé's accounts suggest that several Kamara dispersed from Sibi after Sunjata defeated Sumaworo. Foningama's ancestor's departure seems to represent only one of several Kamara lineages that left the Manden because they did not support Sunjata or some of his successors, and/or because of infighting that occurred between the

³⁶David Conrad, personal communication, 2 Jan 2002; see Jansen/Zobel 1996.

³⁷Condé 1966, in Camara 1980:214. Friki below is probably a contraction of Fri Kama or Farin/Faran Kama.

³⁸Korvah 1971:21. Korvah might have gotten some of this information from Soko Konneh. Paul Korvah wrote that Foningama left Mali because of a drought and because he lost a four year war for the throne that he fought against his "countrymen" (= Songaini and others?) (1995:11). Another Loma account claimed that Foningama was a son of Mali's King Musa, and that Foningama fled from Mali after he lost a battle ("Lorma Folktale" c.1969/1994:52; see Cordor 1968:15).

³⁹Sidibé 1997:81. Sidibé's story corresponds to the Kamara genealogy that Daouda Camara printed (App. 4.9), and is apparently based on Djeke Kamara's unpublished manuscript (n.d.). The Kamara ancestor who Sidibé did not name is probably the Faran Kamā Kamara in Camara's genealogy. Frikama and Friki, and Songaini and Sonkoli, are variants of the same name. Far away in the Gambia, some recall that one of the sons of the Sibi Kamara migrated to "Baliya" (Innes 1974:225).

Kamara. Sunjata did not automatically rule the Manden after he and his allied defeated Sumaworo. According to oral traditions, chiefs like Fakoli who wanted to retain too much autonomy also eventually left.⁴⁰ The same could have been true for some of Kamara. As powerful rulers, it is plausible that not all of the Kamara supported Sunjata's bid to gain power. By supporting Sunjata, they stood the chance of losing power in Tabon, Sibi and other places in the southern Manden that they ruled.

Although the Maniyaka attribute the exodus of the Kamara from the Manden to inter-clan conflict and problems Sunjata, drought was probably also a factor. Some claim that the Maninka started to move south where the soil was more fertile.⁴¹ The Middle Niger region and much of West Africa experienced a long dry period from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries, so some farmers, smiths, hunters and others left the savannah to find better lands to farm and more trees to fell.⁴²

It is important to emphasize that we are working in the early twenty-first century to try and reconstruct history from information that has been passed down orally for dozens of years through several stages of transmission, change, loss and elaboration. Some of the information is too imprecise or contradictory to be useful. This does not mean that there is nothing of possible historical value in oral traditions, but that we now only have fragments of what might have happened. At the same time, people have not just made up these stories to help university students get degrees. The identity of every person in Manding society is partially defined by their important ancestors. Many feel that they

⁴⁰E.g., Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:81.

⁴¹Pinney n.d./1973; Korvah 1995:11. Asumana Jabateh 1992, App. 7.22. Jabateh's story about Joma and his three sons migrating south because the savannah was becoming too bare is questionable in this context.

⁴²Nicholson 1979; Brooks 1993:45; Webb 1995:5; McIntosh 1998:73.

would lose the essence of who they were if they forgot their ancestors, so it is important to keep the memories of their key ancestors alive.⁴³ There must, for instance, be some truth to the stories that people have been telling for over a century which claim that some Kamara left the Manden, and that one of their descendants migrated to Musadu, defeated a Kromah sorcerer, and became a powerful chief. The best that historians can do is frame out some of the larger patterns, develop some plausible hypotheses based on general understandings of social, cultural, and political history, and test those hypotheses.

The *Funé* Kamara of Upper Guinea

According to several Maniyaka traditions, Foningama was a *funé*, a bard who specialized in singing the praises of Islam [6]. The *funé* are *nyamakalaw*, one of the semi-casted artisan groups in Manding society. Many Maniyaka link the *funé* status of Foningama's descendants to the rulers of Sibi and Tabon. Their claim is, however, suspicious; it might be a political move to add a celebrated chief from the Sunjata epic to their list of ancestors to enhance their importance. In Foningama's time, such an amelioration of ancestors would have increased their personal status and may have been meant to give others the impression that they were conquering Musadu in the name of the Mali empire. The Maniyaka also tell about their ancestor Joma who was converted to Islam by the Prophet Muhammed. Joma's conversion seems to be linked to the origins of *funé*, though the traditions collected thus far do not say that Joma was a *funé*.

In 1995, David Conrad published the most comprehensive work to date about the *funé* titled "Blind Man Meets Prophet: Oral Tradition, Islam and *Funé* Identity." Conrad

⁴³Conrad 1999b:223; Wilks 1999:53.

summarized what French colonial administrators, travelers, oral traditionists and scholars have written about the *funé*, and hypothesized about their origins. He quoted the late-eighteenth century Scottish traveler Mungo Park who observed a “class” of “singing men... who travel about the country, singing devout hymns and performing religious ceremonies, to conciliate the favor of the Almighty, either in averting calamity, or insuring success to any enterprise.” Many of them studied the Qur’an and other Muslim books, became quasi-specialists in Islamic history, accompanied *molilu*, preached sermons that condoned good behavior, and performed for their *molilu* and other Muslims.⁴⁴ Park actually defined “ideal *funé* role,” although he did not call these singers *funé*.

The Maninka separate their accounts about the origins of the *funé* into stories about Silamaka and Fosana. Silamaka was probably a composite “war chief and *funé*” whom the Maninka created within the context of the Sunjata epic. The Maninka develop Fosana from Arabic writings. They say that Fosana was a blind man who hosted the Prophet Muhammed, delivered his messages, protected his wife and sang his praises. Fosana’s Arab prototype is the historical Abū Ayyūb Al-Anṣārī who helped Muhammed in some of the same ways.⁴⁵

None of the Maniyaka sources that are available mention Silamaka. Some purport that a Sumaka was one of Foningama’s ancestors, but do not say that he was a *funé*.⁴⁶ It is

⁴⁴Park 1799/1907:213, in Conrad 1995:89-90. Some of the Maniyaka voiced similar definitions. Tènu Kamā Kamara implied that *jèli* who perform in Muslim settings are *funé* (App. 7.19). Mammadi Kènè was speaking about *funé* when he stated that ‘when they are preaching the Qur’an they are doing *jèli* work’ (App. 7.18).

⁴⁵Conrad 1995:88-103.

⁴⁶E.g., Vase Kamala 7.6, l. 1107; App. 7.38, l. 42-45; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37, l. 90-103; Ch. 3.

reasonable, however, to speculate that Sumaka is a variant of Silamaka given the claims which state that Foningama was a *funé*. The Maniyaka generally claim that Foningama and his brother Kònsaba were related to a Kamara chief from Sibi or Toron, and that the chief and his descendants became *funé*.⁴⁷ They usually say that Foningama and his descendants are Kamara, and that Kònsaba and his offspring who remained in westcentral Côte d'Ivoire are Jomani (Jomande, Diomande). Kamara and Jomani are equivalent clan names. Some Maniyaka say that Foningama's ancestor became a *funé* after an older brother praised his younger brother (sometimes identified as Kama) who did something great; he allegedly escaped through Sibi mountain, conquered Tabon, or did some other noteworthy act.⁴⁸ Others maintain that Foningama's ancestor became a *funé* after his brothers or Sunjata defeated him in battle (supra.).

The Maniyaka also talk about an ancestor of the Kamara named Joma who they claim lived during Muhammed's lifetime and was converted by the prophet. The Maniyaka do not say that Joma was a *funé*, but the tales that they tell about Joma are faintly similar to the Fosana accounts. Stories that link Joma to Muhammed represent one of the ways that the Manding started to mix Islamic elements into their oral traditions after certain Soninke and Manding royalty started to convert to Islam in the eleventh

⁴⁷Lanse Kamara 1990, App. 7.11, l. 60-69; Asumana Jabateh 1992, App. 7.22; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Kaamoo Dòlè 1992, App. 7.13; Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7; cf. Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14. The Maniyaka sometimes do not differentiate between *jèli* and *funé*. Here, Kamara bards are equated with *funé*. The name of one of the regions which the Jomani inhabit in Côte d'Ivoire is called Finan. Although one tradition collected there claims that Finan is named after a snake (Derive 1990a, l.26), one cannot dismiss the possibility that Finan or Fina also refers to *funé*. *Fina* and *funé* are variants of the same name (Conrad 1995:102).

⁴⁸Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Vase Kamala 1985, in Geysbeek et. al. 1998:27; Lanse Kamara 1990, App. 7.11; Asumana Jabateh 1992, App. 7.22; see Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7a, l. 54-58. Two informants said that the older brother was the one who departed from the Manden (Lanse Kamara 1990, App. 7.11; Asumana Jabateh 1992, App. 7.22); the others conversely claimed that the younger brother (Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19) or one of his descendants (Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6) was the one who went to Musadu. Vase Kamala and Tènu Kamā Kamara stated that the brother who became the *funé* was from Tabon; Lanse Kamara said that the *funé* was from Sibi.

century.⁴⁹ One popular means that bards used to Islamicize their traditions was to add Muslim characters from the distant past to the genealogies of their ancestors.⁵⁰ Some bards, like the proto-*funé* described below who might have started to serve Muslim *molilu* during this time, could have read some of the Arabic literature that circulated in West Africa, listened to their patrons and pilgrims from Mecca tell stories about Islamic history, and incorporated some of what they learned into their stories.⁵¹ Some Maniyaka, for instance, trace the Kamara's origins to Adam and Eve [7].⁵² Mentioned at the beginning of this chapter is the alleged Kamara ancestor Wakasi who is based on Muhammed's companion Sa'd b. Abū Waqqās. Whereas Wakasi represents the forebearer of the Kamara warrior-chiefs, Joma or Fosana are prototypes of the *funé* Kamara.

The Maniyaka claim that Joma was the first Kamara or Jomani who converted to Islam. According to Asumana Jabateh, Joma had three handicapped sons: one was blind; one was deaf; and one was limp. One time, Joma and his sons went on a journey. When Joma learned that 'the good man' was traveling in the same area, Joma hid his children in a cave because he feared the good man. This good man seems to be a reference to the Prophet Muhammed. Muhammed was said to have been so great that all of the people, and even all of the stones and trees were submitting to him. When Muhammed went to

⁴⁹The neighboring Fulbe did not start to interject Arab antecedents into their genealogies until the first half of the nineteenth century (Robinson 1985:81-89).

⁵⁰See Humblot (1918:537-540) and Sayers (1927:100-101) who published bardic traditions about the major Muslim clans in Soninke and Manding society. The bards attributed persons from early Islamic history to the ancestry list of each clerical clan.

⁵¹Conrad 1995:86,91; see Wilks 1968:168-171.

⁵²Fahnbulleh 1969; Pinney n.d./1973.

the cave to find Joma, Joma sent his sons out to meet him. Muhammed healed each of his sons and sent them back one at a time to implore Joma to come out and meet him. After his third son returned, Joma went to Muhammed and told him, “I submit to you.” Jabateh said that this story accounts for the origin of the clan name Jomani; ‘Joma’s children’ is *Joma dènu* in Maniyakã and is an abbreviation of Jomani.⁵³ In Layi Kèwulèn Kamara’s testimony, Joma tied a rope around his neck and presented himself as a slave to Muhammed because he did not have anything else to offer. Muhammed praised him and said “*Jònba le ni*,” ‘this is a big slave.’ Jomani is a contraction of *Jònba le ni* according to Kamara. Kamara likewise said that this story explains how Joma became the progenitor of all the “Jomani” and *molilu*.⁵⁴ These images about Joma’s blind son and his subservience to Muhammed son are reminiscent of stories that the Maninka tell about the blind Fosana who submitted to Muhammed. Although some counter-argue that a Kamara did not enslave himself to Muhammed,⁵⁵ or that Foningama or Kònsaba were not *funé*,⁵⁶ the most defensible option rests with the majority position that Foningama and Kònsaba were *funé*. Since the sources concur that Foningama and Kònsaba had the same ancestor who immigrated from the Manden, statements which contend that one or another was a *funé* seem to be moot; both were *funé* since they came from a *funé* lineage.

⁵³App. 7.22.

⁵⁴App. 7.16. “Jomani” can also be translated ‘small Joma.’ *Ni* can be a belittling suffix, as when attached to Fulani or *tubabuni* (lit., ‘small white man’). The dual images of slavery and Islam are not mutually inclusive, especially when one views slavery in the context of being enslaved to God. Another etymology explains that Dioman comes from the name of the cap that Kamara chiefs wear (Humbly 1918; see App. I).

⁵⁵One source said that Foningama was a noble, not a slave (Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18). Another claimed that the person who went to the Prophet was Sunjata’s ancestor Lawalu (Lawali), not Joma (Tènu Kamã Kamara 1992, App. 7.19).

⁵⁶Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App., 7.16, l. 873-879, 918-924; Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14.

How, when and why did *funéya* or ‘the condition of *funé*’ develop over time? How does our current understanding of *funé* origins help interpret *funé* stories that the Maniyaka tell. The social category of *funéya* was largely developed among the Soninke and Maninka who lived in the Manden before Sunjata came to power. Thus, Maniyaka stories that tell about the origins of *funéya* can best be analyzed within the larger framework of what the Maninka say.

Conrad theorizes that the real origins of the *funé* might extend back to the Ghana empire.⁵⁷ During the Ghana period, some of the people who were most affected by drought and other hardships might have offered their services to the social elite to maintain a livelihood. A small but distinct class of bards apparently started to serve *molilu*. They earned a reputation as bardic specialists in Islam, and became involved in other craft-related occupations to supplement their livelihoods.

The essential components of *funéya* seem to have evolved during the period between the fall of Ghana in the late-eleventh century and the strife that developed in the early-thirteenth century prior to Sunjata’s unification of the Manden. As Ghana started to decline, many of these proto-*funé* traveled to the Manden and settled in towns like Tabon and Sibi. The chiefs of Tabon and Sibi were Kamara controlled large numbers of farmers, smiths and bards who became slaves. Although the proto-*funé* were mainly associated with Soninke *molilu* who migrated south, a few traditions suggest that some went through varying periods of slavery. As was the custom in pre-colonial times, slaves usually took the names of their Kamara masters. In time, all of the *funé* from the different clans

⁵⁷Conrad 1995.

became Kamara. These forerunners of the *funé* were not only Jawara, Fofana, Dukule, Kuyateh and Kaba, but Kamara who came from Tabon and other towns. Now, most *funé* have the patronymic Kamara. Although the *funé* are now one of the lower occupationally casted groups, they separate themselves from the *jèlilu* who function in the political sphere, and base the essence of their identity on the belief that “their ancestors were already serving as Islamic-oriented bards to Muslim *molilu* of eleventh-century Ghana.”⁵⁸

What do these current suppositions of the *funé* past reveal about the Kamara who migrated south and eventually became the chiefs of Musadu? The Maniyaka essentially argue that a powerful Kamara chief of Tabon or Sibi became a *funé* because he lost a battle. Powerful chiefs frequently fought; some won and the others lost. While some who lost were captured, killed or had to flee for their lives, it is difficult to believe, as some Maniyaka claim, that the chief of Tabon or Sibi became a *funé*. It is more likely that Foningama’s ancestor was a *funé* from Tabon or Sibi, not one of their rulers.⁵⁹ While most of the Maniyaka concede that Foningama was a *funé*, they elevate his standing by claiming that he was a direct descendant of the rulers of Tabon or Sibi. This had the simultaneous effect of diminishing his *funé* status and giving him credibility when he went to Musadu. It is also plausible that Foningama’s ancestor who left the Manden was free, or even that he was related to the Tabon or Sibi ruling elite, but that his descendants gradually became *funé* because they found themselves in situations that compromised their status. The mere confusion over the name or names of the men who ruled Tabon and

⁵⁸Conrad 1995:86-87,102,106-109; Sayers 1927:52,72.

⁵⁹Conrad 1995:101.

Sibi indicate that bards have forgotten the true identity of Foningama's ancestors.

Regardless of what today's bards have remembered or forgotten, it is most likely that the Upper Guinea Kamara have added Faran's name to Foningama's genealogy to enhance his importance. Some of this genealogical engineering could have occurred as the Kamara went to Musadu, or after Foningama became Musadu's chief.

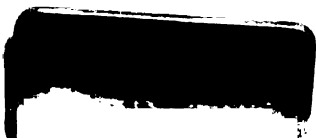
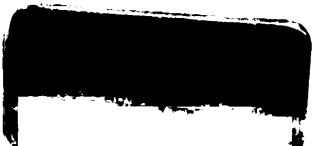
Conclusion

Oral traditions from eastern Guinea indicate that the Kamara were one of the most important power brokers in southern Manden before Sunjata's time. The Kamara, however, were not unified according to several accounts. Some lineages opposed each other, and the balance of power was often contested during times of crisis. A rereading of the Maniyaka traditions suggest that Foningama's ancestor might have been *funé*, and that he was forced to leave the Manden because he became involved in one or more altercations with his kinsmen and/or Sunjata. Maniyaka explanations of how *funéya* emerged reflect their geographic distance from the Manden and their political ambitions as they moved south. The Maniyaka have added the name of Joma to the cast of *funé* ancestors, have claimed descent from one of the Manden's most important warriors who they say was a contemporary of Sunjata, and are largely silent about Silamaka. Maniyaka stories about Joma could partly reflect the fact that they are not as versed about the more standard variants told in the north because they live that much further south. Attributions that Faran Kama is one of their ancestors appear to be more politically motivated. Finally,

even if the Kamara who fled from the Manden were *funé* or became *funé*, they followed in the tradition of their ancestor Silamaka who was a *funé* and a warrior.⁶⁰ Though it was not customary for slaves or *nyamakala* to become chiefs, this sometimes happened during troubled times when governments became weak. Well known examples are Sumaworo Kante, Sakura the late-thirteenth century king of the Mali, and some slave chiefs who ruled Segou in the late-eighteenth century.⁶¹

⁶⁰Conrad 1995:102.

⁶¹Levtzion 1973:65; Conrad 1984:40-41; 1990:17-18; 1992:178-179.



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**HISTORY FROM THE MUSADU EPIC:
THE FORMATION OF MANDING POWER ON THE
SOUTHERN FRONTIER OF THE MALI EMPIRE**

VOLUME II

By

Timothy William Geysbeek

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of History

2002

CHAPTER 3

THE KAMARA MIGRATIONS FROM THE MANDEN TO KONYA-MANI

This chapter summarizes the oral traditions that explain how the Kamara migrated to Konya-Mani after they left the Manden. The stories center around Foningama and his brother Kònsaba. Informants say that these Kamara traveled from the northeast section of present-day Guinea to the Barala, Gbè and Mau regions of today's westcentral Côte d'Ivoire and eastcentral Guinea before they reached Konya-Mani. The narratives identify several places where "Foningama" is believed to have traveled before he reached Musadu. The narrators often tell clichés to explain what happened. Some of the clichés in this part of the epic concern *fonio*, chieftaincy symbols, blessings, curses, palm nuts and a blood pact. In each of these instances, an explanation is given of what these metaphors might mean. It will be important to revisit the clichés and the interpretations that are offered to make modifications where necessary and refine our understanding of what might have occurred in the past.

Foningama's ancestor Kama is sometimes said to have first fled from the Manden to Baté or Wasolon where some Fulbe hid him in a *fonio* seed granary while Sunjata or his clansmen were looking for him. A few traditions use this story to explain how Foni was added to Kama's name to make Foni Kama or Foningama. Some equate the Kamara with *fonio*, saying that each are a symbol of strength and durability. Foningama is then said to have gone to the town of Diemou in Worodugu where he became involved in a succession dispute with his brothers. Foningama's older brothers plotted to kill him because the Kamara patriarch supposedly bequeathed his symbol of authority on him, but

his bard or a woman helped him foil the plot. Foningama then reportedly fled west where he met a Kuyateh *jèli* who took him to Mau. In Mau, the Foningama and the Kuyateh formed an alliance by mixing their own blood.

According to some oral traditions, Foningama's father took his family to Gbè after Foningama left Diemou; this apparently occurred while Foningama was in Mau with Kuyateh. In time, Kònsaba became the *mansa* of the Kamara in Gbè. The oral traditions say that Kònsaba belonged to the Komo society, and that a Konè *mori* who went to Gbè failed to convert Kònsaba to Islam. Foningama and Kuyateh then went to Gbè, but Kònsaba conspired to kill him. When Foningama's Kromah in-laws from Musadu learned about his plight, they sent Fènyabu Kromah to rescue Foningama and Kuyateh.

Later, after Foningama went to Musadu, Kònsaba set out to dominate the Kpelle and other non-Manding peoples who lived in Gbè. After failing to conquer them, he asked a local *mori* to assist him. The *mori* was unable to help Kònsaba, so he sent a message to Timbuktu and asked a powerful *mori* named Kaamòò Mori Kanè to help Kònsaba. Mori Kanè obliged, and went to Gbè with his companion Musa Baayo. Oral traditions that date back to the early-twentieth century claim that Mori Kanè and Musa Baayo went on a famous pilgrimage to Mecca with Mahmūd Baayo and Al-Hajj Salim Sware. Sware seems to have been a historical mid-to-late-fifteenth to early-sixteenth century scholar who founded a community of teachers in the town of Ja in the Bambuk region of Senegambia. Sware's community and the people who later followed their teachings came to be known as the Jakhanke. The Jakhanke did much to rejuvenate Islamic education in Upper Guinea and other portions of West Africa.

The Kanè and Baayo migrations are important because they establish the only

absolute chronological marker in the Musadu epic. The oral traditions say that Musa Baayo and Mori Kanè went to Mecca with Mahmūd Baayo. Al-Sa'di wrote in his mid-seventeenth century *Ta'rikh Al-Sūdān* that Mahmūd Baayo was a jurist from Timbuktu who died in 1543 A.D. Musa Baayo and Mori Kanè thus did not migrate to Gbè before Mahmūd Baayo's lifetime; perhaps not until the second half of the seventeenth century as is discussed at the end of this chapter. One can minimally also argue that Kònsaba migrated to Gbè before the sixteenth century; Foningama is said to have encountered Kònsaba in Gbè before he went to Musadu, and genealogical studies of the Kamara indicate that Foningama migrated to Musadu in the early-sixteenth century. Obviously then, the Kònsaba who conspired against Foningama in Gbè is an ancestor of the Kònsaba who solicited the blessing of Musa Baayo and Mori Kanè.

Most of this chapter is structured after the oral traditions that Vase Kamala told because he included all of the major episode clusters. Kamala's accounts also fit with the general way that most of the oral traditions are told. While many of these accounts flow well when read individually, some are difficult to evaluate when compared with other stories. This is due to the multiple number of Kònsabas and Foningama's, contradictions in the sequence and placing of some events, episode fragments that do not seem to fit in any context, and the blending of episodes from different stories.

Kamara Migrations Toward Konya-Mani

Numerous sources trace the migration route that the Kamara took from the Manden to Musadu [8]. Most of the material for this section has been collected in Upper Guinea which is south of the Manden heartland. The narratives typically only list the

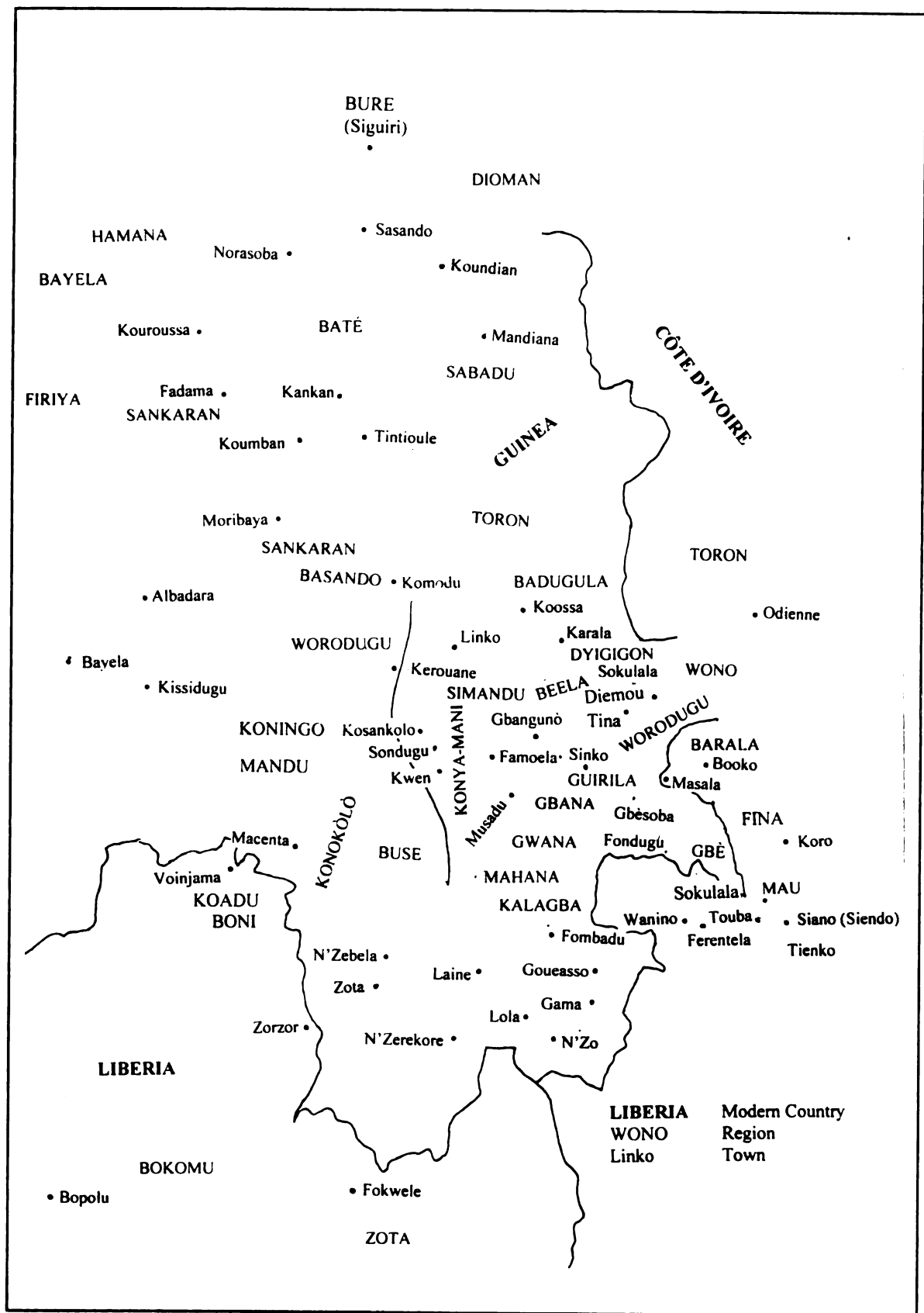


Figure 24 Upper Guinea

towns where the Kamara stayed as they traveled south, and only begin to tell stories about what the Kamara did as they neared Konya-Mani. One would learn more about the Kamara by conducting research further north and east from Konya-Mani.

A half-dozen informants simply said that the Foningama-Kamara migrated directly from the Manden to Musadu, or that they passed through Siano in Mau before they reached Musadu.¹ According to the more detailed versions, these Kamara dispersed south up the Niger River through the Dioman and settled in towns like Farinkamanya. They continued south to Baté and the Sankaran, headed east to Wasolon, and then traveled south again up the Gbanhala and Kourou Kélé rivers to Toron, Worodugu, Barala, Gbè and Mau before they reached Musadu.²

From Faran Kama to Foningama: An Identity Shift

According to some oral traditions, Foni was added to Kama to make the name Foni Kama or Foningama after he departed from the Manden. This new name represented a change in identity, and is used for the Kamara who eventually went to Musadu throughout the rest of this work. All of the sources equate the Foni in Foningama's name with *fonio* (*fōni*) or the acha grain (*Digitaria exilis*) that the Manding, Fulbe and other peoples grow in the savannah.³ *Fonio* is an important staple and long sustaining crop; some narrators use *fonio* as a cliché to remind their listeners that the Kamara are like

¹Liurette 1908, App. 4.1; Amara Kamara 1986, App. 7.9; Asumana Jabateh 1992, App. 7.22; Soko Konneh, in Korvah (1995:11); Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1.

²This is essentially the same route that Yves Person traced four decades ago (1960:52-53; 1971a:675-676). See Appendix H.2 for various listings of the routes that the Kamara are said to have taken south.

³Some of the many variations of *fonio* are *funde*, *fini*, *fani* and *funi* [*funé?*] (Bangura 1919; Dieterlen 1957:126, fn. 2; Burkill 1997:224-225).

fonio.

In the most popular etymology, the Fulbe added Foni to Kama after he fled from the Manden and went to Baté or Wasolon [9].⁴ The Fulbe hid Kama in a *fonio* granary from Sunjata or some of his family members who were searching for him. The Fulbe later released Kama from the granary and jokingly said “Fonio” or “Foningama” when they saw that his face was covered with *fonio*. This incident set the basis for the formation of a special relationship between the Kamara and the Fulbe.⁵ Tènu Kamã Kamara discounted the Fulbe story without comment and said that “Foni” came from Kama’s mother Foni Yama (*‘fonio seed’*) [10].⁶ According to Kamara, Foni Yama went into labor while she was beating *fonio* and delivered Kama nearby. Foni Yama was added to Kama’s name to commemorate his mother and the place where he was born. In a third etymology, Asumana Jabateh said that the Kamara ancestor Joma was nicknamed “Foni Kali” because he could ‘harvest’ (*kali*) *fonio* quickly [11].⁷

These stories are clichés, not to be taken literally. All of them are ascending anachronisms, events that have been projected to an earlier time than the era in which they supposedly happened. There could be some truth to the *fonio*-granary accounts that explain that the Fulbe rescued the Kamara because there seems to have been an early Fulbe presence in Wasolon; thus, the Kamara probably at least encountered the Fulbe as

⁴Dauvillier c. 1905, App. 3; Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7; Lanse Kamara 1990, App. 7.11; Moussa Kièlè 1990, App. 7.12; 1990, App. 7.21. Dauvillier wrote “Kankan” (Baté) (App. 3), and Moussa Kièlè said Siguiri (Wasolon) (App. 7.12, 7.21). Lanse Kamara repeated an incorrect story which states that these Kamara went to the Futa Jalon before they returned to southeast Guinea (App. 7.11).

⁵The Fulbe and Kamara might have developed a *sanangu* or ‘joking relationship’ after the alleged incident occurred, although none of the sources specified as such. Traditions often use a humorous twist like this when they recount stories that supposedly tell how *sananguya* evolved.

⁶App. 7.19.

⁷App. 7.22.

they traveled south.⁸ It is significant that one of the sources for this story was a Kamara, and that another was a Kamara *jèli* - a Kièlè. They were acknowledging that their Kamara ancestor or patron was weak, and that he was being helped by a people who the Manding do not often highly regard.⁹ The Kamara who were the recipients of Fulbe goodwill became indebted to the Fulbe if there is any validity to this story. The Kamara ancestors of old suffered a similar loss of status when they became *funé*.

There is another important factor that may help interpret this *fonio* cliché. Over time, some story-tellers have chosen *fonio* from the geographic mosaic of the savannah to symbolize the strength, durability and longevity of the Kamara. One speaker, for instance, compared *fonio* with Foningama's descendants by saying that 'they were not empty *fonio* seeds.'¹⁰ *Fonio* is easy to sow, matures quickly, and smothers all weeds when it grows, but is difficult to harvest and thresh. The Kamara, likewise, spread rapidly and conquered many people, but sometimes ruled their subjects harshly as they did in Musadu.¹¹

Foningama's Ancestors

Many oral traditions only claim that Foningama was one person who made a long trek from the Manden to Musadu. A few, however, suggest that multiple generations separated the Kamara who left the Manden and the Foningama who went to Musadu. Some said that Foningama's father's name was Fing Koy Fing or Kōifing, Sumaka,

⁸Delafosse 1912/1972 II: 294; Niane 1975:98; Massing 1985:39.

⁹Knight 1972; Innes 1974:315, In. 79-80. Many Maninka and Maniyaka in eastern Guinea have formed close ties with the Fulbe. In Liberia, the Maniyaka call them "Fula Mandingo."

¹⁰Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16, l. 275-279.

¹¹Caillié 1830:330; Bangura 1919; Dieterlen 1954:62-67; Kaba 1971:327, fn. 1; Zahan 1979:118; Burkill 1997:226; Fairhead/Leach 1996:121,319. For a discussion of *fonio* and its possible relationship with the Kamara, see Appendix G.

Foniobakeyala or Base Kamã.¹² A few stated that his mother was Dama Soba Kromah who came from Musadu [12].¹³

According to some interviewees, the Foningama who went to Musadu was a four to seven generation descendant of the Kama who left the Manden. Even though one person could have easily traveled from the Manden to Musadu, it is best to defer to sources which claim that multiple generations of people were involved in this migration given the tendency of oral traditions to condense several people from the distant past into one person. Multiple individuals often became compressed into one person because of memory loss, the effects of structuring on oral traditions, and the attempt by traditionists to magnify the prowess of people like Foningama who emerge as culture heros. Given a gap of four to seven generations, one can reasonably assume that it took one to two hundred years for the Kamara to migrate from the Manden to Musadu. This timing is consistent with genealogical studies which indicate that Foningama did not move to Musadu until the early-sixteenth century at the latest. This date comes from multiplying the sixteen or seventeen generations that several oral traditions say separate the present Kamara from Foningama by the estimated thirty years that comprise each generation.¹⁴

Figure 25 identifies the sources which indicate that two or more generations separated the Manden Kamara from the Musadu Kamara. Most of the Guinean sources derive from the manuscript that Dyigiba Kamara never published. The information from the Ivorian accounts comes from Marie-José Derive and Linda Nagel, a historian and

¹²Figure 25. See Briama Kromah (App. 7.14) and Mammadi Konè (App. 7.23) for Foniobakeyala and Base Kamã respectively.

¹³Geysbeek/Kamara 1994:60, l. 19; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; see Sidibé 1997:84, l. 228-235.

¹⁴Person 1972:13; 1984:312,316-317; Camara 1979, App. 4.9; Geysbeek/Kamara 1991:60-63.

missionary who respectively conducted research in westcentral Côte d'Ivoire in the 1970s and 1980s. The columns in Figure 25 represent descent from one generation to the next.

Figure 25 Foniŋgama's Ancestors

Guinean Accounts				Ivorian Accounts	
Camara 1979 [4.9]	Sidibé 1997	Kamala 1985 [7.6]	Kamara n.d. [7.37]	Derive 1990b	Nagel 1986 [10]
Faren Kamã		Kamãjan	Kamã/Fan (or Faren Kamã)	Soumata (Sumaka)	
Dioman	Dioman/ Foniŋ- gama	[Fé] ¹⁵		Kansaba (Konsaba)	
		[Kamã]			
Koy-Fing	Koifing	Kòngejan?			
Koy-Fing Kamã		Sumaka	Sumaka		
Kònsaba		Kònsaba/ Tiyama	Kònsaba	Tye-masa Siraman (Kònsaba?)	Kemen- tyema
----- Foniŋgama	----- Foniŋ- gama	----- Foniŋgama	----- Foniŋgama	Syaraman Mey (Foniŋ- gama?)	----- Kemen- tyema's younger bro. (Foniŋ- gama?)
				Va Diamu ----- Bue-tye	Diala
				Diamu's children	

¹⁵The bracket only represents generational descent. Fé and Kama are not meant to be equivalent to Dioman, Kònsaba or Maya Soue.

Spaces between hyphens indicate sibling relationships; thus, Sumaka's sons are said in two sources to have been Kònsaba and Foningama. The solid line in Derive's column represents a father-son relationship between Tye-Masa Siraman and Syaraman Mey. In one of his versions of the Musadu epic, Vase Kamala said that an alternative name of Kònsaba was Tiyama.¹⁶ Tiyama is the same as the "Tye-Masa" and "tyema" in Tye-Masa Siraman (Mansa Tye Siraman) and Kemen-tyema. One will only be able to determine if Kònsaba or Tiyama is the same as Tye-Masa Siraman and/or Kemen-tyema after more oral traditions are collected in Côte d'Ivoire. If these names are equivalent, then Keman-tyema's unnamed younger brother could be Foningama.¹⁷

Kònsaba and Foningama

Most of the sources state that Kònsaba was Foningama's older brother, and that the two men were *fadèn*.¹⁸ The Manding usually use *badèn* and *fadèn* to express degrees of closeness or distance in a relationship. Children from the same mother and father are often *badèn* ('mother's child'), but can become *fadèn* ('father's child') when they develop hostility between each other. Likewise, children who have the same father but different mothers, or persons who are not biologically linked, can become *badèn* when they exhibit

¹⁶Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1040; n.d., App. 7.38.

¹⁷See the introduction to Appendix 10 for a discussion about the possible relationship between some of the individuals who are mentioned in the Guinean and Ivorian traditions.

¹⁸For Kònsaba as Foningama's older brother, see Daouda Camara (1979, App. 4.9), Layi Kèwulèn Kamara (1992, App. 7.16, l. 516-529), Sumawolo (1984, App. 6.1), Vase Kamala (n.d., App. 7.38), Wata Mammadi Kamara (n.d., App. 7.37), Briama Kromah (1990, App. 7.14), Kabine Kromah (1992, App. 7.29), Moliké Sidibé (1989, App. 4.10; 1997:82); see Kèwulèn Kamara (1985, App. 7.5, l. 20-24). One informant said that Kònsaba was Foningama's 'younger brother' (Alafā Konè 1992, App. 7.31).

For Kònsaba and Foningama being *fadèn*, see Briama Kromah (1990, App. 7.14), Mustafa Kromah (1992, App. 7.20), Tènu Kamā Kamara (1992, App. 7.19), and Mammadi Kènè (1992, App. 7.18). One said that they were *badèn* (Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7). Daouda Camara reported that Foningama had seven brothers: GboGbè, Gbèfing, Famo, Kònsaba, Ceta/Cessa, Miakaie and Sakoura (App. 4.9). Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara named Kònsaba, Fanyala, Kònsama and Kònsaku (App. 7.37; App. 7.38). Tènu Kamā Kamara added Fangolono to the list of Foningama's siblings (App. 7.19).

high levels of cooperation and support.¹⁹

The relationship between Kònsaba and Foningama is complicated by other factors. The men represent at least two lineages. This does not mean that the traditions do not recall some incidents that can be associated with Kònsaba and Foningama as individuals. Kònsaba and Foningama were probably historical persons, and could have been biological brothers or step-brothers. It is difficult to ascertain, on the other hand, how much real information has been passed down about these men through time. Certainly, much that is said about Kònsaba and Foningama are narrated in the form of clichés. Also, some stories that are attributed to these men are anachronisms that derive from persons who lived before and after them. In this regard, Kònsaba and Foningama are composite individuals. They emerged as heroic figures in Mau and Konya-Mani respectively, but are still “legendary” or “semi-mythical.”²⁰

The identity of Kònsaba and Foningama is also obscured by the fact that the oral traditions generally say that they respectively had different clan names, Jomandé (Diomandé, Jomani) and Kamara. Today, Jomandé is the preferred name for the Kamara who live in western Côte d’Ivoire. Kamara is more common in today’s Mali, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Although some traditions say that Foningama was a Jomandé, there is at least one simple explanation for this claim. Jomandé or Jomandèn means ‘child[ren] of Joma.’ Joma (Dioma) might be the same “Dioman” who is said to have been a descendant of the Kama who left the Manden.²¹ The name change seems to have occurred after Joma settled where the Dioman is now located. Some sources imply that

¹⁹Bird/Kendall 1980; Jansen 1996c:10-11; Boakai Yahah, personal communication, 1993.

²⁰Person 1968a:263, n.48; 1987:259.

²¹Camara 1979, App. 4.9.

Joma became so important that the region was named after him.²² Joma's descendants came to be (or remained) known by his name rather than by their older ancestral name - Kamara.

In much of today's western Côte d'Ivoire then, the name Jomandé might have come to supercede Kamara after the Kamara left the Manden. It follows that Foningama might not have been distinguished from Kònsaba during early times. Some informants interchanged Kònsaba and Foningama, and one implied that Kònsaba was the father of Foningama and another Kònsaba.²³ The name Foningama might have become differentiated from Kònsaba after Foningama went to Musadu. Part of Foningama's new identity apparently involved the substitution of Kamara for Jomandé as his clan name.²⁴ A comparative look at the ways that Kamara and Jomandé are used along the Guinea-Côte d'Ivoire border area should reveal more insight into the historical and cultural aspect of this issue.

The First Conspiracy to Kill Foningama: the Kamara Plot in Diemou

After Foningama left the area where the Fulbe allegedly hid him in a *fonio* granary, he is claimed to have gone to Diemou where some of his family members tried to kill him. Diemou is a town in the Worodugu (Wolodu) region of today's Guinea, and is situated about thirty-seven miles northeast of Musadu. According to many of the oral traditions, Foningama's father blessed Foningama and gave him his special cap or another

²²Humblot 1918:530; Person 1968b:168-169,227, n. 119, 570; Massing 1985:39; Nagel, App. 10.1; Wondj 1992:377.

²³Camara 1979, App. 4.9.

²⁴Foningama seems to be most predominate in Guinea, although one of the traditions that Derive collected did mention "Fuengana" (1990b:55).

symbol of Kamara leadership. Several people in town, including some Kamara, reportedly became jealous of Foningama and tried to kill him. They asked him to sit on an animal skin or stool that covered a hole, but the plot was foiled and Foningama fled to Mau.

Many components of the story are told in the form of a cliché. For instance, stories that tell how persons ask their rivals to sit on mats that surreptitiously cover pits are common in Africa.²⁵ The significant aspect of this cliché is not the play-by-play account that explains how conspirators try to get their victim to fall into a hole. Rather, the intended meaning often involves a succession dispute that will decide who will become the next ruler. Foningama lost in Diemou, but later crafted his own leadership role in Musadu.

Only Vase Kamala named a birthplace for Foningama: Diemou. According to Kamala, Foningama's mother was Makula Dama Soba Kromah, his father was Sumaka, and his wife was a Traoré (Talawole). Kamala claimed that Foningama and his wife had their first child in Diemou, Fanyala (Fèn-jala) [13-14].²⁶ The oral traditions claim that the Traoré were one of the great Soninke sorcerer, warrior and hunter clans in the Ghana and Mali empires. Claims that Foningama married a Traoré are important because such a marriage - if it did take place, would have connected him with a powerful Soninke clan. As a runaway warrior who was seeking to forge his own destiny, Foningama needed to garner the political and spiritual support of clans like the Traoré to succeed.²⁷

²⁵Vansina 1985:90,155.

²⁶App. 7.6, l. 1039-1048.

²⁷Most Maniyaka say Talawole. Other variations are Tabule, Taraore, Tarawure, Tarawali, Tarawari, Tarawiri, Tarawélé, Tarawere, Tawulen and Travele. For background information on the Traoré, see Humblot (1921:137), Kouyaté, in Niane (1980:55), Conrad (1992:176-177; 1999a:63,174,199), Jansen (1995:188), Hunwick (1999:408), Ch. 4 (infra.) and Appendix H.5.

Most versions of the Musadu epic claim or imply that some Kamara conspired to kill Foningama in Diemou [15].²⁸ A few also state that others participated.²⁹ Worodugu is said to have been a major Kpelle stronghold,³⁰ and was supposedly settled by the Konè, Kromah and Kanè before the Kamara moved there.³¹ If some of these non-Kamara were co-conspirators, the oral traditions do not explain their role. Given that Foningama's mother was a Kromah by some accounts, at least some Kromah might have sided with Foningama.

Foningama's enemies are said to have tried to kill him because he was popular, because there were predictions that he would become a great ruler, and because the Kamara *mansa* supposedly gave him the sacred Kamara emblem which represented the power and authority of the Kamara that was passed down from *mansalu* to their

²⁸Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1039-1079; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29, l. 116-182; Daouda Camara 1979, App. 4.9; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18. Two said that this plot occurred in Gbè or Gbèsoba (Gbè) (Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19); one named Silana or Siyanò (Moliké Sidibé 1989, App. 4.10; 1997:81, l. 144). Kabine Kromah's account set Foningama in the opposite direction, going from Gbè to Diemou. According to Kromah, Kònsaba and Foningama lived together in Gbèsoba, but went to Diemou to resolve a conflict. S Others narrated the same story, but did not tell where the event occurred (Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20). Although the consensus states that this first conspiracy occurred in Diemou, Gbè can not be completely ruled out. Gbè or Gbèsoba is suspect because this is the site where Kònsaba later allegedly tried to kill Foningama. Given that the Kamara plotted against Foningama twice in relatively close geographic settings - Diemou and Gbè, it is easy to see how speakers could mix the order or settings of the plots. Diemou is about twenty-six miles north of Gbèsoba. Siano is respectively about twenty-five and sixty-two miles southeast of Gbèsoba and Diemou, and is an alternative cite where some say that Kònsaba later attempted to kill Foningama. Lastly, although many of the traditions say that there were two plots, one in Diemou and the other in Gbè, one cannot completely dismiss the possibility that the earlier traditions only mentioned one plot. Some of these difficulties may be resolved by conducting more research.

²⁹Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18. According to Wata Mammadi Kamara, the people of Diemou and Foningama's brothers schemed to kill Foningama (App. 7.37). Vase Kamala said that Foningama's enemies were the elders of Diemou, not Foningama's father or brothers (App. 7.38).

³⁰Lanse Donzo n.d.; see Person 1984:317.

³¹Geysbeek/Kamara 1994:60, l. 11-14; Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18, Daouda Camara 1979, App. 4.9.



Figure 26 Plot to Kill Fonigama in Diemou (Illustration by Mohammed Chéjan

Kromah, 1992)

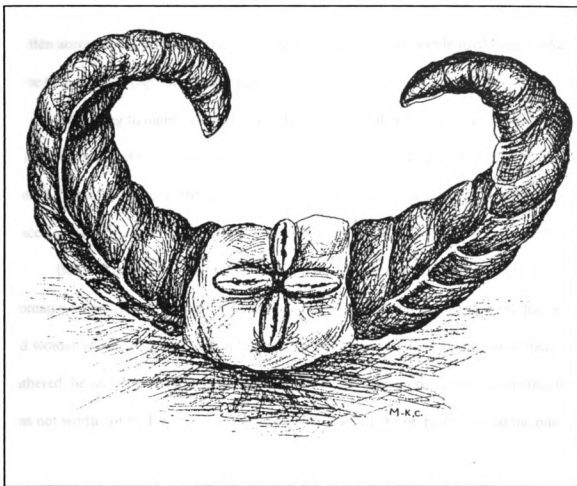


Figure 27 *Saafè* (Illustration by Mohammed Chèjan Kromah, Macenta, 1992)

successors [16-17].³² This symbol is said to have been a cap, gold or iron bracelet, a *saafè* or 'sheep horn,' and a sheep skin or stool [18].³³ The Maniaka probably believed that it was imbued with occult power; forces connected with the wearer would help him fight others and protect him from spiritual and physical harm. One cannot say if this plot

³²Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Monograph/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8, Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1049-1054; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37. For Fonigama supposedly becoming a great leader, see Vase Kamala (1985, App. 7.6; n.d., App. 7.38).

³³See Vase Kamala (1985, App. 7.6, l. 1069), Wata Mammadi Kamara (n.d., App. 7.37), Mustafa Kromah (1992, App. 7.20), Layi Kewulèn Kamara (1992, App. 7.16, l. 668-705) and Tènu Kamā Kamara (1992, App. 7.19) for a cap. For a gold bracelet, see Vase Kamala (1985, App. 7.6, l. 1068) and Wata Mammadi Kamara (n.d., App. 7.37). Moliké Sidibé (1989, App. 4.10; 1997:82, l. 162) makes reference to a *saafè*, skin or stool.

actually occurred, let alone determine what the emblem might have been. Later oral and written accounts do, however, attest that the Kamara and other people used objects like these to symbolize their power and authority.³⁴

According to many oral traditions, the plotters invited Foningama to a meeting where they planned to kill him.³⁵ They covered a hole with an animal skin, a white mat or a stool.³⁶ One informant embellished his account by claiming that the conspirators placed spears and other sharp objects in upright positions at the bottom of the hole.³⁷

Before Foningama went to the meeting, his Masare (Masale, Keita) *jèli* or a woman warned him of the plot.³⁸ The lady is said to have been Foningama's mother or an old woman named Kumba.³⁹ When Foningama entered the area where the elders had gathered, he was directed to sit on the skin or stool. Foningama protested, saying that he was not worthy of such homage. The plot was exposed after Foningama tested the mat with his foot and jumped away when the mat or stool fell into the hole. One informant said that Masare pushed the stool into the hole when he tested the stool to see if it was

³⁴Vansina 1990:119-122; Cashion 1982:160-162; Wilks 1993:91. For a discussion of these Kamara symbols of authority, see Appendix I.

³⁵Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1049-1054; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Moliké Sidibé 1997:83, l. 204-213, 254-280; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29, l. 116-182.. These sources claim that the meeting occurred in a room, in an outdoor meeting place, in a market, or under the branches of a cotton tree.

³⁶This was a sheep skin or cow skin (Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1054; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20. See Kabine Kromah for the mat (App. 7.29, l. 145) and Tènu Kamā Kamara and Wata Mammadi Kamara for the stool (App. 7.19; App. 7.37).

³⁷Sidibé 1997:84-85, l. 257-258.

³⁸Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19. This is the only reference to the Masare in the Musadu epic. It is interesting that a Masare appears as a *jèli*; the Masare are the descendants of Sunjata. This shifting of status, at least among one Masare lineage according to one Kamara, could have occurred after the Kamara defeated the Masare in the south. The Mansare are said to have led the Kamara to today's western Côte d'Ivoire, but were later overpowered by the Kamara (Person 1972:10).

³⁹Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29, l. 116-182; Moliké Sidibé 1989, App. 4.10; 1997:85, l. 268.

part of a set-up.⁴⁰ Foningama then allegedly dared the onlookers to detain him or challenged them to a sword fight, but Masare or someone else persuaded him to withdraw.⁴¹ Foningama left the meeting and went to his wife. Before he left Diemou, he instructed her to give the Kamara emblem to Fanyala when he became a man [19-23].⁴²

The Kamara-Kuyateh Blood Pact in Mau

According to Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara, Foningama encountered a Kuyateh *jèli* after he left Diemou [24-30].⁴³ When Kuyateh met Foningama, he said that he wanted Foningama to take care of his family. Kuyateh then took Foningama to Worodugu where his six sons lived, and then preceded to Mau.⁴⁴ Kamala said in one of his versions that someone ‘cut the hand of the *jèli* and Foningama with a knife and smeared the blood together.’⁴⁵ He declared that the pact explains how Kuyateh and Foningama became ‘one person,’ and how the Kamara of Mau became Jomã-dèn (‘child[ren] of Joma’) or Jomandé.⁴⁶ Kamala added, in another version, that the agreement tells how the Jomandé of Mau became the descendants of the Kuyateh.⁴⁷ Saying that the Jomandé are the Kuyateh’s descendants in this context may reflect the

⁴⁰Tènu Kamã Kamara 1992, App. 7.19, l. 210-227. Others are also said to have fallen into the hole in two accounts (Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; Sidibé 1997:85, l. 275-276).

⁴¹Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14; Tènu Kamã Kamara 1992, App. 7.19, l. 210-227.

⁴²Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1075-1079; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20. Moliké Sidibé said that he went directly to Musadu (1997), but most say that this did not happen until later.

⁴³Kamala said, in one account, that Kuyateh sought Foningama after he (Kuyateh) had a bad dream (purchased on 7 Dec. 1993). Elsewhere, Kamala just stated that Kuyateh was aware of Foningama’s problems (Geysbeek/Kamara 1994:62, l. 57-58; 1985, App. 7.6), or that he knew that the conspirators were following Foningama (purchased on 31 Oct. 1990; purchased on 7 Dec. 1993; n.d., App. 7.38). Other forms of Kuyateh are Kouyaté and Kwiyaté. Kièlè and Kuyateh are the same.

⁴⁴App. 7.6, l. 1080-1091; App. 7.37.

⁴⁵App. 7.6, l. 1097-1098; n.d./tape bought on 31 Oct. 1990; n.d., App. 7.38.

⁴⁶App. 7.38; 1985, App. 7.6; n.d./31 Oct. 1990 purchase; n.d., App. 7.38.

⁴⁷App. 7.6. Wata Mammadi Kamara did not mention the blood story, but did say that Kuyateh wanted Foningama to adopt him and his sons (App. 7.37).

dominant position that the Kuyateh had over the Kamara in this encounter, with the Kuyateh housing Foningama and initiating the covenant.

These episodes show how Foningama added clients to the group that he slowly gathered, and indicates that he was important enough for a *jèli* to become attached to him. The Kuyateh were not just any bardic clan; they were the descendants of Sunjata Keita's *jèli* Bala Fasseke Kuyateh.⁴⁸ Thus, narrators not only bolster Foningama's credibility by claiming that he was a direct descendant of one of the great Kamara *mansalu* of the Manden, but maintain that he coopted the services of a *jèli* from the same clan that served Sunjata's descendants.

Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara's stories also demonstrate how the Maniyaka believe that the Kuyateh became the bards of the Foningama-Kamara. The Manding often exchange blood to bind alliances. The pacts entail support, protection and elasticity for the parties that make the agreement.⁴⁹ Tènu Kamã Kamara's description of how one of his ancestors formed a blood pact with another group conceptually symbolizes what might have happened between Kuyateh and Foningama. Kamara said:

Our ancestor,
And Kwadu Wòni, mixed blood.⁵⁰
This is how we became *badèn*.
If you and your good friend mixed blood...
2365 One cut his hand and let his blood drip into the dish.
They took one white kola and put it under it.
They took gold and placed it under it.
[One said,] "Take care of your children and mine.

⁴⁸Kamala and Kamara said that this Kuyateh was a descendant of Nakumala Kuyateh (App. 7.6, l. 1080-1102; App. 7.37, l.157-175). Nakumala is Nyankuman Duga, identified as Sunjata's father's bard in many stories. For information about the Kuyateh, see Bird (1999:33-44,49), Kouyaté, in Niane (1980:17,38-40), Bulman (1990:323,331, 343-344), Conrad (1999a:14, n. 11), Kouyaté 1987, in Conrad (1999a:186-187) and Wata Mammadi Kamara (App. 7.37, ln. 159).

⁴⁹Tamari 1991:239; Konneh 1992:30; see Korvah 1995:12.

⁵⁰Kamara did not clearly identify his 'ancestor' or the "Kwadu Wòni" (App. 7.19). Kwadu or Koadu is a Maniyaka speaking district in northwest Liberia (see Fig. 3).

They should not fight each other.”

Blood contracts are integral in traditions that explain how the mythical ancestor of the Manding *jèlilu* Surakata became Muhammed’s praise singer. The Manding cast Surakata after Surāqa ibn Mālik ibn Ju’shum, one of the early converts to Islam who is said to have had a divine encounter with Muhammed. Sources claim that Surakata became a *jèli* either after he drank blood from a wound that Muhammed incurred in battle, or after he was coated with blood that dripped from the bodies of animals and fallen enemies. These blood motifs derive from pre-Islamic components of Manding culture that persist in the oral traditions. They signify that Surakata was one of Muhammed’s special griots, and that the blood pact “initiated patron-client relationships that had more in common with political alliances than with kinship bonds.”⁵¹ Some traditions similarly claim that a blood pact was formed between Sunjata and Bala Fasseke Kuyateh after Sunjata cut some flesh from his chest or leg and gave it to Kuyateh.⁵² Blood partnerships bound persons who were not family members, involved sanctions if certain conditions were not met, and usually applied to the groups whom the individuals represented rather than solely to the persons who formed the pacts.

Kamala’s descriptions about Foningama’s flesh being cut and his blood being smeared with Kuyateh’s blood is similar to accounts which claim that blood was rubbed on Surakata or that Sunjata cut his own flesh. Even if Kamala downloaded accounts about Surakata and Sunjata into the episodes that he told about Foningama and Kuyateh, the main point of his story is that the Kuyateh became Foningama’s *jèli* before Foningama reached Musadu, and that the Kamara probably used their tie with the Kuyateh to

⁵¹Conrad 1985:39-41; Cordell 1979:381; see Kopytoff 1985:46.

⁵²Bird 1999:49-50.

legitimate their contest of Konya-Mani. Lastly, Kuyateh's willingness to shelter Foningama represents another instance where the Kamara became indebted to others. The Fulbe and a *jèli* or a woman are earlier said to have helped Foningama's ancestor. If Foningama's side of the Kamara family became *funé* after they left the Manden because several things happened which altered their status as nobles, instances like these could explain how their rank gradually diminished.

The Kònsaba Kamara settle in Barala and Gbè

The next cluster of episodes explain the conditions that led the Kamara to Barala and Gbè (Fina). The stories describe the contacts that the Kamara developed with the autochthonous ancestors of the Kpelle, Loma and Dã who lived there, and with the Kanè, Baayo and Kuyateh who later migrated to Gbè. Barala is in today's Côte d'Ivoire; its principle town is Booko. Gbè is south and west of Barala in today's Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire. Gbèsoba is an important town in Gbè and is situated in Guinea. Gbèsoba is about twenty-two miles southwest of Booko. Another key town in these episodes is Siano which is in Mau near Touba.

The Kamara move to Gbè

The Kamara are said to have been one of the first Maninka clans to migrate to Gbè and Mau.⁵³ Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara claim that Foningama's father Sumaka moved from Diemou to Mt. Gbèsinsèn with his sons Kònsaba and Fanyala and the rest of his family; a diviner said that Sumaka should go where there were two

⁵³Gonnin 1986:108-112; Person 1984:317.

mountain peaks.⁵⁴ When Sumaka left Diemou, he cursed the people of Worodugu because they conspired against Foningama and said they would always plot against themselves [31-33]. Kamala and Kamara then imply that Kònsaba succeeded Sumaka as the *mansa* of the Kamara after they moved to Gbè.⁵⁵ According to Kamala, Kònsaba remained childless after he became *mansa*. Sumaka asked Fanyala to give his five sons to Kònsaba because he said that it was shameful for a *mansa* not to have any sons. After Fanyala gave his sons to Kònsaba, he asked his father to let him move. Sumaka agreed, so Fanyala went and established Gbèsènè or ‘Gbè farm.’ Kamala listed nearly two dozen towns that Fanyala and his descendants founded, and said that 152 total villages were created because Sumaka blessed Fanyala [34-37].⁵⁶

Vase Kamala’s story about Sumaka is similar to Daouda Camara’s genealogy which claims that Foningama’s ‘father’ Fing Koy Fing died at Diemou.⁵⁷ If one tentatively equates the Sumaka in Vase Kamala’s accounts with Fing Koy Fing, this means that Sumaka/Fing Koy Fing died in Diemou or shortly after he arrived in Gbè (Figure 25). Kònsaba, who represents at least two different persons, is the focal point of the rest of the stories about the Kamara in Gbè. Foningama, meanwhile, supposedly went to Mau with Kuyateh, and then later went up to Gbè where Kònsaba tried to kill him.

According to oral traditions, a Konè *mori* immigrated from the sahel and tried to convert Kònsaba. When the *mori* did not complete his mission, he traveled to Konya-

⁵⁴Mt. Gbèsinsèn seems to be Gbèsoba. Gbèsoba is located near a mountain that is called Cornes Gouessoba on modern maps. Cornes Gouessoba means ‘the horns (dog ears) of Gbèsoba,’ which seems to refer to two main peaks. Refugees reportedly used to go to this mountain when war in the lowlands made life too unpredictable (Kourouma 1989-90:14). Vase Kamala also said that Sumaka took his family to Solona or Sinko; Sinko is about twenty-five miles northwest of Gbèsoba (e.g., App. 7.6, l. 1123; see Kaamòò Dòlè 1992, App. 7.31, l. 944).

⁵⁵App. 7.6, l. 1104-1116; App. 7.37, l. 176-210.

⁵⁶App. 7.6, l. 1550-1565.

⁵⁷App. 4.9.

Mani and settled in Beyla. Foningama then supposedly left Mau and went to Gbè where he met Kònsaba. After Foningama foiled Kònsaba's plot, he fled to Musadu. Later, Kònsaba is said to have tried to assert his authority over the Kpelle, Loma and Dã. When he failed, he asked a *mori* to help him. The *mori* summoned a Kanè and Baayo from the Manden to help Kònsaba rule the non-Manding who lived in Gbè. The Baayo and Kanè were Jakhanke *morilu* who spread an orthodox and peaceful version of Islam in many regions of West Africa.

Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara tell their stories about the Kanè and Baayo before they explain how Kònsaba tried to kill Foningama. But, internal inconsistencies in the oral traditions and our broader understanding of how the Maninka seem to have moved to Konya-Mani indicate that the Kanè went to Gbè and attempted to convert Kònsaba to Islam before Kònsaba tried to kill Foningama. Later, Kònsaba supposedly summoned the Kanè and Baayo to help him defeat the Kpelle, Loma and Dã.

Masa Brahma Konè's Failed Jihad Against Kònsaba

Alafã Konè narrated a ten episode story that reportedly explains how his ancestors migrated to Gbè before they went to Beyla. When we interviewed Konè at his house in Beyla in 1992, he was in a room with a library of a few dozen books that were published in Arabic. His undoubted familiarity with the Qur'an and Arabic literature partly explains where he and other scholars get the information to appropriate key individuals from early Islam into local family histories. Konè, for instance, told how his ancestors left the Middle East, traveled from North Africa to Mau, and ended up settling in Beyla and becoming the *mori* of the Bèrèté [38-48]. The Konè provide spiritual support for the

Bèrètè, and the Bèrètè permitted them to be the religious leaders of the town. Given the significant religious role that the Konè have in Beyla and Konya-Mani, it is helpful for them to be able to trace their first ancestors to the Middle East and key areas in the North Africa from where traders, *mori* and scholars have immigrated to introduce Islam to the forest edge of West Africa.

According to Alafā Konè, the name of the first Konè was Lasana. He said that Lasana was the son of a prophet named Ali who fought in a jihad against Ma-Wiyatè. Lasana left the jihad and went to Morocco.⁵⁸ Ali is a reference to Muhammed's son-in-law and cousin who became the third caliph of Islam in 656 A.D. Ma-Wiyatè was Mu'āwiya, the governor of Syria who defeated Ali in battle in 657 A.D. and proclaimed himself the caliph. Lasana is Husain, one of Ali's sons who spent the last years of his life in Medina and died in 669 A.D.⁵⁹ The Moroccans made Lassana's son Alafā the *mansa* after Lassana died. Alafā's son Brahima emerged as the military leader of the Konè who led the jihad across the desert.⁶⁰ Being unable to fight in Mauritania and Maraka because

⁵⁸App. 7.31, l. 1530-1615.

⁵⁹Humboldt 1919:402; Lammens 1953:135. Denny 1985:132-135. Vase Kamala claimed that the first Konè was Sama Suna, and that Sama Suna's seven sons died in Mecca while fighting for Muhammed. Sama Suna bequeathed his sacred hat to his descendants who went south. One of his offspring, Jusinyèn Konè, used this hat to shield himself from being killed by bullets or spears when we went to Wagadu and fought. Vase Kamala claimed that Fakoli asked Jusinyèn if he could use this hat when we went to fight. Konè agreed, but Fakoli never returned the hat (in Geysbeek et. al. 1998:30-31,44-45). Kamala's tale about Sama Suna derives from stories that bards in northeast Guinea and Mali like Jèli Mori Kouyaté tell about how the twelve sons of Samasira Burumasira 'died in the Prophet's wars.' Kamala and Kouyaté link Sama Suna or Samasira Burumasira to Sogolon Konè's family (e.g., Kouyaté 1987, in Conrad 1999a:163; see Sisòkò 1968, in Johnson 1968:109-110). Samasira and Burumasira derive from Qur'anic and Samson and Abraham (Humboldt 1918:539; Conrad 1999a:197, ln. 102; see Sayers 1927:99). Most of the Konè's conversion to Islam seems to have been more recent. There are, however, some instances when Konè such as Alafā and Brahima who are said to have converted early on. The non-Muslim association of some Konè that is reflected in their link with the Konè of Do and Kri is seen a story about the time when Muslims told Sumakala Konè and his Bama (Kanè) slave to leave a certain town because Konè was too heavily involved in the *jo* or 'idol' business (Fofin Sumaworo 1986, App. 7.7a, l. 288-311). Sumakala left and established the town of Jodu or 'land of the ritual object.'

⁶⁰Is this a vague reference to the Almoravid invasions?

the residents of these areas were Muslims, Alafā went to Beledu which is north of today's Bamako where he established "Alifalaya" or 'the place of Alafā.'⁶¹ The Konè converted the people of Beledu, but did so through peaceful means. Brahima then supposedly went to Gbèsoba when he heard about the great 'unbeliever' Kònsaba.⁶² When he reached Gbèsoba, Kònsaba successfully bribed him with so many gifts that Brahima did not attack him. Kònsaba urged Brahima to become his *mori*. Brahima, however, did not trust Kònsaba, so he told Kònsaba that he wanted to leave to get his children. Instead of returning to Gbèsoba, Brahima went to Samana where he built a town. He later traveled to Beyla and married the Bèrèté *mansa*'s daughter.

The tradition in question is not the first. Eighty years later, Paul Marty published an account that told about a Konè named Moriba who led the Jomandé from the Sankaran to the town of Tiaoue in Mau where they pushed the Dã past the Bafing river.⁶³ The Jomandé were led by a man named Kogue Kaan (Kònsaba?) who was not a Muslim. Marty's sources said that a Yissifou Bamba, who was the companion of Musa Baayo who is discussed later in this chapter, went to Mau after the Konè and Jomandé settled there. Claims that Yssifou Bamba and Musa Baayo followed the Konè and Kamara to Mau demonstrate, at least according to oral tradition, that the Kamara and Konè migrated to Gbè and Mau before the Baayo and Kanè.

⁶¹Laura Armtson similarly learned that some Konè *morilu* in the Sankaran originated from "Arafanya" (1994:2).

⁶²In the next section, for instance, traditionists associate Kònsaba with the Kòma society. In this context, and considering that these eastern Kamara are known as Jomani, one wonders how the word *jo* or 'ritual object' is related to the prefix in Jomani.

⁶³Marty 1922:129; see Gonnin 1986:151. Oral traditions also say that the Muslim Konè and non-Muslim Kamara settled together in other parts of Gbè and Mau (Derive 1990b:53,57). Moriba means 'important *mori*.'

The Second Conspiracy to Kill Foningama: Kònsaba's Plot in Gbè

According to Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara's versions of the Musadu epic, Kuyateh took Foningama to a safe haven in Mau after Foningama fled from Diemou [49-52]. Kamala implied that Foningama's life was being threatened in Mau when he said that some Musadu Kromah went to Mau to rescue him. In Kamala's stories, Tumaningèmè Kromah of Musadu dreamed that Foningama's life was being endangered and that Foningama was destined to rule the 'four corners of the land.' Tumaningèmè gave his horse and money or a cow's tail to his younger brother Fènyabu. The cow's tail was said to protect Fènyabu, which means that it was occult-saturated. The horse may indicate the use of cavalry, although this is speculative. Fènyabu allegedly went to Mau, rescued Foningama and Kuyateh, and took them to Kònsaba and the other Kamara who lived in Gbè. The relationship between Foningama and Kònsaba does not seem to have been contentious before Foningama went to Gbè; most sources do not say that Kònsaba was one of the conspirators who tried to kill Foningama in Diemou. Circumstances, however, changed in Gbè, at least according to the traditions. After the parting of the Kamara patriarch, Kònsaba became the Kamara *mansa* and might have viewed Foningama as a threat if one takes the liberty to read the oral traditions this literally.

Wata Mammadi Kamara and two of Vase Kamala's accounts claim that the Kromah disagreed about what to do with Foningama. According to Kamala, Fènyabu wanted Foningama to join them in Musadu, but Tumaningèmè did not support this idea. Tumaningèmè feared that Foningama's presence would lead to trouble. Another Kromah, Zo Musa, was causing unrest in Musadu. Tumaningèmè believed that hostilities would break out if Zo Musa and Foningama lived in the same place. Tumaningèmè might have

also felt that Foningama's settlement in Musadu would jeopardize his own status. Regardless of what actually happened, one can surmise that stories about Tumaningèmè's opposition to the settlement of Foningama in Konya-Mani became more dominant in some versions of the epic after Foningama usurped the *mansaya* of Musadu from the Kromah (Chapter 7). The supposed tension between Fènyabu and Tumaningèmè also suggests that one Kromah faction might have formed an alliance with Foningama to increase their advantage in Konya-Mani.⁶⁴

Kònsaba's Plot Against Foningama in Gbè

Several sources explain how Kònsaba plotted against Foningama [53-64]. Dauvillier narrated the core episodes in 1905. His sources told him that Foningama went to Gbè after he escaped from Sunjata. The *mansa* of Gbè, however, tried to kill Foningama, so he fled to Musadu.⁶⁵ Later narratives say that Kònsaba was the *mansa* who Foningama encountered in Gbè. Fofin Sumawolo was the next to mention these episodes. He said that Kònsaba was living in Gbè when Foningama reached the area, but that Foningama went to Musadu because Kònsaba tried to 'cheat' him.⁶⁶ Dauvillier and Sumawolo's accounts were fragments of a much longer oral tradition that has been circulating in southwest Guinea and westcentral Côte d'Ivoire for years.

Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara narrated a multi-episode story that is a detailed version of Sumawolo's seemingly innocuous comment that Kònsaba tried to

⁶⁴Lanse Donzo's claim that Fènyabu eventually settled in Gbèsoba with the Kònsabasi indicates that the political landscape of the Kromah in Konya-Mani might have been as contentious as the Kònsaba-Foningama division in the east (n.d.).

⁶⁵App. 3.

⁶⁶App. 7.7.

‘cheat’ Foningama. According to Kamala’s 1985 interview that is a good representation of his other oral traditions, Fènyabu Kromah took Foningama and Kuyateh from Mau to Gbè where Kònsaba was the *mansa*.⁶⁷ Kamala related a tale to the effect that Kònsaba welcomed Foningama and Kuyateh when they reached Gbè, but said that they could only settle if the land approved. Kònsaba felt that Foningama was a threat, so he dug a hole and lowered a drummer in the hole.⁶⁸ Kònsaba evidently wanted to portray the drummer as being the spirit of the land. Kònsaba told the drummer to beat his drum when he asked the land if Foningama should settle where the sun sets. The sun sets east, toward Konya-Mani.⁶⁹ When everyone gathered the next day, Kònsaba told the land that his brother had come, and asked the land if his brother should settle with him. After repeating the question many times and getting no reply, Kònsaba asked if Foningama should go where the sun sets. The drummer beat the drum each time Kònsaba asked this question. Upon hearing the reply, Foningama, Fènyabu and Kuyateh agreed to leave the next morning.

Fearful, however, that Foningama would learn of his deceit, Kònsaba convened a secret meeting to arrange for Foningama’s death. An old woman sitting on the veranda overheard the discussion and warned Fènyabu. During the night, Fènyabu snuck Foningama through town and helped him climb over the wall. When Foningama realized that he had left his *jèli* in town, Fènyabu returned for him. Fènyabu wrapped Kuyateh in an old mat, hoisted him on his head, and started to leave. On his way, he met the Kòma

⁶⁷App. 7.6. Wata Mammadi Kamara, who often patterned his story after Vase Kamala, said Foningama and Kuyateh went to Siano (App. 7.37).

⁶⁸Mustafa Kromah added that Kònsaba sacrificed a kola nut at the edge of the hole after the drummer went into the hole (App. 7.20).

⁶⁹Kamala said that Kònsaba placed a chair over the covered hole in another version (n.d., App. 7.38).



Figure 28 The Kòma seeking to kill Foningama, by Mohammed Chèjan Kromah, 1992

dancer and his entourage that were going to kill Foningama.⁷⁰ They allowed Fènyabu to leave after he told them that he was just moving his belongings to another house. Fènyabu hoisted Kuyateh over the wall when he reached the edge of town. When Kuyateh got out of the mat he reportedly said, “Foolish Foningama, you ran away and left.” Both men laughed when Foningama said, “but I found you in an old mat.” The narrators said that this incident formed the basis for a ‘joking’ (*sanangu*) or ‘binding relationship’ (*lasili*) between the two clans. This new alliance also reinforced the blood pact and patron-client relationship that Foningama had made with his Kuyateh *jèli*, and gave the Kuyateh another reason to make special claims on the Kamara. This story represents yet another example of a time when someone rescued Foningama.

A few sources claim that Kònsaba conspired to kill Foningama in Mau [65].⁷¹ They say that the Kamara migrated from the Manden to Siano (Mau), and that Foningama later went to Musadu. According to Moliké Sidibé, Siano or Silana was the place where Kònsaba conspired to make Foningama fall in the hole.⁷² Yves Person simply noted that Foningama moved from Siano to Musadu, and said that Siano was an important religious center that Kònsaba’s sons established.⁷³ He asserted that the Jomandé migrated to Mau to become involved in the kola trade, and that the Masare, Donzo and Sumaworo accompanied them. Person also claimed that the Keita initially led the Kamara into these

⁷⁰Officials, bards, torch bearers, musicians and less important members of the Komo often accompany Komo dancers. Sometimes, the association head is the dancer (McNaughton 1979:19-20).

⁷¹Monograph/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8; Daouda Camara 1979, App. 4.9; Sidibé 1997:82, l. 152. These accounts may derive Djèkè Kamara’s unpublished manuscript.

⁷²Sidibé 1997:81-83.

⁷³Yves Person reported that Siano is an important ritual center of the Jomandé. The lineage of Mea-Kuru, which descended from Kònsaba, guards the Jomandé ‘sanctuary’ at Siano and conducts the rituals. Person also claimed that the Kandesì, Setasi, and Famoghosi, who descended from Mea-Kuru, spread from Siano and conquered Mau. He first said that these movements occurred during the sixteenth century, but later dated them back to the late-fifteenth century (1968b:570; 1984:317; see Gonnin 1986:257-258; Derive 1990a:25).

areas.⁷⁴

In summary, the oral traditions suggest that Foningama entered Musadu from two different points, Gbè and Mau. Do these views conflict, or are they separate segments of a larger story that many accounts do not connect? None of the Siano versions tell how Foningama walked the seventy-seven mile journey to Musadu if the most direct path was taken. Person drew an arrow on his maps that showed the Kamara arcing their way to Musadu in a slightly northwest direction through southern Gbè.⁷⁵ The stories must be connected to other individual accounts to understand the larger sequence of events that might have occurred. The traditions indicate that the Foningama-Kamara did not migrate much further west than Wanino (Mau), Diemou (Worodugu) and Gbèsoba (Gbè) before Foningama moved to Musadu. Most of the Kamara lived farther to the east in Seguela, Barala, Koro and Mau. When Foningama left Mau as the traditions claim, it would have been natural for him to travel north or northwest into areas that some Manding probably inhabited. Locations to the south and west were more heavily forested, and the non-Manding who resided there might have been less hospitable to him. It is in this context therefore that Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara's story about Fènyabu Kromah meeting Foningama might be significant. They explained that Fènyabu took Foningama from Mau to Gbè, and then to Musadu. Their accounts also link the versions which claim that the plot allegedly occurred in Siano or Gbè, even though both areas represent competing claims about where Kònsaba attempted to kill Foningama. Foningama would have had to pass through Gbè to avoid the direct route through Kalagba that was less inhabited by the Manding at the time. Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara's stories

⁷⁴Person 1964:326; 1972:10.

⁷⁵Person 1961:52.

thus fit the larger pattern of all the stories and make geographical sense.

The Kamara, Baayo and Kanè in Gbè

The Baayo and Kanè help Kònsaba Defeat the Kpelle, Loma and Dã

The oral traditions claim that the Kpelle, Loma and Dã lived in Gbè when Kònsaba arrived there. In time, Kònsaba eventually sought to rule them. Gbè's inhabitants, however, resisted, so Kònsaba asked for some help. Musa Baayo (Bagayogo) and Mori Kanè are said to have immigrated from the Middle Niger to help Kònsaba consolidate his rule in Gbè. Baayo and Kanè were Jakhanke, a group of scholar-traders founded by a famous teacher named Al-Hajj Salim Sware. Most scholars argue that Sware live sometime from the mid-to-late fifteenth to the early-sixteenth century. Sware is said to have gone on several pilgrimages to Mecca and established a community of scholars in the town of Ja in Senegambia before he died. Some oral traditions allege that the Musa Baayo and Feremourou Kanè who went to Gbè were two of the "twelve famous *ulema* of the past" who journeyed to Mecca with Al-Hajj Sware.⁷⁶ After the pilgrims returned to West Africa, Musa Baayo and Feremourou Kanè allegedly migrated south to Gbè where they met Kònsaba and later founded Koro and Ferentela.⁷⁷

The Baayo and Kanè were not only *morilu*, but *jula* or long-distance traders. As *morilu* and *jula*, they partly characterized what made the Jakhanke unique. From today's

⁷⁶Marty 1922:130; O'Sullivan 1976:74-75; Hunter 1977:188; Launay 1992:82; Wilks 1989:61-62,99. For other information about the Jakhanke, see Hunter (1976), Sanneh (1989), and further discussion about the Jakhanke in Chapter 7.

⁷⁷For more information on the Baayo, see Appendix H.1. The Kanè are not listed as having been one of the leading Jakhanke clans (Sanneh 1989:11,18), but they were Jakhanke to the extent that "Feremourou Kanate" or Fere Mori Kanè was associated with Al-Hajj Sware and Musa Baayo. Some literate Kanè Muslims are said to have links with the Fulbe (Paegard 1961:18; Conrad 2002:26, fn. 134; A. Massing, personal communication, 22 May 2002).

Gambia to Côte d'Ivoire, narrators acknowledge that the Baayo were some of West Africa's earliest *jula*. According to Banna Kanute, Mamudu Baayo of Timbuktu was the leader of the *jula* in the Gambia: the Baayo, the Daabo, the Fofana, the Dansoko and the



Figure 29 Kola nuts waiting transport in a warehouse, Macenta, 1986

Singaate.⁷⁸ The Kanè and Kromah were early Maninka long-distance traders who made towns like Koro and Ferentela into important commercial centers. The *jula* facilitated the transport of kola nuts and possibly gold from the forest to the Middle Niger.⁷⁹ Even though the Kanè and Baayo were *jula*, the Maniyaka traditions rarely recognize the important role that traders had in spreading Islam.⁸⁰ Traditionist started to exaggerate the Islamic identity of many clans in the twentieth century.⁸¹ Indeed, the Baayo were some of

⁷⁸Kanute 1969, in Innes 1974:235-236, ll. 2035-2046. Early Soninke long-distance traders were called *wangara* (Massing 2000).

⁷⁹Person 1968b:168-169; O'Sullivan 1976:82-83; Toungara 1980:5,54; Massing 2000:289.

⁸⁰See Levtzion 1987b:21.

⁸¹Robinson 1985:85.

the original *bla* or ‘sorcery clans’ that Fakoli allegedly ruled.⁸² Sumaworo Kante or Kanè was the quintessential blacksmith-sorcerer of Soso, and a Kanè is said to have been one of the most feared sorceresses who lived during the time of Sumaworo and Sunjata.⁸³

Some traditions claim that after Baayo and Kanè blessed Kònsaba, Kònsaba’s men surrounded a market and gave its contents to them. This might be a reference to the plundering of goods by Kònsaba’s warriors. Some sources tell another cliché, that of the *morilu* giving some palm nuts to Kònsaba. After the Kònsaba planted the seeds and trees grew, birds took some seeds from the trees and scattered them throughout the land. This cliché might explain where the Kamara later settled and became *mansalu*.

Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara narrated an etymology that explains how the Kamara came to dominate the Kpelle in Gbè [66-71]. They said that after Kònsaba went to Gbèsoba, he sacrificed a cow to a *jina* of the Kpelle named Tonba (‘big termite mount’) or Tintinba (‘big mountain’).⁸⁴ Unhappy with the results, Kònsaba proclaimed that he was the real ruler of the land. Kònsaba said that he would kill the Kpelle if they did not leave in one week, so the Kpelle fled into the forest.⁸⁵ Mustafa Kromah narrated a vaguely similar account, though substituted the Loma for the Kpelle.⁸⁶ He said that after Kònsaba met the Loma when he went to Gbè, a rumor spread that he was going to kill the Loma leader N’Ze. Kònsaba assured N’Ze that this was not true, so N’Ze permitted the Kamara to settle there. Eventually, however, the Loma fled into the

⁸²Conrad 1992:177; Kouyaté 1988, in Conrad 1999a:58.

⁸³Belcher 1999a:101; Kante 1960:10; Kouyaté 1987, in Conrad 1999a:185. The Kanè are also known as Kana, Kanaghate, Kanaaté, Kanate, Kande, Kannade, Kannate and Kènè.

⁸⁴Thanks to James Fairhead for translating *Tonba* (personal communication, 28 July 1995).

⁸⁵App. 7.6. Wata Mammadi Kamara added that Kònsaba drove the Kpelle from Gbè, Worodugu, Fuala and Samana (App. 7.37).

⁸⁶Kromah said Foningama. Foningama, though, is a praise name in this case and refers to Kònsaba (App. 7.20, l. 66-114).

forest when they learned that N'Ze would be decapitated.

Kamala and Kamara then explain how Kaamòò Mori Kanè and Musa Baayo migrated from Timbuktu to Gbè to help Kònsaba become supreme in the area, and how the newcomers respectively founded Koro and Ferentela in Mau. These etymologies are popular in Gbè and Barala and probably also in Mau, although Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara are the only informants from Guinea who mentioned them.

According to Kamala and Kamara, Kònsaba was not satisfied with the sacrifice that he made to the Kpelle *jina*, so he asked a Donzo or Sumaworo *mori* to make his descendants prosper [72-78]. In return, he gave one of his daughters to the *mori*.⁸⁷ The *mori* agreed to help, but summoned Mori Kanè from Timbuktu because he did not have enough power to grant Kònsaba's request. "Timbuktu" most likely refers to the large area of the Middle Niger where Timbuktu, Jenne and other Muslim centers were established. In what seems to be a cliché that describes a divination ritual, Kamala said that the *mori* placed a *lisimu* or letter in the mouth of a fish, and that the fish swam the roughly one thousand mile journey to Timbuktu.⁸⁸ Kalamòò Mori Kanè dreamed that a fish was sending him a message, so he instructed the fishing people to give the fish to him when it reached Timbuktu. When the fish was caught and Mori Kanè read that a fellow *mori* was requesting his assistance, he and Musa Baayo went to Gbèsoba.

When Mori Kanè reached Gbèsoba, he supposedly agreed to bless the Jomandé after Kònsaba sacrificed a young albino girl and a red pan filled with gold [79-87]. The

⁸⁷Wata Mammadi Kamara said that Kònsaba wanted Sumaworo to help him so Foningama's followers would not overcome him (App. 7.37). Nagel similarly learned that the Sumaworo were the *mori* of the Jomandé, and that the Konè and Donzo were the Jomandé's warriors (App. 10.7).

⁸⁸See Conrad 1992:158. This mythical journey would have taken the fish down the Kourou Kélé, Sankarani and Niger Rivers.

albino represented a valuable sacrifice to obtain the favor of the spirit world, and the gold symbolized great wealth. After Mori Kanè retired for prayer, an earthquake consumed the items. The people of Gbè dragged Mori Kanè through town against Kònsaba's pleas and threatened to kill him because they did not see an immediate result. After Mori Kanè made the items reappear, the Gbèka or the 'people of Gbè' admitted their wrongdoing and asked Mori Kanè to complete his blessing. Mori Kanè guaranteed that the Gbèka would always have many children and enough food to eat, but said they would never become rich. He then placed two stones over the hole where the sacrifice items were buried and named the spot "Gbèsuba" (Gbèsoba) or 'big sorcery of Gbè.' The Kpelle subsequently worshiped the rocks.

When Mori Kanè was preparing to leave, Kònsaba's young men surrounded Gbèsoba's market and gave Mori Kanè all of the human beings, gold, horses, cows and food therein to thank him for his work [88-92]. Kònsaba's gift seems to foreshadow the 'sacrifice of one thousand' that Foningama made after he became the *mansa* of Musadu (Chapter 7). In return, Mori Kanè gave Kònsaba a palmtree. After Kònsaba planted the seeds and the trees grew, Kònsaba sent some of the seeds to the Kamara in Musadu. Kamala also said that birds scattered the seeds all the way to the ocean, explaining how palm trees came to be grown in these other parts of Upper Guinea.

The Guinean narratives are grounded in a rich historiographic tradition that derives from western Côte d'Ivoire. The earliest Baayo-Kanè account comes from Lieutenant Blondiaux who wrote that 'the village of Koro was founded by M'fa Moussa Bakaïoko.'⁸⁹ Commandant Le Campion then found an oral tradition written in Arabic that

⁸⁹Blondiaux 1897:371; see Gonnin 1986:317-320.

provided more information about these migrations.⁹⁰ Marie-José Derive revisited these traditions a half-century later when she interviewed Mori Kamagate, Mamadou Toure and Karamogoba Soumahoro.⁹¹ Even though Derive unfortunately omitted the portion of Soumahoro's oral history that explained what happened to "Fuengana" or Foningama after he left Gbè, the information that she and Le Campion gave offer more perspective to the narratives that were recorded in Guinea.⁹²

The Ivorian sources focus on Musa Baayo and the Dã, not Mori Kanè and the Kpelle. According to the Arabic document, Gonsila or Kònsaba was a traditional ritual specialist who summoned Musa Baayo to protect him from the Dã whom they had pushed into the forest. Musa Baayo traveled to Gbè with some warriors and helped Kònsaba subjugate the Dã. In return, Kònsaba gave Baayo many slaves as 'booty.'⁹³ Karamogoba Soumahoro said that a Jomandé *mansa* asked a *mori* named Mya Samoo Kiaaté (Miate, Sumaworo) to help him make his village more powerful.⁹⁴ Kiaaté sent a fish to Timbuktu with a message asking Musa Baayo to visit Gbè. After Musa Baayo read the message, he went to Gbè where a Sumaworo ruled. Sumaworo 'adorned' or probably made sacrifices at one of the mountains. Musa Baayo left Gbè after 'pagan' *jina* stole his shoes from the mosque. According to Kamagate and Touré, Mori Kanè joined south with Musa Baayo, but separated after they passed Odiénne.⁹⁵

The Guinean and Ivorian traditions that tell how the Kamara, Baayo and Kanè

⁹⁰Marty 1922:130ff; see Wilks 1965:95; O'Sullivan 1976:5,23, n. 3.

⁹¹Derive 1976:25-26; 1990b:55-56; see O'Sullivan 1976:74.

⁹²Derive 1990b:55.

⁹³Marty 1922:131-133.

⁹⁴Derive 1990b:55; see Person 1961:55; Nagel, App. 10.2. Mya Samoo Kiaaté's name is similar to the Mérité Yabia (Miate) who allegedly migrated from Timbuktu to Mau with Musa Baayo (Marty 1922:132). This Maya Samoo Kiaaté is the Sumaworo who Wata Mammadi Kamara identified (fn. 87).

⁹⁵Derive 1976:25-26.

helped the Maninka become dominant in Gbè permit one to make a broad statement about the nature of the relations that the Maninka developed with others when they migrated south. The association between the Manding and their hosts seems to have started relatively peacefully, as seen in N'Ze's initial acceptance of the Kamara and the Kamara's willingness to make a sacrifice to a *jina* whom the Kpelle highly regarded. While these "events" cannot to be taken literally, they indicate that considerable assimilation probably occurred through intermarriage, economic exchange, religious adaptation and political integration. In time, however, Kamara warrior-traders and scholar-traders like the Baayo and Kanè asserted their hegemony over the Kpelle, Dā and the other more original inhabitants of Gbè and Mau.⁹⁶ This was part of the same process that occurred along the forest edge from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries; Foningama extended this pattern to Konya-Mani when he went to Musadu.

The market and palmtree episodes are clichés that have been preserved to explain something else that actually happened. Although it is often difficult to interpret clichés with any degree of certainty, the Ivorian accounts offer some hints that seem to make the Guinean stories a little more clear. The stories from Côte d'Ivoire interject the themes of war and religious strife that are less apparent in the Guinea materials. Read in conjunction with the Arabic history from Côte d'Ivoire, Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara's 'young men' who went to the market may be warriors; the market items that they supposedly gave to Mori Kanè may have been slaves and riches that they plundered from the Dan and Kpelle. The *jina* who reportedly stole Musa Baayo's sandals during prayer symbolizes confrontation between Islam and local religious beliefs and practices. Vase

⁹⁶Person 1984:317.

Kamala's claim that Mori Kanè had Kònsaba sacrifice a human being, red pan and gold speaks more to the fusion of Islam and traditional ideas.

The palm nut episodes indicate that Mori Kanè sent seeds to Foningama in Musadu. The scattering of the palm seeds by birds and the subsequent growth of palm trees may also signify claims to land ownership, political domination and the formation of socio-political alliances through wife-giving and other mechanisms.⁹⁷ Also, might the sudden appearance of palm nuts say something about the end of drought? Palm trees thrive best in the rainforest and need much rainfall to grow in abundance.⁹⁸

Musa Baayo and Mori Kanè found Koro and Ferentela

The next stories are augmenting episodes that explain how Musa Baayo and Mori Kanè respectively founded Koro and Ferentela [93-98]. They do not directly pertain to the founding of Musadu, and are only told by Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara. Kamala might have learned these stories when he lived in Côte d'Ivoire.

According to Kamala and Kamara, Mori Kanè and Musa Baayo separated after Kanè divided the market items with Baayo. Kanè gave his cane to Baayo - transferring some of his power and authority to him, and told Baayo to settle where the cane landed. Only the most esteemed *morilu* used canes like this.⁹⁹ Kamala said that Musa Baayo put the cane across his shoulder and walked until it struck a *kolokolo* (*kuokuosan*) tree. The area where the cane landed did not have any water, so Musa Baayo informed Mori Kanè. Kanè prayed and made a torrential downpour carve a river into the land. Baayo named the

⁹⁷See Fairhead/Leach 1996:70-88; Roberts 1987:28-29.

⁹⁸Miller 1982:26.

⁹⁹Wilks 1968:169.

town Koro after the tree that his cane struck. Meanwhile, Mori Kanè went south and founded Ferentela.

The early-twentieth century Arabic source from Côte d'Ivoire that Marty collected similarly said that Musa Baayo walked with a cane across his shoulders and stopped when both ends of his cane struck two *kolo* trees. God created a river because there was no water, and Musa Baayo built a mosque at the river's source. Baayo died in Koro, and his tomb became a pilgrimage site.¹⁰⁰ Mori Kamagate and Mamadou Toure do not mention Kònsaba. They said that Mori Kanè and Musa Baayo traveled together and separated after they passed Odienne. When Baayo realized that there was no water where his cane stopped, he prayed and traced a route where the water should go. An everlasting supply of water filled the imprint that he made in the ground. Mori Kanè traveled further south and founded "Moriferebougoula." The town's name was shortened to "Ferefougoula" or Ferentela.¹⁰¹ Karamogoba Soumahoro did not speak of a miracle that was performed to create a river. Instead, he said that Musa Baayo's son Nuamanea moved to where the present Koro is located because the land where he originally settled was too marshy.¹⁰²

The Guineans condensed several separate stories into one long narrative. Since the Côte d'Ivoire materials come from the areas where these events are said to have taken place, they provide more precise information about what is believed to have happened. Nonetheless, the fact that so many points in Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara's accounts are comparable to the Côte d'Ivoire stories attest to feedback and the durability of Maniyaka traditions in Guinea.

¹⁰⁰Marty 1922:131.

¹⁰¹Derive 1976:25-26.

¹⁰²Derive 1990b:55-56.

Dating the Kamara, Baayo and Kanè Migrations to Mau

Establishing sequences of events and chronology are especially difficult when working with oral traditions. One can, for instance, provide relative dates from traditions based on genealogical distance as Yves Person did for Foningama, but such reckoning is problematic given the way that people manipulate genealogies.¹⁰³ A historian is in a better position to assign firm dates if he or she can connect some aspect of a tradition with a historically viable event or person. The near contemporary information that Ahmad Bābā Aqit and al-Sa'di give about Mahmūd Baayo (d. 1543) and his sons Ahmad (d. 1571) and Muhammad (d. 1594) helps one make the first firm statements about the timing of the Maninka migrations to Musadu.¹⁰⁴ Thomas Hunter was probably correct when he stated that Mahmūd, not Muhammad, was the Baayo who went on the pilgrimage to Mecca with Al-Hajj Salim Sware.¹⁰⁵ If Musa Baayo and Feremourou Kanè journeyed to Mecca with Al-Hajj Sware and Mahmūd Baayo, then Musa Baayo and Feremourou Kanè could not have migrated south before the early-sixteenth century given the fact that Mahmūd died in c. 1543 A.D.¹⁰⁶ One notes also that the contemporary Arabic sources only indicate that the Baayo who left Timbuktu were descendants of Muhammad's brother Ahmad, not Muhammad. In John Hunwick's opinion, it would "only be a matter of conjecture" to state that the ancestor of the Baayo who went south were the offspring of Muhammad.¹⁰⁷ It is therefore impossible to tell whether the Musa Baayo who is claimed to have helped

¹⁰³Person 1972; Henige 1974.

¹⁰⁴See Hunwick 1990:163. Aqit died in 1627 and Al-Sa'di wrote his *Tarikh al-Sudan* in 1655 (in Hunwick 1999:lxix-lxxii,62-68; see Appendix H.1).

¹⁰⁵Hunter 1976:188.

¹⁰⁶Marty 1922:130.

¹⁰⁷Hunwick 1990:151-152,163; see Massing forthcoming.

Kònsaba and founded Koro was a descendant of Muhammad, Ahmad or another Baayo. Lastly, most historians argue that the Baayo who dispersed from the Middle Niger to today's Burkina Faso, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire did so during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹⁰⁸ Ivor Wilks' "second half of the seventeenth century" date that he assigned for the Baayo and Kanè migrations to Koro seems reasonable given the seventeenth and eighteenth century date that historians claim for the migration of the Baayo to other parts of West Africa.¹⁰⁹

Yves Person originally claimed that the Kanè and Baayo journeyed with the Kamara during the mid-sixteenth century and respectively founded Ferentela and Koro.¹¹⁰ He subsequently argued that the Kamara settled in Konya-Mani and Mau no later than the late-fifteenth century. Person readjusted his dates to fit his theory that the Konya Kamara were impetus of the Mane invasions that Europeans recorded along the Atlantic coast after the mid-sixteenth century.¹¹¹ There are two problems with this aspect of Person's work. Person did not factor in the sixteenth and seventeenth century Arabic accounts about the Timbuktu Baayo when he estimated the sequence and timing of their migrations to Mau.¹¹² Person also wrote that the Baayo and Kanè migrated south with the Kamara, but he did not state why he linked these migrations. It seems, rather, that the Kamara went to Mau well before the Baayo and Kanè as the traditions from Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire

¹⁰⁸Wilks 1965:93-95; see Levtzion 1968:91,165-167; Massing forthcoming.

¹⁰⁹Wilks 1965:94. Le Campion wrote that the twelve pilgrims left the Middle Niger in the mid-eighteenth century; and Marty accepted his idea (1922:130). Derive estimated a much earlier mid-sixteenth century date (1976:26; see Toungara 1980:4-6; O'Sullivan 1976:74-83). Derive did not, like Person, factor in the sixteenth and seventeenth century accounts about the Baayo and Kanè pilgrims when she proposed her dates.

¹¹⁰Person 1968b:168-169; 1972:10.

¹¹¹Person 1984:317.

¹¹²Person probably knew about the Timbuktu Baayo, as he referenced Houdas' 1900 French translation of al-Sa'di's *Tarikhs es-Sudan* (1975:2172).

claim.¹¹³ This does not discount Person's argument that the Kamara could have moved to Mau and Konya-Mani by the late-fifteenth century.

Conclusion

According to several oral traditions, the Kamara moved through several places before they reached Musadu. The traditions collectively say that Foningama's ancestor migrated to Baté or Wasolon after he left the Manden and met the Fulbe. There, the Fulbe hid him in a *fonio* granary from Sunjata or his clansmen. One or more of his descendants probably then moved south and eventually settled in Diemou. The *mansa* of the Kamara lived in Diemou, and some oral traditions state that he choose Foningama to replace him as his successor. Many of the other Kamara did not agree with his decision, so they plotted to kill Foningama. After a bard or an old women foiled the plot, Foningama left Diemou. He met a Kuyateh *jèli* who took him to Mau where they forged a blood pact.

The narratives claim that after Foningama left Diemou, the senior Kamara took his son Kònsaba and the rest of his family to Gbè. After the Kamara *mansa* died, Kònsaba succeeded him as the leader of the Kamara. One informant stated that a Konè *mori* traveled from the Manden to convert Kònsaba to Islam, but that Kònsaba did not submit to God. After the Konè encountered Kònsaba, Fènyabu Kromah went from Musadu to Mau and took Foningama to Gbè where Kònsaba lived. Kònsaba conspired to kill Foningama after he arrived, but an old woman supposedly overheard the plotters discussing their plans and apprized Kromah that Foningama was in danger. So, Kromah helped Foningama escape and took him to Musadu.

¹¹³Marty 1922:129-130; Derive 1990b:50; Massing forthcoming; supra.

The details of some of these accounts are not clear, and a summary like this does not deal with many of the questions that have not been answered. Yet, this does provide an overall summary of how many oral traditions explain how the Foningama-Kamara migrated from the Manden to Musadu. The accounts show that Kònsaba and his descendants became the dominant Kamara lineage in today's westcentral Côte d'Ivoire, and that Foningama's branch of the Kamara did not start to assert any long-lasting authority until they went far enough west to Konya-Mani. Foningama seems to have challenged, or at least threatened the Kònsaba-Kamara, and ultimately fled to his Kromah in-laws who lived in Musadu.

The accounts also demonstrate how several peoples intervened at critical junctures in the epic to help spare the life of Foningama or one of his ancestors. The people who are claimed to have rescued a Kamara were the Fulbe in Baté or Wasolon, a woman or a Masare bard in Diemou, a Kuyateh bard who took him to Mau, and a woman and an Kromah in Gbè. Women and *jèlilu* were part of the lower tier of the social order, and the Manding often looked down on the Fulbe. Yet, these are the peoples who are said to have saved Foningama's life. In the previous chapter, there is a discussion about whether or not Foningama's ancestor who left the Manden was a *funé*. Most of the traditions indicate that he was a *funé* who seems to have been fictitiously linked to the noble Kamara to elevate his status, even though he became a powerful warrior who conquered Musadu. The possibility was also discussed that Foningama's ancestor who left the Manden was a noble, but that his status became altered over a period of several generations as he and/or his descendants became involved in situations that compromised his status. If these Kamara descended from noble to *funé* status, instances that describe how some Fulbe,

jèlilu and women who saved the lives of these Kamara could explain how their rank was gradually diminished.

In the earlier part of the epic, perhaps as early as the time of Sunjata and Sumaworo, Maninka smiths and traders started to migrate south. Numerous oral narratives claim that a man named Musa Kromah founded the town of Musadu in a section of Konya-Mani where several rivers and streams made the land hospitable for farming, population growth, and the establishment of a center of trade. It is to the traditions which describe the founding of Musadu that our attention is now turned.

CHAPTER 4

MUSA KROMAH AND THE FOUNDING OF MUSADU

As Sunjata Keita and his allies formed the Mali empire in the thirteenth century, Maninka and Soninke were probably starting to drift south to trade gold, iron and kola nuts that they harvested in the forest and savannah for salt, horses, cattle and other goods that they transferred from the Niger river basin. According to many oral traditions, Kamara such as Faran and his descendants migrated in a south-southeasterly direction to Barala, Gbè and Mau. The Kromah and Konè traveled along more southerly routes to Konya-Mani. Some Baayo, Dole, Donzo, Kamara, Sanoe and Traoré probably also went to Konya-Mani early on, but their itineraries are less certain. Traditionists indicate that the Maninka who went to Konya-Mani assimilated with the people who already lived there; some so-called “pygmies,” and the ancestors of the Dã, Mano, Gola, Konor, Kpelle, Loma, and others whose presence is no longer remembered. The newcomers intermarried, formed alliances and exchanged customs and ideas with their hosts.¹ Claims that peoples of so many backgrounds lived in Musadu indicate that Konya-Mani was a zone of transition and regrouping for traders, farmers, fishing people, refugees and others who represented many different backgrounds.

The oral narratives suggest that when the Maninka and Soninke journeyed south, they established trade towns to coordinate the production and trade of goods. According to several oral traditions, one of the oldest and most important communities that the Soninke and Maninka developed in today’s southeastern Guinea was Musadu. The

¹Brooks 1993:45,71; Person 1984:316-317.

Musadu epic collectively lists one dozen towns that existed in the region before Musadu was founded, but Musadu became the economic and political center of Konya-Mani.

Many of the accounts also tell a story that explains how a man named Musa moved to the Dion River to fish, hunt and farm, and built a shelter that formed the nucleus of what later became known as Musadu or ‘Musa’s town.’

In this chapter, the pre-Manding history of Konya-Mani according to oral tradition is first discussed. This is followed by a section on the general role of hunters, smiths and traders in the distant past, and then a summary of the main accounts that describe how Musa founded Musadu. I argue that Musa seems to have been a composite Kromah who followed the tradition of other Musa-pilgrim characters like Fakoli who preceded him in the Manden, and that he probably founded Musadu with the help of some other Kromah, some Konè, some Donzo and others who people no longer remember. Informants refer to Musa and his close associates as ‘hosts,’ and reserve the name ‘strangers’ for those who were living when Foningama later moved to Musadu. The last portion of the chapter explains why Musadu became such an important economic stronghold in the region.

The Peoples of Early Konya-Mani

Information that the oral traditions offer about the ethnic make-up of Musa or Zo Musa help identify the mosaic of peoples who lived in Konya-Mani before the Manding arrived. Most of the oral traditions stated that Musa was Kpelle or Maniyaka; fewer numbers said that he was Loma, Dã, Mano or Gola. Early-to-mid twentieth century writers in Guinea and Liberia also claimed that “pygmies” lived in parts of the savannah and forest regions of Upper Guinea. In this section of the chapter, the history of these

peoples who lived in Konya-Mani and beyond is briefly surveyed.

Pygmies and autochthones

There is considerable indication in oral traditions that “pygmies” or “small men” resided in portions of eastern Guinea, westcentral Côte d’Ivoire and central Liberia long ago (Appendix K).² Some of the reports are sensational, with a few sources calling these people “man-monkeys” or “jina.” Yet, although the existence of smaller-size have not been positively confirmed by physical evidence, consistent references to their existence that span nearly the entire twentieth century lead one to believe that some of the earliest people who lived in Upper Guinea were shorter than most of the Africans who live in these parts today.

Early South-West Mande, South-East Mande and South West-Atlantic speakers in Konya-Mani and beyond

Apart from scattered references about small people, oral traditions record that the ancestors of the Kpelle, Loma, Konor, Mano, Dã and Gola lived in Konya-Mani and surrounding areas before the Maninka arrived. The present-day Kpelle and Loma are South-West Mande speakers. The Mano, Dã and Kono are South-East Mande speakers, and the Gola are South-West Atlantic speakers. The Maninka and Maniyaka are North-Central Mande speakers.

South-East and South-West Mande languages probably started to diverge before

²Johnston 1906/1969:887; Viard 1934:11; Jacquier 1935:58-59; Schnell 1949:4; Holas 1952a:42-43; Niane 1960:44; Kante 1962/1992:282; Schroeder/Massing 1970:5; Moundekeno 1979:10; Germain 1984:30-33; Ellis 1999:275; see Kopytoff 1987:10,57; Vansina 1990:17,29.56-67; Ford n.d.:9-10; 1991:95.

the time of Christ. South-West Mande and North-Central Mande languages might have started to separate by the eleventh century. Proto-Kpelle and proto-Loma do not seem to have started to differentiate until the late-sixteenth century after the Mane invaders went toward the coast and created considerable population shifts.³ Thus, by the early-fifteenth century after Musadu had probably already been founded, the Dã, Mano, Gola and Maniyaka spoke separate languages. Even though the ancestors of today's Kpelle and Loma probably only spoke Proto South-West Mande during Musadu's early history, this does preclude the ancestors of the Kpelle, Loma, Dã and Mano from having started to form a self-consciousness based on cultural, religious and historical differences before linguistic variations became pronounced.⁴ The formation of a relatively unified political culture that is associated with today's ethnic groups did not start to emerge among many of these peoples until the late-nineteenth century when the Americo-Liberians and French started to colonize this part of Upper Guinea and mapped them out as separate units to control and tax them more easily.⁵

If the ancestors of these peoples encountered earlier inhabitants who some call pygmies, such smaller stature people might have cohabited there for centuries as happened in central Africa. The earlier peoples would have been the hosts of the newcomers, intermarried with them, and taught them how the hunt, farm, fish, heal, mine and perhaps smelt iron. Newcomers might have gradually adopted elements of the first people's language(s) and culture(s) as they became numerically, economically and politically more dominant.⁶

³Dwyer 1973:205, n. 1,261, n. 3; 1974:65-66; 1989:50; see Hair 1968b:54.

⁴Dwyer 1973:191-195; Dwyer 1974:65-66; see Kastenholtz 1991/92.

⁵D'Azevedo 1989; Højbjerg forthcoming.

⁶See Vansina 1990:56-57.

The late-fifteenth century is the estimated date that Foningama and other Maninka, Maniyaka and Soninke started to assert their physical, political and cultural hegemony in Konya-Mani and other lands north of the forest line in Upper Guinea [99]. The dating of the Kamara to Musadu is mainly based on genealogical studies that trace the advent of Foningama to Musadu to the mid-sixteenth century, and the possible involvement of the Konya-Mani Kamara in the mid-sixteenth Mane invasions that the European traders recorded along the coast.⁷ Earlier groups of Manding, Soninke and other Mande speaking people would have founded Musadu earlier. The oral accounts imply

⁷Many oral traditions claim that Foningama lived sixteen or seventeen generations ago. This dates Foningama back at least to the mid-sixteenth century giving approximately thirty years per generation (Person 1972:10; Geysbeek/Kamara 1991:63; see Henige 1974:77). Person first dated Foningama to the sixteenth century (e.g., 1970:284), but later argued that the Kamara reached Musadu no later than the end of the fifteenth century to match with his theory which is adopted in this work that the Musadu-Kamara probably participated in the Mane invasions (1984:317). A circa. 1500 date for Foningama only tells when the Kamara became dominant in Konya.

Documentary evidence indicates that Musadu existed at least by the early-eighteenth century; the argument is made here that Musadu is much older. When Benjamin Anderson visited Musadu in 1868, the Musaduka told him that Musadu was very old and that all of the other towns in the region came from Musadu. The oldest man told Anderson that Musadu existed when his grandfather was born (1870/1971: 104). If Anderson's informant was talking about his biological grandfather or someone his approximate age who was two generations older than him, this roughly dates Musadu to the early-eighteenth century. (If the informant was about eighty years old at the time, then his "father" and "grandfather" could have respectively been born in the late-1750s and late-1720s given roughly thirty years per generation [see Person 1972]).

Several oral traditions claimed that Musadu is the oldest or one of the oldest towns in Konya (Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Amara Kamara 1985, App. 7.9; Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7; Fata Moussa Kièlè 1990, App. 7.12; Kaamòò Dole 1990, App. 7.13). Literate informants said that Musadu was founded 600, 805, and 2,050 years ago (Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7; Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8; Moussa Kièlè 1992, App. 7.21, l. 539.). These dates represent each of the speaker's attempts to express Musadu's antiquity in more western forms, and are not to be taken literally (see Vansina 1985:132-133).

Some administrators and academics dated Musadu's founding anywhere from the thirteenth to the eighteenth centuries, but offered negligible or misleading evidence to support their suppositions. Paul Humblot concluded that Foningama migrated to Konya 'several centuries ago,' but wisely did not commit to any time period (1919:530). According to the geographer R. J. Harrison Church, Manding traders founded Beyla in 1230 (1980:114,294; 1974:144,489; see Hopewell 1958:32). He probably concluded that "Beyla," which the French selected as the name of the province where Beyla and Musadu are located, was the oldest town in the province. After Lt. Marchand passed through Beyla in 1897, he wrote that Manding from Siguiri introduced Islam to the area in the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries (1897:105). Pere Bouysson claimed that Foningama (not Musa) founded Musadu in seventeenth century (in Lelong 1949:24, App. 4.3). Chatelier hypothesized that Manding refugees founded Musadu after they fled when Briama Konde sacked Kankan in about 1765 (1899:160). Others adapted this position (Trimingham/Fyle 1960:36; Fisher 1971:viii; Sanneh 1972:10), but Yves Person effectively argued that Musadu was founded much earlier (1975:2124).

that Musadu developed into a fairly good size cosmopolitan commercial town before Foningama's arrival. Working from the broader currents of West African history, George Brooks suggested that Musadu was probably founded during the late-fourteenth to early-fifteenth centuries by "Mande" traders to acquire kola nuts, mine gold, and barter for iron and cloth.⁸

The Proto-Kpelle

The Gola and the proto-Kpelle, Loma, Dã and Mano lived far more north than the areas where most of them live today. According to oral traditions, the proto-Kpelle are said to have lived as far north as Sanankolo and Kosankolo, and not have resided much further south than Boola [100].⁹ Linguistic evidence supports the ancient presence of the Kpelle in Konya-Mani and environs as well, and reveals the extent to which the Maniyaka and Kpelle intermarried and learned each others languages. One speaker said that the Kpelle got their name "Gbèsè" or "Gbèlèsè" from their ancestors who resided at

⁸Brooks 1993:73; see Millimono 1989:11.

⁹Person 1961:47-48; 1968b:128, n.75; 1984:317. The Maniyaka claim that the Kpelle lived northwest of Konya-Mani in Kèwa, Beela-Farana, Guirila, Worodugu and Gbana (Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29, l. 18-30; 1993, App. 7.34, l. 144-145; Lanse Kromah 1984, App. 7.2), and to the southeast in Gbè (Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; S. Kromah 1985, App. 7.4c; Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14) and Mau (Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1117-1120; see Blondiaux 1897:375). The Kpelle are also said to have lived in Konya-Mani (Lanse Kromah 1984, App. 7.2; Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16, l. 51-76; Tènu Kamã Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28), and in the Konya-Mani towns of Diakolidu (Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14; "Connaissance/Beyla" n.d., App. 4.11; Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28; Lanse Kromah 1984, App. 7.2), Jèwu (Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28), Wanino (Kabine Kromah 1993, App. 7.34, l. 144-145) and Musadu (Lamole 1909, App. 4.2; Peyrissac 1912; Lelong 1949, App. 3; Person 1960:47; 1968b:128, n. 75; 1984:317; Weisswange 1969:59; Sumawolo 1984, App. 6.1; Lanse Kromah 1984, App. 7.2; Moussa Kièlè 1992, App. 7.21, l. 68-73,503; Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14; Jala Kamara 1992, App. 7.27; Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; 1993, App. 7.34; Moliké Sidibé App. 7.33, l. 305-336; 1997:80-81, l. 110-114; Sakou 1983).

Gbè mountain.¹⁰ “Kpelle” is the Liberian English equivalent of “Gbèsè.”¹¹ The Manding call their own people who live in Konya-Mani and other places east of the Fon-Going mountain - *Gbèsè Maniya* or “Kpelle Mandingo.” The Dhèmeya River and Dyewu mountain in Konya-Mani are Kpelle names, as is the regional name Konya that derives from Koniya mountain.¹² Toponyms help discern historical origin because they are usually more permanent than the names of towns and villages.¹³

The Proto-Loma

The most northern of the early groups who once lived in Musadu were the ancestors of the Loma [101]. The Loma narrate fairly detailed traditions which state that their ancestors once lived in Musadu. According to the Guinean scholar David Sakou, the Loma originally lived in the Kissidougou area after Sunjata returned from exile. When Sunjata’s step-brother Dankaran Touman supposedly fled to Kissidougou after Sumaworo chased him from the Manden, Dankaran Touman’s followers pushed the Loma south to their present location and west toward Komodu, Kerouane, Toron and Konya-Mani.¹⁴ Sakou claimed that the Loma were the first to settle in Musadu as the Keita forced them

¹⁰Kabine Kromah 1993, App. 7.34, l. 472-474.

¹¹Holsoe 1974:4-5,15. ‘Gbè mountain’ is a translation of “Gbè sè-sèŋ” or “Gbè sèi-ŋ” in Guinea Gbèsè (Kpelle). The Liberian Kpelle name is “Gbè sii-sèŋ (gbiŋ)” (Thatch, with Dwyer 1981:148).

¹²Kourouma 1989-90:21,29.

¹³Jones 1981:169.

¹⁴The Loma reportedly lived as far north as Sabadu, over to Guirila and Gbè in the east, down to Diakolidu and Fooma in the south, and west of Konya-Mani toward Macenta (Person 1961:47-48; Moundekeno 1979:12; Germain 1984:123; Moliké Sidibé 1989, App. 4.10; 1997:86-87, l. 305-336; Beavogui 1973-74; Sakou 1983; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1121-1122; cf., Gamory-Doubourdeau 1926:290). The Maniyaka also claim that the Loma lived in Konya-Mani (Dauvillier c.1905, App. 3; Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16, l. 553; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28), in the Konya-Mani towns of Jèwu (Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28; Kabine Kromah 1993, App. 7.34, l. 144-145), Guirila (“Connaissance/Beyla” n.d., App. 4.11) and Musadu (Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Asumana Jabateh 1992, App. 7.22; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29, l. 18-30; 1993, App. 7.34, l. 1-13; Moliké Sidibé 1997:80-81, l. 105-114; Kaba 1971; Korvah 1960/1994:55), and along the Bembaya River (Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28; Kabine Kromah 1993, App. 7.34, l. 144-145).

south from Kerouane and Toron in the thirteenth century. The Loma remained in Konya-Mani from the end of the thirteenth to the beginning of the fifteenth centuries. During that time, they allegedly founded Musadu named it Masata or ‘village of the chief.’ The writer quoted the Loma proverb *milaghè e Missadu wòlò* which he said means ‘hospitality, friendship, confidence and respect enlarged Musadu.’¹⁵ Sakou also said that the Kpelle have the same proverb: *Bèlèkè be Musadu kènè*. Sakou continued by saying that Konaté and Kromah started to migrate south as the Mali empire started to fracture in the 1390s. When Foningama moved to Musadu much later in the seventeenth century, he encountered a Kpelle chief named Zo Musa. After the Maniyaka took control of the town, they renamed it Musadu.¹⁶

In the writings of another Loma historian, Siafa Beavogui, when the Maninka forced the Loma to Konya-Mani in the late-fifteenth century, the Loma pushed the Konor and Mano south from the places where they were living at the headwaters of the Milo River. Beavogui based his calculation on a ten generation genealogy that a Voloa Koly Beavogui supposedly learned after he became a member of the Poro society.¹⁷ Voloa Beavogui included some Loma names in the genealogy that have Maniyaka equivalents, suggesting that the Maniyaka and proto-Loma intermarried and worked closely together early on.¹⁸ According to Voloa Beavogui, the ancestor of the first Loma who migrated to Konya-Mani was Khome Zomanigui (Khome Zo Mani-gui). Khome Zomanigui is

¹⁵Saa Moundekeno quoted the same proverb - *labia kha Musadu wònòni* (1979:12). None of my Loma and Kpelle friends in Monrovia could translate this proverb.

¹⁶Sakou 1973-74:39-40; see Kante 1971-72:12.

¹⁷Beavogui 1973-74.

¹⁸When the Manding later migrated to areas that were predominately Loma, they intermarried with the Loma and became *Toma Maniya* or “Loma Mandingo” (see Højbjerg forthcoming). In addition to marrying Loma women, the Maniyaka also mixed many elements of Loma culture into their own. Tènu Kamā Kamara, for instance, said that the Maniyaka adapted the Loma *doo* or secret society, and that the Loma borrowed Maniyaka methods of circumcision and burial (App. 7.19).

probably the Musa in the Maniyaka traditions who allegedly founded Musadu. Khame or Kamè is equivalent to Kèmè and Kromah. *Zo* means ‘sorcerer,’ and Mani is the root form of Maniyaka. Khame Zomanigui was supposedly a ‘peasant who knew the secrets of the soil,’ implying that he was the person who made the arrangements with the spirits to occupy the land. This coincides with some of the things that the earliest people had to know and do when they founded Musadu. Khame is said to have sired a hunter named Khosakoly Koivogui who had a ‘leopard’ totem. Koivogui is the same as Kamara; Khosakoly Koivogui minimally refers to the Kamara who succeeded Zo Musa, and could refer to Foningama.¹⁹

Gola, Dã and Mano origins

Some Gola, Dã and Mano claim that a few of their ancestors immigrated from Musadu. Although only one known Gola source makes this claim, this does not diminish the possibility that some Gola originated from Musadu.²⁰ Most Gola claim that their ancestors came from Sierra Leone and Kongba territory in westcentral Liberia.²¹

According to Yves Person, some Gola, Kpelle, Loma and Dã lineages

are held to be the progeny of Manding speakers, probably pagans, who crossed recently the ethnic border and were fully assimilated. Furthermore, some of these lineages seem to be of immigrant Dyula stock and preserve until now the memory of their Muslim forebearers, whose holy heritage, including old Korans they

¹⁹Sakou also said that some of the later settlers were a Beavogui (Keita) and Gouavogui (Traoré). Loma surnames are usually the names of totems. For instance, the Loma word for ‘leopard’ is *koi* or *koli*. Koivogui means ‘leopard person’ and represents the name of the people who have the ‘leopard’ totem. The Maniyaka equivalent of Koivogui is Kamara. The totem of the Koivogui and the Kamara west of Gbè and Mau is ‘leopard’ (Suret-Canale 1963:34-35; see Adam 1951). Other Loma claimed that the Faingama (Foningama-Kamara), Guilavogui, Koivogui, Beavogui, Gzovogui and Kouvogui lived in Musadu (Koivogui n.d.; Korvah 1961/1994:61).

²⁰Asmana Kpo 1967, App. 2.2.

²¹d’Azevedo 1969b:5-6; 1980:19; Lovejoy 1980:107; see Besolow 1891:22.

worship in pagan rituals.²²

It is likely that some Gola memories that connect their distant past to Musadu derive from their ancestors who intermarried with the Maniyaka or predecessors who might have been Maniyaka at one time and later became Gola.

Some Dã also say that they originated from Musadu.²³ Most indicate that their ancestors came from Touba and Mau more to the east.²⁴ Some eastern Dã intermarried with the Maniyaka, learned Maniyakã, and became Muslim in later times. This contrasts with the western Dã in today's Liberia who distanced themselves more from the Maniyaka.²⁵

Some Mano allege that their ancestors lived as far west and north as today's Macenta province, the sources of the Milo River and Musadu.²⁶ More Mano are said to have come from the 'mythic center of [Mano] diffusion' at the Kohere (Kohire) mountain that is south of Boola.²⁷

One cannot often pinpoint geographic places for the origin for people, or assume to know all of the places where people lived before they migrated to their present position. So, it is not surprising to find oral traditions which claim that people immigrated from several areas. The Kpelle, Loma, Dã, Mano and Gola, though, claim that some of

²²Person 1972b:13-14; see Appendix 2.2.

²³Zetterström 1976:17.

²⁴Person 1961:47-48; Germain 1984:48; see Himmelheber 1964:2.

²⁵Ford n.d.:7-8; 1991.

²⁶Beavogui 1973-74; Fata Musa Kièlè 1990, App. 7.12, l. 15-22; see Harley 1941:6. One wonders if there is any relation between the Mano (Ma) and one claim that the "Kamara" were the offspring of "Ma" adventurers who migrated south and married the "pre-Mande Ka" (Sayers 1927:72). For references to Musadu, see Zetterström (1976:18; 1976:18, fn.1), Peyrissac (1912), Germain (1984:19) and Braima Toligbè Kamara (in Sidibé 1997:90, l. 977). Vase Kamala's claim that Musa settled in a section of Musadu called Wògòmanò might indicate an early Mano presence in Konya-Mani given the name's suffix (App. 7.6).

²⁷Holas 1952b:22; Person 1961:47-48; Riddell 1979:132; Germain 1984:47; see Ellis 1999:40.

their ancestors lived in Musadu at one time, and connect their ancestor with Musa. The fact that so many people continue to recall Musa indicates how important he was in the past.

Hunters, Smiths and Traders

Many of the Manding and Soninke who migrated south were hunters, smiths and traders. Hunters were probably the individuals in Mande speaking societies who developed the means of communicating with the spirit world and learned the initial principles of how to amass *nyama* or 'occult power.' Roderick McIntosh writes, in conjunction with his discussion about hunters, that "three themes" exist at "the very core of Mandeness:"

The first and best studied of these is *nyama*: that notion of the highly-dangerous vitalizing force of the world that can be packaged and made even more potent by acts of transformation. The second is *dali-ma-sigi*: those heroic quests over the sacred landscape made for the purpose of accumulating greater authority in the world of human affairs. The last is *Mande Onomasticon*: the notion that greater Mande, including and in many cases augmented in the Middle Niger, is a network of power locations, a spatial blueprint of power in three dimensions.²⁸

"Hunters were perhaps the first to deal in vast quantities of *nyama*," and "may have pioneered the concept of *nyama*." All "Mande" speaking peoples who originated from the Middle Niger believe that *nyama* is the life force or "occult energy" that all living and non-living objects intrinsically have. People cannot create this dangerous and potentially life-threatening *nyama*, but they can increase and transform it.²⁹ During

²⁸McIntosh 1998:27. Although McIntosh principally deals with Ja-Macina, Jenne, Jenne-jeno, Timbuktu and other towns in the Middle Niger, his work clarifies some of the social, religious, and political dynamics that transpired in Musadu.

²⁹McIntosh 1998:27-28.

volatile periods of early history, hunters became “Men of Crisis.” At least by the first millennium AD, hunters developed new forms of authority to “guard the social equilibrium” and “preserve village alliances and accords between community subgroups.”

Hunters used many methods to augment their authority: they learned how to control *nyama*; organized member-only hunters associations; and imbued the symbols of their livelihood such as bows, arrows, quivers, axes, horns and spears with *nyama*.

Whereas vertical kin-based political structures tended to be authoritarian and tried to resolve crises through conflict and despotic means, hunters tried to mediate problems through horizontal associations that cut across kin loyalties. Kin-based horizontal structures that could fairly quickly adapt to change were often more effective than hierarchal constructs to help societies better deal with situations of crisis.³⁰

Hunters also “pioneered the Mande initiative of the ‘knowledge of quest’” or *dali-ma-sigi*. The Mande-speaking peoples believe that the earth is “a network of power locations” that powerful spirits originally controlled. Hunters traversed these sacred places in the wilderness to accumulate and control more knowledge and occult energy. Many places were linked to “a fluid network of underground watercourses;” such sacred places were often linked to major water systems like the Niger River that contained powerful *faaro* or ‘water spirits’ which appear in folklore and oral traditions. The creeks and rivers that emanate from Musadu and Konya are the kind of sacred water places where the Manding believed that water spirits lived.³¹ Hunters kill territorial spirits that typically take animal forms, garner the *nyama* that is released when the animal is killed, and add the head, skin or other body parts from his kill to his collection of symbols. Once

³⁰McIntosh 1998:8,27-28.

³¹Baba Dole, for instance, said that *jina* lived in Musadu (App. 7.30).

the hunter has killed the spirit, other people are free to migrate to this location. Oral traditions often show how Mande-speaking hunters were the first to travel to far-reaching places and found new towns. In many cases, hunters often preceded smiths, traders and their other kinsmen.³² The traditions provide fragmentary evidence which indicate that the Donzo hunters might have migrated to Konya even before the Kromah, and that Musa probably hunted. Hunters were often better equipped than smiths and traders to deal with the peoples, animals and spirits which lived in the forest.

Smiths transformed the power and symbols of hunters to become more important than hunters. By the last centuries of the first millennium when the Ghana empire existed, blacksmiths began to challenge hunters and hunter societies. Smiths were only one of a number of other occupational specialists like leatherworkers, *jèli* and potters. They were called *nyamakalu* or 'handles (*kalu*) of occult energy (*nyama*),' and attracted people from across kinship lines. These specialists competed for influence and formed the basis of a complex society that probably developed by the thirteenth century.

Smiths gained power through working with iron. Iron ore possesses vast amounts of *nyama*, especially ore that comes from sacred places linked to waterways. Tremendous *nyama* is said to be released when smiths produce iron. Master smiths use the correct rituals to communicate with the spirits, manipulate the *nyama*, and employ proper techniques to smelt and smith iron. Smiths used trees of the earth for fire to smelt ore and make iron. As smiths learned how to harness increasing amounts of occult power, they became more powerful than hunters and emerged as the most powerful occupational group. Accounts which state that Musa settled in Donzola might be a cliché which means

³²McIntosh 1998:27-28,135-136,177.

that the smiths whom Musa represented might have become more dominant than the Donzo as they increased in numbers, settled in the land and accumulated more *nyama*. Smiths concurrently gained social influence as they provided implements that the public needed. Initially, smiths equipped farmers with the tools that they needed to domesticate crops along the Niger river. Later, they furnished the accouterments that farmers needed to sustain population growth as farmers tilled more land.³³ Some smiths used their occult power and widening leverage in society to become political leaders. Blacksmiths sometimes became “smith kings” like Sumaworo. More often than not, though, smiths helped shape society’s “cultural space” as they mediated between humans and the spirit world. Smiths thus significantly impacted the social, political, and religious direction of society.

As smiths developed better techniques to separate impurities from the iron and make iron objects, they began to restrict the knowledge and technology of their craft to their own smith lineages and form smith-led associations like the Komo and Poro. Smiths also started to live in separate quarters or found smith-towns around population centers.³⁴ Non-smiths did not want to neighbor with smiths because they feared them, and smiths wanted to segregate themselves from society and older generations of smiths to protect their secrets and techniques. Smiths also formed their own communities so they could be closer to their smelting sites. Smiths became especially venerated and feared because of their utility in society and close connection with occult powers. A smith gone awry could cause considerable damage in society.

Early smiths imported ore iron from mineral and spiritually rich areas like Ja-

³³McIntosh 1998:177.

³⁴McNaughton 1998:177-178; Fairhead et. al. 2003.

Macina and Jenne. Eventually though, smiths began to move away from valued smelting locations along the Middle Niger as a long dry period set in during the first half of the second millennium. As the savannah slowly moved south, so did smiths; smiths needed firewood from the trees of the savannah to fire their furnaces. When smiths ventured into new lands, they made contracts with the spirits so they could inhabit and use the land. Smiths also often doubled as traders or became traders, and were often, like hunters, the first Soninke and Manding to venture into new lands. Movement afforded smiths the opportunity to protect new iron ore sites and develop new trade networks for the finished metal that they manufactured.³⁵

Blacksmiths refined their techniques, developed closer connections to the occult, formed their own esoteric associations, and became more insulated from society. Gradually, smiths began to conflict more with transient hunters who themselves had forged their own links with the spirit world. In many instances, smiths became more powerful than hunters. Whereas hunters pioneered people's ability to deal with *nyama*, "smiths later elaborated the core beliefs (that "hunters initiated") about how to control and transform the supernatural or occult power (*nyama*) of the natural world." Hunters extracted materials from the environment to accumulate their power, but smiths "shifted the symbolic tense of *nyama* from extractive to active." They "added significant value to the life force" or *nyama* of the places they inhabited. Smiths used the land and fire to make iron, added significance to the power of sacred places, and utilized animals rather than killed them when they settled in new areas. In short, "the sacred landscape evolves and becomes richer with the smith's transformations."³⁶

³⁵Brooks 1993:45; McIntosh 1998:142,150-153,177-189.

³⁶McIntosh 1998:178,187-188.

Smiths also made peaceful contacts with the local people among whom they settled. They learned their languages, married their women, and made many useful products for farmers, hunters, fighters and chiefs. Traders, who often accompanied smiths, updated them with information from North Africa and the Middle East about medicinal treatments. Smiths also formed secret societies such as the Nyana, Komo and Poro that controlled and protected trade routes, communicated information over long distances, repaired bridges, brokered disputes, influenced the selection of political leaders, and harnessed and disseminated secret knowledge about the occult. In the north, Sumaworo used the powers and alliances that he developed as a smith to reach the political height of what a smith could do - become the leader of a state. Sumaworo became the archetype “Blacksmith King.”³⁷ Many versions of the Musadu epic claim that the most important Manding and Soninke who first migrated to Konya were the Kromah and Konè, with the Kromah being the chiefs. Some Traoré, Baayo, Bama-Kanè, Sanoe and Kamara might have also settled in Konya early on. Many of the early Kromah, Kamara and Baayo were smiths. The oral traditions imply that these clans initially formed amicable relations with the autochthones and the East, South-West Mande and West Atlantic speaking peoples who lived in Konya. Other Maninka and Soninke specialists who probably migrated to the far south at this time were potters, the wives of smiths.³⁸

‘Traders’ or *jula* accompanied smiths in this first stage of expansion. Arabic sources call the first known long-distance traders in West Africa “Wangara.” The Wangara were Soninke or Soninke-speaking nobles, fighters and peasants who specialized in trading over great distances. They date back to the Ghana empire, and were

³⁷Brooks 1993:73-77,100.

³⁸Brooks 1993:39; Frank 1998.

the “forerunners” of long-distance Manding traders who joined the Soninke and expanded beyond the borders of Mali.³⁹ Soninke and Berber Arabic language manuscripts of the late-fifteenth and early-sixteenth centuries reveal that the descendants of many traders or “Wakoré” had become Islamic scholars, lawyers and judges from Ghana. Some of the most prominent were Sanoé and Baayo.⁴⁰ Later European sources named the Dukule, Kaba (Jakite) and Konaté as important merchants.⁴¹ According to the oral traditions, individuals from all of these clans went to Musadu. Muslim traders often became the “carriers of Islam” who exposed peoples to Islam, and set the foundation for clerics or “agents of Islam” who actively spread Islam and established Islamic institutions.⁴²

The first Wangara who migrated south toward the forest edge in the thirteenth century probably went to gain direct access to the kola trade.⁴³ The first Maninka traders who went to places like Konya-Mani, Mau and Koro were probably itinerants who exposed themselves to considerable risk. They often journeyed to their destination during the dry season with all of their goods, and began to return home as their supplies diminished. Some traders settled in non-Manding towns as their connections and import-export loads increased. These settler-traders needed the protection and patronage of their hosts, so they learned their languages, adopted some of their customs, and married some of their women. Yet, they also needed to retain a measure of social distance from the host societies in which they lived to maintain connections with the northern trading partners.

³⁹Al-Bakrī 1068, in Hopkins/Levtzion 1981:82; Al-Iḍrīsī 1154, in Hopkins/Levtzion 1981:110-111; Person 1968b:97; Levtzion 1973:167; Lange 1994:287; Wright 1997:81; McIntosh 1998:272; Massing 2000:282-284; Wilks 2000:93-94.

⁴⁰Al-Sa’dī c.1655, in Hunwick 1999; Levtzion 1973:58; Massing 2000:287-289.

⁴¹Lange 1994:287; Massing 2000:288-289.

⁴²Levtzion 1987b:22.

⁴³Levtzion 1973:166; Brooks 1993:71; McIntosh 1998:277.

Long time settler-traders lost much of their stranger status, or at least appeared much like hosts to the Soninke and Manding who followed them.⁴⁴

Musa founds Musadu: A Summary of the Story

This chapter that tells how Musadu was founded is the core segment of the Musadu epic. The most popular etymology states that a man named Musa built a shelter near the Dion River, and that this shelter formed the basis of a settlement which later became known as Musadu [102-108].⁴⁵ While there are several minor differences in the accounts, most of the versions agree on the main points. In 1905, Lt. Dauvillier summarized the main episodes of this story:

‘The first Malinke who came and established himself in these regions was a warrior of Sondiata called Toumani Kourouma, who received from his king the authorization to go and settle for good, there, it seems, with his family and his following in recompense for his good services. Toumani came in the Konian and one of his captives, N’zougou Moussa who preceded him, chose the site of the present village of Moussadougou where Toumani subsequently installed himself. This was the first village of the Manian Malinke. It retains the name of the captive, Moussa (dougou signifies village in Malinke).’⁴⁶

The sources collectively named several places where Musa is said to have lived before he founded Musadu: Koniya where Musa and Masama Dole made sacrifices;⁴⁷

⁴⁴Ford 1992; n.d.

⁴⁵Most Maniyaka say “Misadu,” but Musadu is used because this is the form that appears most frequently on maps and in publications. There are over two dozen variations of Musadu (Misadu) and Masadu. Variants of Musadu are Musādu, Musadugu, Musahdu, Musardu, Mussadu, Moosá-doo, Mosadu, Moussadou, Moussadou, Moussadougou, Moussatazou (Loma), Moussaya (‘Musa’s place’), Misadu, Misādu, Misadougou, Missadougou, Misata (Loma), Misawu and Misaso (‘Misa’s town’). Masādu, Masado, Masatazu (Loma), Masaso (‘chief’s town’), Massadougou and Masakêlaso (‘the chief man’s town’) are spellings or pronunciations of Masadu (App. C). The Loma add the suffix *ta* for ‘town’ or ‘land’ instead of the Maniyaka *du*, *so* or *ya*.

⁴⁶App. 3. Toumani Kourouma is Tumaningèmè (Tumani Kèmè) or Tumani Kromah. Kèmè is equivalent to Kromah in southeastern Guinea.

⁴⁷Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18.

the 'hilltop' where Musa's owners Tumaningèmè, Femo Dole and Sani Sanoe resided;⁴⁸ Wanino or Sanyola (Sanola) where Tumaningèmè or Musa lived;⁴⁹ a place at the base of Konyaba Mountain where Musa and Jufa Konè resided;⁵⁰ a town at Nèlèkòlò creek where Tumaningèmè lived or where Musadu was established;⁵¹ the original Musadu

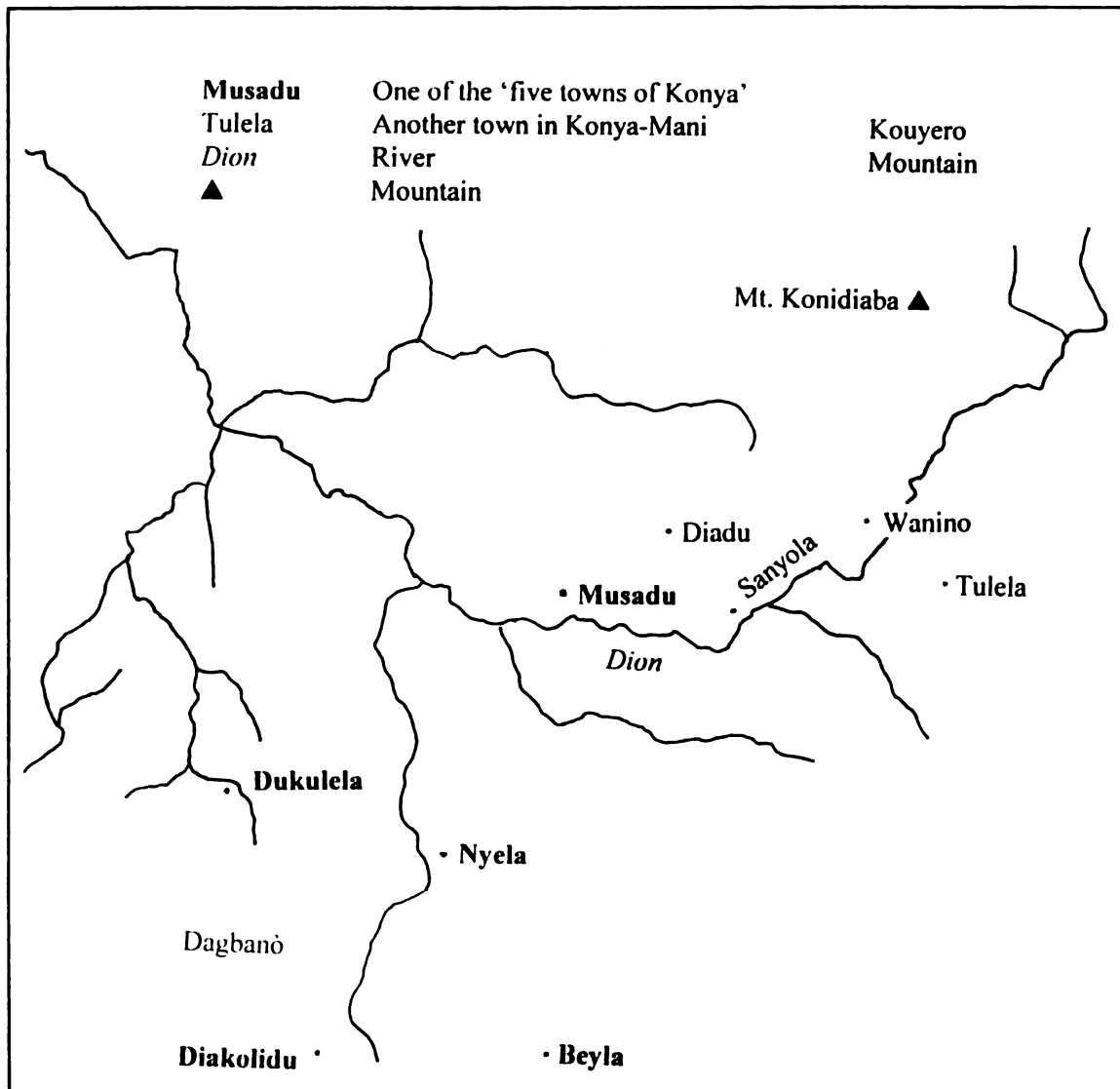


Figure 30 Konya-Mani

⁴⁸Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19. This 'hilltop' could have been Konyaba Mountain.

⁴⁹Monographie/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1385.

⁵⁰Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; 1993, App. 7.34.

⁵¹Balgali Koesia 1985, App. 7.4a; S. Kromah 1985, App. 7.4c.

that Musa founded which may have been different from its present location;⁵² the ‘old’ town’ where Zo Musa’s nemesis Tumaningèmè lived;⁵³ Dolela where Tumaningèmè, Foningama and Femo Dole lived;⁵⁴ Bokoma in Gbè where the Kromah lived before they moved to Musadu;⁵⁵ Nyawulèni creek and Damuda where Musa originally lived;⁵⁶

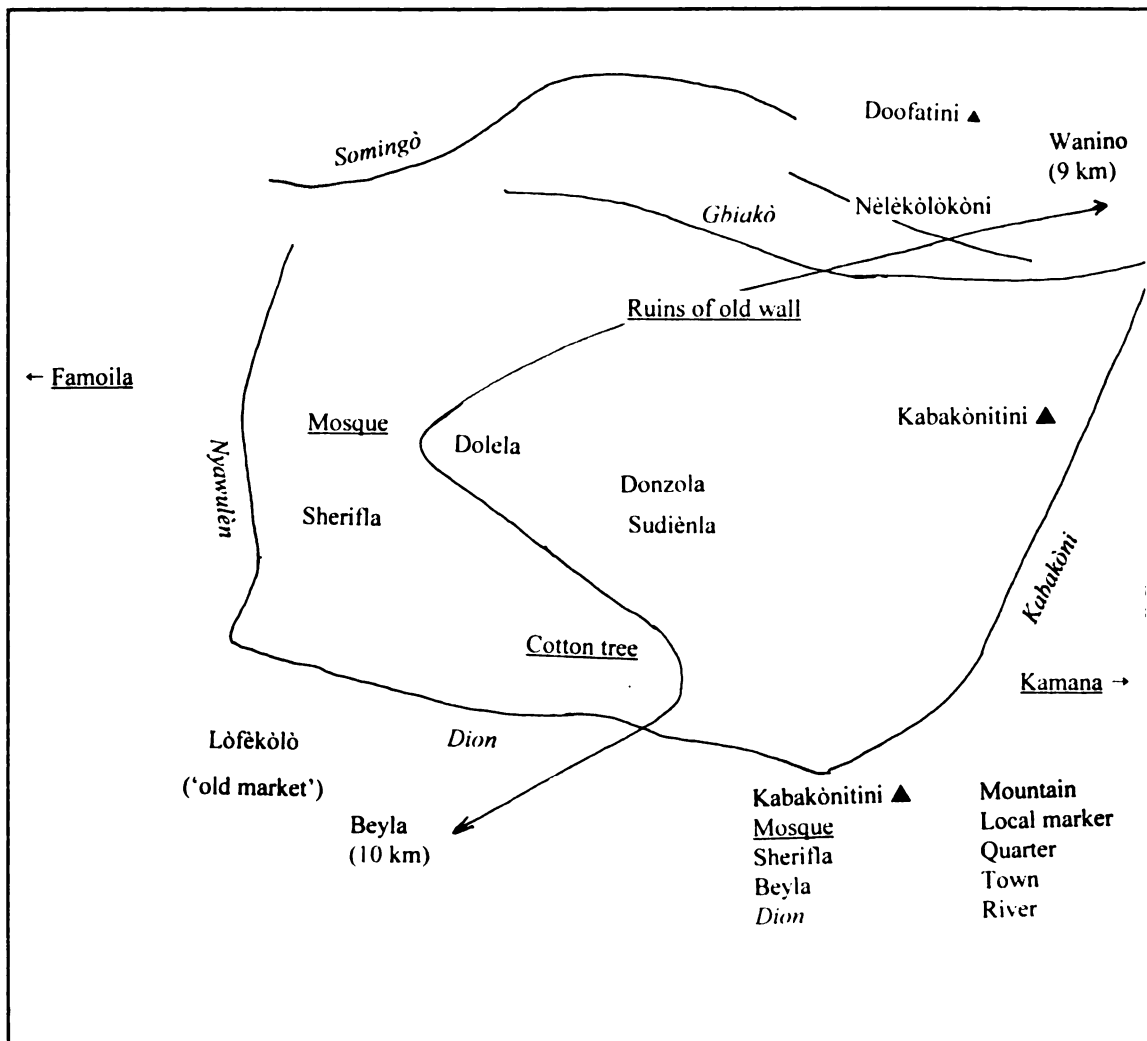


Figure 31 Musadu (Source: Baba Dole and friends in Musadu, 1993)

⁵²Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28; Alafā Konè 1992, App. 7.31.

⁵³Mammadi Dole 1985, App. 6.2. Dole mistook Tumaningèmè for Foningama.

⁵⁴Kaamoo Dòlè 1990, App. 7.13; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35. Was the original Musadu and/or Dolela at Nèlèkòlò creek?

⁵⁵Kaamoo Dòlè 1990, App. 7.13. Bokoma is a Kpelle name.

⁵⁶Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; 1993, App. 7.34.

Baayola where Zo Musa, Jufa Konè and Zo Musa Jala or Ngana Musa lived;⁵⁷ and Dagbanò where Tumaningèmè lived.⁵⁸ It is not possible to determine whether some of these towns pre or post-date Musadu. Nonetheless, the fact that several sources claim that Musa and others lived in several towns throughout Konya-Mani and beyond before Musadu was founded suggests that the area was at least sparsely settled.

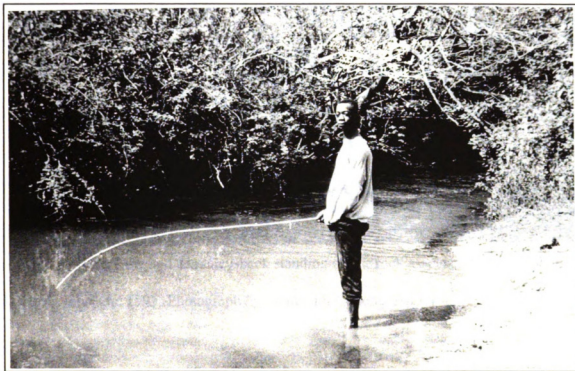


Figure 32 Young man fishing in the Dion River, Musadu, 1993

Before Musa founded Musadu, some say that he worked for someone or was someone's slave.⁵⁹ Some sources also often claim that he had a wife, and that a Konè, another

⁵⁷Yaya Dole 1985, App. 7.4e; 1986, App. 7.8; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35.

⁵⁸Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1283. The locations of Bokoma, Damadu and Baayola are unclear to me.

⁵⁹Dauvillier c. 1905, App. 3; Bangali Koesia 1985, App. 7.4a; S. Kromah 1985, App. 7.4c; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1396; Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7; Kaamòò Dòlè 1990, App. 7.13; Tènu Kamà Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Yaya Dole 1985, App. 7.4e; 1986, App. 7.8; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29, 44-50, 69; 1993, App. 7.34, l. 17-20; Alafà Konè 1992, App. 7.31; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; S. Kromah 1985, App. 7.4c; Moliké Sidibé 1997:90, l. 962.

Kromah and other persons lived with him.⁶⁰ Musa's overseer supposedly sent Musa and/or his companions to go fishing at the Dion River every day, and made them periodically with their catch (Figure 32).⁶¹ In time, Musa built a temporary shelter or farm



Figure 33 Baba Dole and Tim Geysbeek standing on the rock associated with Musa in Donzola, Musadu, 1993 (Photograph by Mammadi Oppong Sanoe)

kitchen (*toda*) near the Dion where he could sleep so that he would not have to return to the village every evening.⁶² Musa is also said to have hunted and farmed when he went to the Dion,⁶³ and that he or one of his descendants settled where Donzola quarter is

⁶⁰Bangali Koesia 1985, App. 7.4a, l. 20-25; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1500-1501.

⁶¹Musa reportedly fished with a boat and net (Geysbeek/Kamala 1994:69, l. 307-308), a hook and spear (Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a) or bamboo traps (Ibrahim Bété 1993, App. 7.35). One stated that Musa cast for fish on the creek bank when the river overflowed during the rainy season (Yaya Dole 1985, App. 7.4e; 1986, App. 7.8). For a note on fishing and gender, see Vase Kamala n.d. App. 7.38, ln. 1391.

⁶²One informant said that Musa's family and friends also went to the Dion (Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28).

⁶³Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28; Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30; Kaamòò Dòlè 1990, App. 7.13; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a.

currently situated in Musadu.⁶⁴ Eventually, Musa reportedly began to lodge hunters who stopped to dry their meat and sleep.⁶⁵ Musadu was also claimed to have been ‘located on a road that traders supposedly used;’ some traders supposedly formed a market to sell the fish that people caught in the Dion.⁶⁶ Other goods like northern salt, local farm products and game, and kola nuts from the forest would have been traded in the market.⁶⁷ Musa’s overseer, often identified as Tumaningèmè, eventually moved his family to the new settlement that Musa founded. He permitted the town’s name to remain Musadu even though Musa was supposedly subservient to him. Many Maniyaka distinguish between Musa who founded Musadu,⁶⁸ and Tumaningèmè or the Kromah owned the town [109].⁶⁹ As Musadu grew, the people are claimed to have started to settle into different quarters based on clans or taboos.⁷⁰

One oral tradition supports Vase Kamala’s claim that Tumaningèmè lived

⁶⁴Some say that Musa stood on a rock in Donzola and killed animals that came out of the forest (Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30), or moved from Kabakòni to Donzola because ‘Kaba creek’ was too rocky (Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a) (Figure 36). Another claimed that Musa built his first shelter where the main mosque is located, and that his son moved to Donzola (S. Kromah 1985, App. 7.4c). Vase Kamala stated that Musa built in a section of Musadu that was called Wòògòmanò (App. 7.6); the present location of Wòògòmanò is not known to this researcher.

⁶⁵T. Dole, personal communication.

⁶⁶Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35.

⁶⁷According to one source, the traders were Fulbe (Bangali Koesia 1985, App. 7.4a).

⁶⁸Dauvillier c.1905, App. 3; Johnson 1974, App. 8.1; Fisher 1971:ix-x; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a; Korvah 1960/1994:55; Mammadi Dole 1985, App. 6.2; S. Kromah 1985, App. 7.4c; Bangali Koesia 1985, App. 7.4a; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1400-1406; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Weisswange 1969:59; Jèkè Kamara 1992, App. 7.26; Jala Kamara 1992, App. 7.27; Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30; Moliké Sidibé 1997:90, l. 949-978; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19. A few said that Foningama was the founder (Lelong 1949:25, App. 4.3; Germain 1984, App. 4.5; Person 1970:284; see 1968c:825). One can only say that Foningama founded Musadu to the extent that he transformed the town into a political power (Chapter 8); he did not literally found Musadu because he settled there after it was established.

⁶⁹Linard 1948, App. 4.6; Bangali Koesia 1985, App. 7.4a; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29, l. 150-153. Claims that Tumaningèmè or the Kromah were Musadu’s founders or owners are legitimate if one regards the Kromah as Musa’s owner. According to Wata Mammadi Kamara (App. 37, l. 535), for instance, Tumaningèmè told Musa, “‘What village will you find that is not mine?’” Some stated that Musa (Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Alafā Konè 1992, App. 7.31) or Foningama (Mammadi Konè 1992, App. 7.23) were the owners.

⁷⁰Korvah 1960/1994:61; Sidibé 1997:90, l. 971-978; see Koivogui n.d.

amicably with Musa after he moved to Musadu.⁷¹ Discussions about the relationship between Musa and the early Maniyaka who settled in Musadu can be regarded, in the broadest context, as ties that the early Maninka formed with the proto-Kpelle, Loma, Dã and the other peoples who lived in Konya-Mani. Linguistic evidence supports the notion that there was a close connection between the Maniyaka and Kpelle, and that the Kpelle and Maniyaka lived peacefully together. “Konya” is the Maninka form of the Kpelle name “Goniya,” and the Manding translate Konya or Goniya from Maniyakã, Kpelle and both languages. The most common translation of Konya is ‘rocky (Kp. *koni*) place (Ma. *ya*).’⁷² Maniyaka names for Konya are Mani and the less used Jò (‘ritual object’) [110-111].⁷³

Many Maniyaka intermarried with the ancestors of the Kpelle, Loma and other peoples who lived in Konya-Mani.⁷⁴ Some informants recognized the fluid identities of the many peoples who lived in Musadu. Jomah Kamara was reminded of this when he conducted an interview with some elders in Musadu.⁷⁵ In the interview, Samuka Kromah and Yaya Dole told Kamara that Musa was a Kpelle slave. According to Kromah, Musa was the slave of a Kromah; Dole said that Musa was a Sanoe. When Kamara asked Dole if Musa’s descendants were Kpelle, Loma or Maniyaka, Dole reiterated that he was a Sanoe and refused to associate Musa with any ethnic group.

Alafã Konè narrated one etymology of Musadu that is different from the others

⁷¹Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1410-1415; Asumana Jabateh 1992, App. 7.22.

⁷²Kp. = Kpelle, and Ma. = Maniyakã; see Kamala (App. 7.6, ln. 1134). Some say that Konya derives from Koniya Mountain (Kabine Kromah 1993, App. 7.34, l. 1-15; Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30).

⁷³Sims 1859-1860/2003; S. Kromah 1985, App. 7.4c.

⁷⁴Asumana Jabateh 1992, App. 7.22; Sakou 1983; Beavogui 1973-74; Sidibé 1997:90, l. 970-977; Lanse Kromah 1990, App. 7.11; cf. Ford 1989:26; Ellis 1999:39.

⁷⁵App. 7.4.

[112]. He noted that Musa was a Kpelle slave who owned Musadu, but said that Musadu was only settled after some people burned over the land. Konè stated that someone wrapped the end of a branch with a white cloth, set the cloth on fire in Kalala, and went from Chèwa (Kèwa) to the place where Musadu was eventually founded and burned the land.⁷⁶ Kalala and Chèwa figure prominently in several other accounts. Some claim that Kalala is older than Musadu, and that Kalala was a dispersion point for the Konè, Kamara, Koesia, Dukule and Donzo.⁷⁷ Others indicate that the Konè, Kamara and possibly the Dole lived in Chèwa before Musadu was founded.⁷⁸

Musa's Multiple Identity and Background

Statements that the oral traditions make about Musa and the people associated with him provide hints about the social and political setting that existed in Konya-Mani when Musadu was founded. Some historical material can be gleaned from these traditions despite the fact that many of the narratives reflect fairly recent biases and attitudes that people have projected back to the early days of Musadu's past.

Multiple Musas

Musa is a composite of many persons [113]. Most of the oral traditions say that the Musa who founded Musadu is the same Zo Musa who confronted Foningama. A half-

⁷⁶Alafā Konè 1992, App. 7.31, l. 1028-1035. This element of the story might be part of the Musadu epic that has faded away in recent years.

⁷⁷Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7a, l. 137-141, 288-311; Kaamoo Dòlè 1990, App. 7.13, l. 46-48, 371-374; Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28, l. 364-371; Alafā Konè 1992, App. 7.31, l. 1019-1035, 1616-1651; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a, l. 110-112.

⁷⁸S. Kromah 1985, App. 7.4c, l. 96-99; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 135-138; Alafā Konè 1992, App. 7.31, l. 1028-1035.

dozen sources, however, stated that Musa represented two, three or four individuals who lived the same number of generations apart from each other (Appendix K.1).⁷⁹ They minimally identified two Musas: Musa who founded Musadu, and Zo Musa who was expelled from Musadu. These designations are retained in this study. Most of the informants who made these distinctions came from Konya-Mani. These persons had more access to some of the finer details about the epic than most of the others who did not live in Konya-Mani.

References to a single Musa are probably the combined product of several imaginary, legendary and real persons or groups who have been condensed into one person over time. Clustering many individuals into one person is a common phenomenon that occurs in oral traditions that claim to tell about “accounts of origins,” and is characteristic of figures like Fakoli who bards portray as having been great leaders in the distant past.⁸⁰ The descriptions that oral traditionists now give about Musa probably only faintly resembles any Musa-type person who lived. For instance, an individual in the Maninka traditions named Fajigi seems to be partly based on the pilgrimage that the Mali emperor Mansa Musa took to Mecca in 1324. One only needs to compare stories that *jèlilu* now tell about Fajigi with documented accounts about Mansa Musa’s pilgrimage to realize that there is little in current oral traditions about Fajigi that corresponds to the contemporary fourteenth century accounts.⁸¹ Historians can still, nonetheless, partly distinguish some aspects of oral traditions that are more historical than others, and extract

⁷⁹Weisswange 1969:59; S. Kromah 1985, App. 7.4c; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29, l. 2853-2868; Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28; Tènu Kamã Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1386; Moussa Kièlè 1992, App. 7.21; Mammadi Konè 1992, App. 7.23.

⁸⁰Vansina 1985:23; Conrad 1992:149.

⁸¹Moraes Farias 1989; Brett-Smith 1996:8-9; Conrad/Camara 1997.

themes that appear in the traditions to help provide a better sense about what might have happened in the past.

Musa and Zo Musa: Kromah trader, smith and sorcerer

The oral traditions ascribe various backgrounds and social roles to Musa and Zo Musa [114]. Although much of the evidence in the traditions suggests that both of the Musas were free Maninka traders, smiths and sorcerers, and that their clan name was Kromah, there are other opinions. Some Maniyaka claim that Musa or Zo Musa were Kpelle, and a few said that they were Loma. The lone Gola source and two of the Mano accounts claimed that Musa or Zo Musa was one of their own peoples. One Kpelle, Mano and Konor account, and a few Maniyaka traditions stated that he was Maniyaka (Chapter 5). Although many Maniyaka claimed that Musa as a slave, none of the other sources conferred any slave status on him.⁸² Most said that Musa had a master or overseer who was Tumaningèmè or a Kromah; a few claimed that this overseer was Foningama, Femo Dole, Sani Sanoe, or a Sware or Kanè [115].⁸³ Most of the oral traditions claim that the Sware and Kanè migrated to Musadu during or after Foningama's time, so these claims

⁸²Johnson 1974, App. 8.1; Monographique/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8; Korvah 1960/1994:55; Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Fisher 1971:ix-x; Weisswange 1969:59; Ture 1972-72; Sumawolo 1984, App. 6.1; Anonymous 1985, App. 7.4d; Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5; Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16; Moussa Kièlè 1990, App. 7.12; 1992, App. 7.21; Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20; Mammadi Konè 1992, App. 7.23; Jèkè Kamara 1992, App. 7.26; Jala Kamara 1992, App. 7.27; Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28; Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a; Lamole 1909, App. 4.2; Germain 1984, App. 4.5; Holas 1952b; App. 4.7; Zetterström 1976:18; 1976:18, fn.1; Beavogui 1973-74; Sakou 1983; Kromah 1961, in Massing 1985:38; Asmana Kpo 1967, App. 2.1. For sources which claim that Zo Musa was a slave, see footnote 59 in this chapter.

⁸³For Tumaningèmè or the Kromah, see Dauvillier (c.1905, App. 3), Bangali Koesia (1985, App. 7.4a), Yaya Dole (1986, App. 7.8), Kaamòò Dòlè (1990, App. 7.13), Tènu Kamā Kamara (1992, App. 7.19), Kabine Kromah (1992, App. 7.29; 1993, App. 7.34), and Baba Dole (1992, App. 7.30). Tènu Kamā Kamara (1992, App. 7.19) and Mammadi Kènè (1992, App. 7.18) said Foningama, Dole and Sanoe. See Vase Kamala (1985, App. 7.6, l. 1460; n.d., App. 7.38, l. 456) for Sware, and Vase Kamala (in the narrative on the 10-31-1990 tape that was purchased) for Kanè.

can be discounted. Other sources at least recognize the Dole and Sanoe as having been hosts, with the Sanoe sometimes being closely associated with the Kromah.

The oral sources generally indicate that Musa was Maniyaka, and that he was almost certainly a Kromah named Musa.⁸⁴ Musa's ancestors were probably smiths like Fakoli who operated within the world of local Manding religion and was the leader of the Komo society.⁸⁵ Some traditions say that Musa was a Kromah (Koroma) or a Kro, Kolo and Koloma; Kro is an abbreviation of Kromah, and Kolo or Koloma is an alternative pronunciation of Kromah.⁸⁶ Next, the names Zo, Musa and Kòma indicate a close affinity with the Kromah. Most of the Maniyaka call Zo Musa - Zo Musa Kòma (Appendix D). Zo Musa Kòma means Zo Musa the Kòma. Zo is a variant of *so*; *solu* (pl.) were "particularly powerful and frequently aggressive sorcerers."⁸⁷ Kòma (Koma) is a southern form of the Komo society that originated in the Manden.⁸⁸ The main *bla* or sorcery clans in the Manden were the Kromah, Baayo, Kamara, Kamissoko, Sinayògò, Dano and Sisòkò. Oral traditions indicate that the *blaw* were early residents of the Manden and that they controlled smiths and societies like the Komo. Fakoli, who sometimes appears as the predecessor of all of these clans, but especially of the Kromah, Dumbuya and Sisòkò, emerges in the Sunjata epic as having been the "ultimate" sorcerer and smith.⁸⁹ He

⁸⁴Some also said that Zo Musa was a Konè (Monographie/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8), a Bama (Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18) or a Sanoe (Yaya Dole 1985, App. 7.4e; 1986, App. 7.8). The Bama are the same as the Dole and Kanè (Conrad 1984:45,51), and Sanoe are sometimes said to be equivalent to the Kromah. Thus, even though they state that Zo Musa was someone other than a Kromah, the Konè, Bama-Dole-Kanè and Sanoe that they equate with Zo Musa all number among some of the earliest Maninka and Soninke who migrated to Musadu.

⁸⁵See Conrad 1992:154-155.

⁸⁶Holas 1952b, App. 4.7; Germain 1984, App. 4.5; Zetterström 1976:18; Sidibé 1997:85, l. 282.

⁸⁷McNaughton 1988:49. Kòma does not seem to be the same as Kromah (unless Kòma and Kromah are related), and is probably not to be confused with the Komma who are sometimes said to have been one of the Muslim clans of the Manden (Innes 1974:173, 293).

⁸⁸McNaughton 1979:17.

⁸⁹Moraes Farias 1989:156; Conrad 1992:154,177; see Brett-Smith 1994:40.

became one of the rulers of Manden before Sunjata returned from exile to defeat Sumaworo and consolidate the Maninka.⁹⁰ Fakoli's power derived from the "local occult forces" of the Manden world of warriors that helped Sunjata unite the land.⁹¹ His disassociation with Islam is evident in one of my assistants claims that Fakoli worshiped two "idols," the female "Fakoli Daba" ('big head') and the male "Fakoli Kumba" ('big mouth').⁹² Fakoli's 'big mouth' and 'big head' represent the masks, secrets and power that the Manding and others associate with the Komo.⁹³

Fakoli developed some of his political and spiritual power from his mother and father's side of the family, and from the powerful Konè and Traoré who were linked with Do and Kri. Vase Kamala said that Fakoli's father was from Yandawòlò and that his mother was Kasia (Kasia Kanè, a Soninke).⁹⁴ Kasia's brother or Fakoli's uncle was Sumaworo. Fakoli's foster mother was a powerful sorceress named Tènèba Konè, and Fakoli married an equally famous sorceress named Keleya Konkon Traoré.⁹⁵

The Musas in the Musadu epic are based on a larger than life Musa-pilgrim motif in the Maninka traditions that extend back to Fakoli and other Musas who are stated to have gone on a hajj to Mecca. The proto-type for all of these Musas might originate from stories in the Qur'an and in the traditions of the prophets that tell how Moses or Musa wandered in the desert or indeed throughout the whole world.⁹⁶ The accounts maintain that Fakoli derived some of his power from Komo ritual objects that he acquired when he

⁹⁰Conrad 1992:174.

⁹¹Conrad 1992:154-155.

⁹²Faliku Sanoe, personal communication, 1993.

⁹³Conrad 1992:157.

⁹⁴Rather, some say that Fakoli's father Yerèlènko who came from Norasoba (Conrad 1992:174; see Moraes Farias 1989:159-160).

⁹⁵Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:42; Moraes Farias 1989:159-160; Diabate, in Conrad 1999a:75.

⁹⁶E.g., Qur'an Sura, 2:51-61; Knappert 1985:104-120.

went to Mecca. These pilgrims are associated with the name “Musa” and the Komo society that many link with Fakoli. Some Maniyaka claim that Fakoli went to Mecca after the Manden war, or that Fakoli was forced to leave Mecca because he refused to abandon sorcery.⁹⁷ The latter reference to sorcery is related to a Maniyaka claim that Fakoli was the leader of the Kòma society in the Manden, that he was a great “medicine man,” and that the medicine that Fakoli used to form the Kòma was stolen from the Ka’ba in Mecca before Muhammed had a chance to destroy it all.⁹⁸

Such stories from southeast Guinea are based on Maninka tales from the north which say that someone named Musa or Bala (*b/la*) brought back the key instruments of power to the Manden when they returned from Mecca: Muslim books and Komo ritual objects. These Musas or Balas appear as several persons. Some are Fajigi, Mansa Musa or Jigi Mansa Musa the Mali emperor who went to Mecca in 1324, Makan Taa Jigi, or a Musa who is partly based on Mansa Musa, and Fakoli himself who supposedly went to Mecca with Mansa Musa either as Fakoli or Sora Musa.⁹⁹

Several themes in the stories about the Jigis and Musas in the Manden relate to the Musas who appear in the Musadu epic: (1) the Jigis are also named Musa or Bala; (2) the Musas introduced the Komo to the Manden; (3) most of the Jigis or Musas are associated with “great journeys or migrations,” (4) Musa has become analogous with “pilgrim” over time; (5) and most of these individuals were concerned with religious issues.¹⁰⁰ The Musadu Musas exhibit most of these traits. First, the “Kòma” that the Maniyaka usually add to Zo Musa’s name is a reference to Kòma or Komo society. The Musa who founded

⁹⁷Vase Kamala n.d., App. 7.38; Kromah 1985, App. 7.3.

⁹⁸Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1992, App. 7.17f.

⁹⁹Moraes Farias 1989; Conrad 1992:152-155; Camara/Conrad 1997.

¹⁰⁰Moraes Farias 1989:162-162,166; Conrad 1992:153-154.

Musadu might have introduced the Kòma to Konya-Mani, although none of the traditions make this claim. Second, numerous sources allege that Zo Musa went on a great migration from Musadu to Zota and other towns in today's southeast Guinea and central Liberia. The pilgrimage theme is less pronounced with the Musa who founded Musadu than with the Zo Musa who left Musadu. Lastly, some oral traditions assert that Zo Musa left Musadu for religious reasons, and that he founded branches of the Kòma or other initiation societies when he migrated south.¹⁰¹

If Musa was a Kromah, how does one account for claims that some make which say that he was Kpelle or a slave? The argument is made in Chapter 5 that two Kromah were vying for power when Foningama went to Musadu - Tumaningèmè and Zo Musa. Foningama and his clerics sided with his 'uncle' Tumaningèmè to drive Zo Musa out of town. Foningama then used the momentum that he gained in the fight against Zo Musa to take the chieftaincy of Musadu away from Tumaningèmè. Even though Foningama usurped political authority from Tumaningèmè, Tumaningèmè's descendants remained the dominant Kromah lineage in Musadu. Following this line of reasoning, the Kamara and the Tumaningèmè-Kromah might have demonized Musa by claiming that he was Tumaningèmè's Kpelle slave. Traditionists could have also transformed the memory of Musa into a slave after Foningama conquered Musadu to lower his status. Now, a few centuries later, many probably take Musa's alleged slavery and non-Maniyaka status for granted, and do not examine the underlying reasons why Musa has come to be known as a slave. These suggestions that explain why many sources call Musa a Kpelle slave are plausible but only tentative, and are open for discussion and modification.

¹⁰¹I thank David Conrad for alerting me to the correspondence between the Musas of the Manden and Musadu (June 1992).

Musadu's 'Hosts': the Early Soninke and Maniyaka of Konya-Mani

Several Maniyaka oral traditions, beginning with the short history of Beyla province that French administrators prepared in the late-1950s, specify that Musadu's early population was divided into two groups. The first comprised three 'hosts' (*dulu*, *jati*) who were presumably the first people who lived in Musadu, and the second were three 'strangers' (*lona*) who arrived after the hosts [116].¹⁰² The sources consistently claimed that Musa and Foningama were Musadu's respective hosts and strangers, but the sources differ about the other people who were hosts and strangers.¹⁰³ Some, for instance, listed Tumaningèmè, Ngana Musa and Femo Dole as hosts, but a few said that they were strangers. Most of these differences relate to each source's understanding about the order in which people migrated to Musadu, and who they believed had the rights to ritual or secular rule.

The differences in opinion about Musadu's hosts or strangers can be partly explained by the fact that the Maniyaka have collapsed several stages of settlement into just two, hosts and strangers. They often assume that the proto-Kpelle and other people now considered as non-Manding lived in Konya-Mani when Musa arrived, but designate Musa as a host. Many Maniyaka acknowledge the presence of the Kpelle by saying that Musa was Kpelle, but most of the evidence in the oral traditions indicates that Musa was Maniyaka. Identifying Musa as a host projects a Maniyaka-oriented view of the world; it diminishes the importance of the peoples who lived in Konya-Mani before Musa arrived, and implies that the Maninka were the first to settle in Konya-Mani.

¹⁰²Monographie/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8. Most of the informants who later talked about Musadu's hosts and strangers said that there were three of each; a few said that there were between one to four.

¹⁰³App. K.1; N.1.

Given the information that is available in the oral traditions, one can identify at least five major periods of time when different peoples settled in Musadu. Particular peoples, clans and individuals correspond to each era; many overlap into other stages. The first stage begins with the autochthones who were present when the Maninka arrived, but who the Maniyaka do not generally recognize as having been hosts. The hosts and stranger stages are divided into early and late sub-stages because there are clear time demarcations within each.

1) Autochthones; often remembered as pygmies or *jina* from the very hazy past. These first inhabitants of Konya-Mani included the ancestors of the Kpelle, Loma, Dã, Mano, Gola and others who people now no longer recall (Chapter 4).

2) Hosts; Musa Kromah who allegedly founded Musadu. Informants most consistently associate Zo Jala Musa or Ngana Musa Kromah and Jufa Konè with Musa. Some Baayo, Dole-Bama-Kanè-Sumaworo, Donzo-Fofana, Kamara, Sanoe and Traoré apparently also seem to have settled in Konya-Mani during this time according to oral traditions. Many of these peoples were hunters and smiths, but probably started to accept some aspects of Islam as they became involved in trade. The first Manding and Soninke might have started to migrate to Konya-Mani in the thirteenth or fourteenth century (Chapters 4-5).

3) Late-hosts; the first Soninke and Maninka clans that introduced Islam to Musadu. These would have been more Islamicized Kromah (Tumaningèmè), and some Sanoe, Bèrètè, Dole and Traoré clerics. Zo Musa Kromah, a supposed descendant of the Musa who supposedly founded Musadu, became powerful at this time. Zo Musa and the rest of the people in this and the earlier stages crossed into the next period. The

movement of these peoples to Musadu is tentatively dated to about the fifteenth century (Chapter 5).

4) Strangers; Foningama Kamara, his Kromah, Masale (Keita) and Kuyateh bards, and his Dole, Sherif and Béété *morilu* who forced Zo Musa to leave Musadu.

Foningama's migration to Musadu (Chapter 5) and the out-migration of Zo Musa and many of the hosts associated with him (Chapter 6) is roughly dated to the last half of the fifteenth century or early-sixteenth century.

5) Late-strangers; the Kanè, Fofana, Dukule, Sware and Sherif clerics who helped Foningama secure his position in Musadu and expanded his power beyond Musadu and Konya-Mani. Some of these clerics seem to have come at different times or extended their influence at different times. This period potentially covers the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries and includes the events associated with the exile of Foningama from Musadu (Chapters 7-8).

The Kromah

According to the oral traditions, the Kromah were the foremost Maniyaka clan in the early history of Musadu. Musa Kromah founded Musadu, and a Zo Jala Musa or Ngana Musa are also said to have lived in Musadu during the host era.¹⁰⁴ Although the oral traditions say little about this Musa who can be called Zo Jala Musa the *ngana*, his

¹⁰⁴Yaya Dole 1985, App. 7.4e; 1986, App. 7.8; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a. Zo Jala Musa and Ngana Musa are the same person. Yaya Dole, Ibrahim Béété and Mammadi Donzo are the sources for the names Zo Jala Musa and Ngana Musa. Dole, Béété and Donzo were friends in Musadu who probably knew the same core traditions about Musadu's history. Dole said Zo Jala Musa, and Béété and Donzo said Ngana Musa. The three men listed Musa and Jufa Konè as two of Musadu's three hosts, said that the third host was a *jèli*, and alternately named the *jèli* Zo Jala Musa and Ngana Musa.

name provides some clues about who he was and the roles that he might have played in the early history of Musadu. A *zo* is a noted sorcerer, so Zo Jala Musa was probably a sorcerer. Zo Jala Musa might have also been a smith; some of the most powerful sorcerers were smiths who belonged to the Komo society, and some of the Kromah who migrated south were probably smiths like their forebearer Fakoli.¹⁰⁵ *Ngana* (*ngara*, *nyara*) refers to a ‘master’ or ‘charismatic leader’ who is “masterful, distinguished, accomplished, extremely knowledgeable and skilled.”¹⁰⁶ Zo Musa Jala thus could have been a *ngana* who took a leading role in Musadu’s early history.

The sources also say that Zo Jala Musa or Ngana Musa was a *jèli*. Warriors or chiefs and *jèlilu* were usually mutually exclusive roles in Manding society, although bards often advised and encouraged their leader-patrons to accomplish great tasks. When the migrants went beyond the political, social and cultural frontiers that the Maninka controlled, frontiersmen were less constrained to adhere to the categories that their kinsmen more strictly observed in the north. Furthermore, many of the *nyamakalaw* like the *jèlilu* who migrated toward and into the forest lost many of the cultural attributes associated with *nyamakalaw* as they were forced to diversify their roles. Martin Ford argues in an unpublished paper titled “The Absence of Caste in a Mande Diaspora Population: The Case of Liberia’s Mandingo” that Maniyaka traders, warriors, farmers and clerics had to shift between socioeconomic roles to survive or meet the challenges that they faced.¹⁰⁷ According to Ford, the “pre-colonial Mande diaspora society” that migrated to Konya-Mani did not have

¹⁰⁵Sidibé 1989:7, App. 4.15; Toungara 1980:53.

¹⁰⁶Conrad 1999a:39, ln. 545, 42, ln. 1409; see Brett-Smith 1994:162-163.

¹⁰⁷Ford n.d.:4-5. One hopes that Ford will publish this important paper in the future.

stable occupational categories, as was characteristic of the savanna societies (cf. Johnson 1986:16). Rather, the Mande stranger presence is marked by a fluidity of socioeconomic roles. Some migrants, especially those of caste - the smiths, leatherworkers, weavers and musicians - maintained their skills, but lost their distinctive cultural identity. Others, notably those who lacked craft specialization, readily shifted their economic roles. Their survival was based on bringing something novel to the region. Those who remained mobile, refusing to become enmeshed in their hosts' networks of kinship and friendship, often succeeded economically and resisted being absorbed by the local societies.

Some also claim that Tumaningèmè was a host.¹⁰⁸ Yaya Dole, Ibrahim Béété and Mammadi Donzo, however, categorized him as a stranger.¹⁰⁹ Dole, Béété and Donzo apparently stated that Tumaningèmè was a stranger because they believed that Jufa Konè and Zo Jala Musa were more closely associated to Musa than Tumaningèmè and thus had a more ancient presence in Musadu. Two of the sources that claimed that Tumaningèmè was a host substituted Ngana Musa for Tumaningèmè and placed Ngana Musa in the stranger category. The distinction between Tumaningèmè and Ngana Musa is not necessarily significant at this level of detail because Tumaningèmè is a honorific name for the Kromah in southeast Guinea. So, Ngana Musa or any other notable Kromah could have been called Tumaningèmè. The matter of whether or not Tumaningèmè was a host or stranger must be understood in the context of the relative way that people identify firstcomer hosts and latecomer strangers, and suggests a layering of at least two generations of Kromah in Konya-Mani. Musa and Zo Jala Musa can be grouped in host period; Zo Musa and Tumaningèmè belong in the late-host period.

Questions about which persons were hosts or strangers relate to a narrator's perspective about how far certain people were removed from the land, and what

¹⁰⁸ Monographie/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8; Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28.

¹⁰⁹ App. 7.4e; App. 7.8; App. 7.35; App. 7.36a.

relationship they had with those who had spiritual and political control over the land. Everyone is ultimately a newcomer or immigrant. The Kromah (Musa, Zo Jala/Ngana Musa), Konè (Jufa) and Donzo were earlier comers than the Soninke and Maninka who migrated to Musadu in the late-host stage. The Kromah, Konè and Donzo hosts were, however, latecomers to the Kpelle and other peoples who preceded them. Thus, the newcomer-latecomer debate has its own inertia that originates in the distant past and continues into the present.¹¹⁰

Many West Africans believed that *jina* or deities owned the land and lived in places like waterways, rocks, mountains and trees. The first people who moved to a certain place needed to pacify the spirits if they wanted to use the land. Founding ancestors like the Kromah in Musadu built shrines, performed rituals and made sacrifices to the spirits for peace, prosperity and power. The first residents and their descendants became *duutilu* or 'land owners.' Apart from maintaining good relationships with the spirit world, land owners were responsible to clear the land, apportion land to newcomers or community members, and exile persons who violated the land. In the early stages, 'land owners' served as ritual and political chiefs.

Newcomers were ultimately under the authority of landowners until they became more powerful than landowners. Tumaningèmè, for instance, settled in Musadu before Foningama, but Foningama later superceded him as the chief of Musadu. The landowner and his descendants usually retained ritual control of the area. Sometimes, a newcomer who lived in one place for a long time would argue that his ancestors were the first ones

¹¹⁰Kopytoff 1987:52-71. This discussion of first and second comers is also based on Hopkins (1972:6), Zahan (1974:11-13), Conrad (1981:83-86), Murphy/Bledsoe (1987:124-128), Wilks (1989:18-19), Tamari (1991:239) and Fairhead/Leach (1996:104-106.).

to settle the land and that they also had the right to maintain ritual control of the land. This was often the situation for firstcomers who became political chiefs and who were responsible for establishing new institutions and relationships that fundamentally altered the social, cultural and political landscape of the area. In Musadu's case, some argued that Tumaningèmè was a host because they said that he lived in Musadu before Foningama. Zo Jala Musa the *ngana* and Jufa Konè, however, were more closely associated with Musa, meaning that their descendants viewed the Tumaningèmè-Kromah as newcomers and potential threats to their authority.

Yves Person broadly traced the movements of the Maninka toward the forest into two stages. He argued that the Konè, Kromah and Konaté made the first substantial encroachments up the Upper Niger in the fifteenth century or earlier to seek kola nuts. The Bamana lived between the Siguiri-Kankan-Kouroussa triangle, the Loma and Kissi lived along the Milo river as far north as today's Kankan, and the Kpelle were south of the Loma. The Konè, Kromah and Konaté gradually pushed the Loma, Kpelle and Kissi toward the forest as they moved into Sankaran and Toron, but did not go further south than the line that roughly extends from today's Farana in the west to Kerouane and Odienné in the center and the east.¹¹¹ The Keita originally led the Kamara, Ulaire and Mara or Sako in the second stage toward the sources of the Niger. The Kamara later became the leaders of this migration, and settled in Mau and Konya-Mani by the late-fifteenth century.¹¹² Individuals from other clans probably traveled with the Kamara,

¹¹¹Others claim that the Traoré, Keita and Turé traveled with the Kromah and Konaté (Niane 1960:47; Moundekeno 1979:10-12; Millimono 1989:7).

¹¹²Person 1968b:73-74,103; 1984:317. The Soninke Mara are the same as the Sako (Fairhead/Leach 1994:318; Kouyaté 1987, in Conrad 1999a:177,200, fn.1454; see Leynaud/Cissé 1978:150, fn.41; Humblot 1921:137).

although some of the clans probably settled in different villages as a few traditions suggest.¹¹³

Written and oral data recently collected in Guinea identify several other places where the Kromah went, and indicate that the Kromah ventured another one hundred miles further south to Konya-Mani than what Person projected. The oral traditions indicate that the Kromah took a more southwesterly route to Konya-Mani than the Kamara.¹¹⁴ Some claim that Fakoli's father was from the town of Norasoba in the region of Negeboria in the southwest Manden.¹¹⁵ According to oral traditions, some Kromah dispersed from Norasoba to Hamana and the Sankaran. The ancestors of those who migrated to Konya-Mani preceded in a southeastern direction to Baté and Sabadu, and headed south into the valleys of the Dion, Kourai and Gbanhala rivers. They passed through Toron and Sumandu, and migrated further south to the towns of Diemou, Tina, Gbana, Solona, Fuala, Guirila and Gbè before they reached Konya-Mani.¹¹⁶ The Kromah not only founded Musadu when they went to Konya-Mani, but also settled in Wanino,

¹¹³Niane 1975:99.

¹¹⁴App. H.4.

¹¹⁵Lanse Kromah 1984, App. 7.2; Vase Kamala, 10-31-1990 purchased tape; Camara 1980:82; Niane 1984:133; Bulman 1989:160,165-167; Moraes Farias 1989:160; Conrad 1999a:75. Fakoli, Fakoli's 'sons' or Fakoli's father are said to have founded Norasoba. Fakoli, Bakari (Bakali, Boakai) and Tuma(ni) are praise names for the Kromah. Fakoli is used most widely in Mali and northeast Guinea. The Manding sometime substitute Tuman and Bakari for Fakoli in the more southern locations of today's Beyla and Macenta provinces.

¹¹⁶Bakari's alleged sons Tumã, Vase (Manduma) and Bala [Musa] are claimed to have trekked to Sumandu, and then dispersed further south (Lanse Kromah 1984, this portion is not in the appendix). Tina or Sina also seems to have been an important dispersion point for the Kromah. Tumaningèmè is said in one account to have migrated from Bamako to Tina before his sons fanned out with the Donzo to Kankan, Guirila, Fuala and Konya-Mani (Linard 1948, App. 4.6). Another reports that Tumaningèmè and his 'brothers' went from Toron and Toumandou (Kerouane) to Tina trading kola nuts, and that Tumaningèmè went deeper south to Musadu (Beavogui 1973-74:54). According to Kabine Kromah, a Kromah had four sons in Tina who scattered to different places: Famèvi to Gbana, Sowana to Solona, Fatama to Kerouane, and Tumaningèmè to Musadu (App. 7.29, l. 1-30). Others claim that a Kagbè or Youssouf (Kagbè Youssouf?) Kromah lived in Tina (Donzo n.d.; Vase Kamala, 10-31-1990 purchased tape; Kabine Kromah, 1993, App. 7.34, l. 26).

Dagbanò and at Nèlèkòlò creek.

Several sources suggest that the Kromah were traders. Most of the Kromah who left the Manden were probably smiths and sorcerers like their alleged progenitor Fakoli.¹¹⁷ Nonetheless, many of the Kromah who descended south from the Mali empire to find iron ore and smelt probably also become kola traders. Kola was perhaps the principle exchange item for iron products, and smiths tried to control the trade of both goods to increase their position in the iron-kola trade.¹¹⁸ In today's western Côte d'Ivoire, Kromah and Baayo blacksmiths became the *jula* who organized long distance trade.¹¹⁹ Long-distance traders often became Muslims; there is a link between Islam and commerce that extends back to the early Soninke *wangara* of the Ghana empire, and ultimately to Muhammed who was a trader before he became a prophet. Merchants were "carriers of Islam." They knew the basic elements of Islam and exposed non-Muslims to their faith, but usually did not try to convert others to Islam.¹²⁰ Islam gave long-distance traders a religious and social affinity with like-minded traders that was necessary to transmit information about news, prices and market conditions over great distances. Being a Muslim also provided ready made host-stranger conditions for traders who were traveling or who were sending goods from one relay point to the next. According to the oral traditions, the late-host Kromah related to Tumaningèmè seem to have been more Muslim than the earlier Kromah like Musa and Zo Jala Musa the *ngara*.

¹¹⁷Conrad 1992:154-155.

¹¹⁸Lovejoy 1980:112-113.

¹¹⁹McNaughton 1979:8; Toungara 1980:53; see Brooks 1993:45.

¹²⁰Levtzion 1987b:21-23.

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The Konè and Traoré

The other person who is most consistently identified as having been a host besides Musa was Jufa Konè (Konde, Jara).¹²¹ *Jufa* means ‘enemy (*ju*) killer (*fa*),’ so Jufa Konè might have been a warrior. The Konè were a powerful warrior and sorcery Soninke clan associated with Sunjata’s mother Sogolon. The Konè controlled the regions of Do and Kri in the central Manden during the time of Sunjata. Do is something of an enigma in the Maninka traditions. *Do* means ‘secret’ in Manding; Do and Kri were “a land of secrecy” with “genie spirit guides,” “ritual origins” and a secret association named Do. Do, especially, “was an archetypal location not just for all matters concerning the hunt, but for sacred sites and the acquisition of spiritual power (*nyama*).”¹²² The Konè, who ruled Do and perhaps Kri as well before the Traoré became the chiefs, fostered the occult power which made their land renown.¹²³

After Sunjata defeated Sumaworo, many Konè reportedly left Do and Kri with the Kromah. The Konè led the Kromah to Hamana and the Dioman, and then to Sankaran, Baté and Toron.¹²⁴ Genealogical studies date the Konè movement from the Manden to the Sankaran to the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries.¹²⁵ These time frames are consistent with

¹²¹Monographie/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8; Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28; Yaya Dole 1985, App. 7.4e; 1986, App. 7.8; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; 1993, App. 7.34; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a. Also known as the Cone, Conde, Konde, Konnte, Konde, Konte and Jala (Diarra) (Sayers 1927:69; Leynaud/Cissé 1978:147; Conrad 1990:47, ln.58).

¹²²Conrad 1997d:140.

¹²³Bulman 1990:202,287; Conrad 1997d:141. For Muslim antecedents of the Konè in oral traditions, see Chapter 3.

¹²⁴Person 1964:325; 1968b:32,74-75; Niane 1974:64; Leynaud/Cissé 1978:26-27. A Fanoni (Fanony, Famani, Faramani, Framory, Famourou, Feremodou) is said to have been an important Konè who lived in the Sankaran (Arcin 1911:70; Humblot 1919:421; 1921:137; 1951:113, fn. 1; Person 1968b:106; Sidibé 1989:7; App. H.3, Fig. 49). The Souma Horo who Arcin (1911:70) said was a famous Konè in the Sankaran was actually a Kanè or Sunjata’s arch-nemesis Sumaworo Kante. Some also claim that a (another?) Fanoni Konè fought with Sunjata (Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:55; Sisòkò, in Johnson 1986:109; Kouyaté 1988, in Conrad 1999a:63).

¹²⁵Leynaud/Cissé 1978:26-27; Niane 1974:64.

many traditions which state that the Konè were well established as Musadu's hosts before Foningama went to Musadu, perhaps before the second half of the fifteenth century.

When the Konè migrated south, they maintained some of their cultural and historical background as they partly redefined who they were when they settled in new lands and interacted with new peoples. The Konè would have claimed a certain prestige from their ancestry and peoples like the Traoré from the Manden with whom they were associated.¹²⁶ They could have also helped the Kromah placate the land spirits, and might have helped coordinate trade from Konya-Mani to the sahel through the connections that they had with their kinsmen in the Sankaran, Do and Kri.

The Traoré or Talawole were another Soninke clan that could have also moved to Musadu during the host era. One Loma source said that the Guilavogui were early residents of Musadu; the Guilavogui are Traoré.¹²⁷ A Maniyaka tradition claimed that when Foningama went to Diemou, he married a Traoré.¹²⁸ Another narrative stated that one of the people who departed from Musadu with Zo Musa was a Traoré.¹²⁹ The Traoré ruled Kri and Do with the Konè in earlier times. They were also joking partners with the Konè and belonged to the same esoteric association, so some Traoré could have traveled with the Konè or followed the Konè south.¹³⁰

The Baayo, Kamara, Sanoe, Dole and Donzo

The oral traditions indicate that several other Soninke or Manding clans might

¹²⁶Arntson 1994; D. Robinson. personal communication, 30 Dec. 2001.

¹²⁷Sakou 1983:15; Suret-Canale 1963:34. See Chapter 2 for some early Traoré who are said to have been Muslim.

¹²⁸Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1038-1046.

¹²⁹Seku Saiyòn 1970, App. 5.2; Mammadi Dole 1985, App. 6.2.

¹³⁰Leynaud/Cissé 1978:148.

have also participated in Musadu's founding or at least been present during the early period of Musadu's history. Two of the clans were *blaw* like the Kromah, the Baayo and Kamara. The other early immigrants were Sanoe, Dole-Bama-Kanè-Sumaworo and Donzo-Fofana.

The evidence for an early Baayo presence in Konya-Mani is Yaya Dole and Ibrahim Béété's claim that Musa lived in Baayola or the 'town of the Baayo' before he founded Musadu.¹³¹ This suggests that some Baayo settled in Konya-Mani much earlier than the Musa Baayo who migrated to Gbè and Mau with Mori Kanè in the seventeenth century and helped the Kònsaba-Kamara become powerful (Chapter 3). The early Musadu Baayo might have been smiths who became nominal Muslim traders like the Kromah and their Baayo counterparts who settled in Wasulu.¹³²

A few traditions indicate that some Kamara might have also resided in Musadu before Foningama arrived. The Loma, for instance, claim that their ancestors and the Kamara lived together in Musadu at the same time.¹³³ One informant claimed that a Kamara accompanied Zo Musa when he went to Musadu (Chapter 7). The Manding who departed with Musa were more loyal to him than the Foningama-Kamara and their clerics who fought Zo Musa. The Kamara were also a *bla* clan that had a close affinity with the Kromah and Baayo, and were one of the leading smith and sorcerer clans that migrated to Bure and mined gold.¹³⁴ Some claim that gold was one of the first items that the Maninka sought when they went to Konya-Mani (*infra.*).

The Sanoe (Sano, Saghanughu) also seem to have settled in Musadu at an early

¹³¹App. 7.4e; App. 7.8; App. 7.35, l. 1-12.

¹³²Toungara 1980:53-54; Massing forthcoming.

¹³³Korvah 1960/1994:61; Koivogui n.d.

¹³⁴Moraes Farias 1989:155; Perinbam 1996:268.

date. Oral traditions variously claim that Musa was a Kpelle-Sanoe, that Musa's owner was a Sanoe, that Sani Sanoe was one of Musadu's hosts, or that Tumaningèmè or Musa lived in Sanyola ('Sanyo/Sanoe town').¹³⁵ The close affiliation between the Sanoe and Kromah can be accounted for in several ways. The Sanoe and Kromah are said to have been the same in Baté.¹³⁶ If this was true for the Maninka who migrated south in earlier times, then Musa, Tumaningèmè or any other Kromah could have also been known as Sanoe. The Sanoe and Kromah are bound by a *lasiliya* or 'binding relationship' in Konya-Mani, and the Sanoe were allegedly one of the original *jula* along with the Dole and Kromah who went to Musadu.¹³⁷ Although the Sanoe were one of the five leading Muslim clans in the Manden, and were responsible for renewing Islam in many parts of today's Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana during the eighteenth century, many Sanoe who went to Konya-Mani were probably not Muslim if they were as closely identified with the Kromah as some of the oral traditions suggest.¹³⁸ If some Sanoe were Muslim, many of them eventually abandon Islam. The Maniyaka regard many Sanoe who live in Konya-Mani's neighboring region of Gbana and the town of Boola as Kpelle or non-Muslim; they allegedly farmed and intermarried with the Kpelle, and also intermarried with the non-Muslim Kromah and Donzo.¹³⁹

There is ample oral evidence that the Dole-Sumaworo-Kanè-Bama lived in

¹³⁵Yaya Dole 1985, App. 7.4e; 1986, App. 7.8; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Monographie/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6.

¹³⁶Humblot 1918:528.

¹³⁷Kabine Kromah 1993, App. 7.34, l. 71-85; Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7b, l. 765-770; Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8, l. 220-226.

¹³⁸Moraes Farias 1989:154; Wilks 2000:101-103.

¹³⁹Kabine Kromah, App. 7.29, l.2833-2852, App. 7.34, l.423-477. Likewise, Kabine Kromah said that the Sanoe switched from Kpelle to Maniyaka after they accepted Islam. Gbana is said to have been a stronghold of the Nyana society, and was known as a non-Muslim land in the nineteenth century (Ch. 6; Doreh 1870/1974:131).

Konya-Mani before Foningama went to Musadu. Sources variously claimed that the town of Dolela ('Dole town') existed before Musadu was founded, that Musadu was a Dole town, that a famous Dole *mori* named Femo was a host, that Zo Musa was a Bama before he became Kpelle, that the Sumaworo lived in Musadu before Foningama arrived, and that a Masama Dole who made sacrifices at Koniya Mountain lived during the host era.¹⁴⁰ Dole, Sumaworo, Kanè and Bama are equivalent clan names, which can make the interpretation of so many names confusing if one does not know that they are the same in many parts of Upper Guinea.¹⁴¹

Finally, some informants claim that Musa or his son settled in the Donzola section of Musadu.¹⁴² The Donzo ('hunter') were hunters, so a few Donzo could have migrated to Konya-Mani with or before the Kromah.¹⁴³ The narrative which claims that Musa settled in Donzola suggests that Musa might have settled with the Donzo, though one can not interpret oral traditions so closely. The Donzo are said to have migrated to Baoule, Touba and Beyla with the Konè and Kamara, and helped the Kromah found Fuala (Fwala).¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰Kaamoo Dòlè 1990, App. 7.13; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18, l. 25,200-219,525-537,560,640; Moliké Sidibé 1989, App. 4.10.

¹⁴¹Kaba 1971:68; personal knowledge. Vase Kamala likewise equated the Bama, Dole, Kanè, Kande (Kane) and Sumaworo in one of his oral traditions (App. 7.6, l. 1273; see Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18, l. 238). The Bama are known as the Bamagana in the oral traditions about Soso emperor Sumaworo, and should not be mistaken for the Bamana and Bamba (Innes 1974:173; Conrad 1984:45,51, n.45; personal communication 2 Feb. 2002).

¹⁴²Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a; S. Kromah 1985, App. 7.4c; Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30; Fig. 33. The Donzo are equivalent with Fofana and Nyèn (Linard 1948, App. 4.6; Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7; personal knowledge).

¹⁴³Delafosse 1912/1972 I:139; Camara 1977:21; Leynaud/Cisse 1978:147; Kourouma 1989-90:7; Jansen et. al. 1995:77; Massing 2000:297, fn. 35.

¹⁴⁴Person 1960:53. Person wrote (or the publisher misprinted) Bosso for Dosso (Donzo) in this instance. See Linard (1948, App. 4.6) for Fuala.

The Economic Basis of Musadu's Founding, Growth and Importance

Some of the oral traditions affirm that Musadu was founded for economic reasons. They say that Musa fished, farmed, hunted and traded when he went to the Dion River. Ibrahim Béété's statement that Musadu was 'located on a road that traders used' crystalizes claims that Kromah traders were some of the first Maninka to visit the area. Musadu was ideally situated to become a center of long distance trade.¹⁴⁵ George Brooks theorizes that

the Konyan highlands, [the] source of several major tributaries of the Niger River, lay deep in the forest zone during the c.700-1100 wet period and probably remained a forest environment with sparse populations until well into the dry period [c. 1100-1500] that followed. Mande smiths and traders were probably attracted to Konyan by a combination of gold deposits (Maunay 1961:300-301, map on p. 295) and the opportunity to barter iron and iron implements and cotton cloth with neighboring dwellers. Mande called the area south of Konyan *Worodugu*, "land of kola," and iron hoes for kola were a principal exchange (Lovejoy 1980:112-113).¹⁴⁶

The rain forest has a canopy of tree cover and a wide variety of trees and plants of different heights. North of the forest was the "forest-savannah transition zone" that probably started to characterize Musadu's environment by the end of the dry period when many of the events in the epic likely took place. The "Guinea savannah," which is part of the forest-savannah zone, has the tall grasses of the savanna and several types of trees like the oil bean, locust bean and shea butter. Seasonal crops grow during the rainy season, and grass, plants and small trees are often burned during the dry season. Fringe forest areas are located along water ways and on mountain tops in this belt.¹⁴⁷

The peoples in the forest and savanna-forest zone produced many crops that

¹⁴⁵App. 7.35.

¹⁴⁶Brooks 1993:73.

¹⁴⁷Iloje 1980:30-33; Grove 1991:38; Fairhead/Leach 1996:37-39.

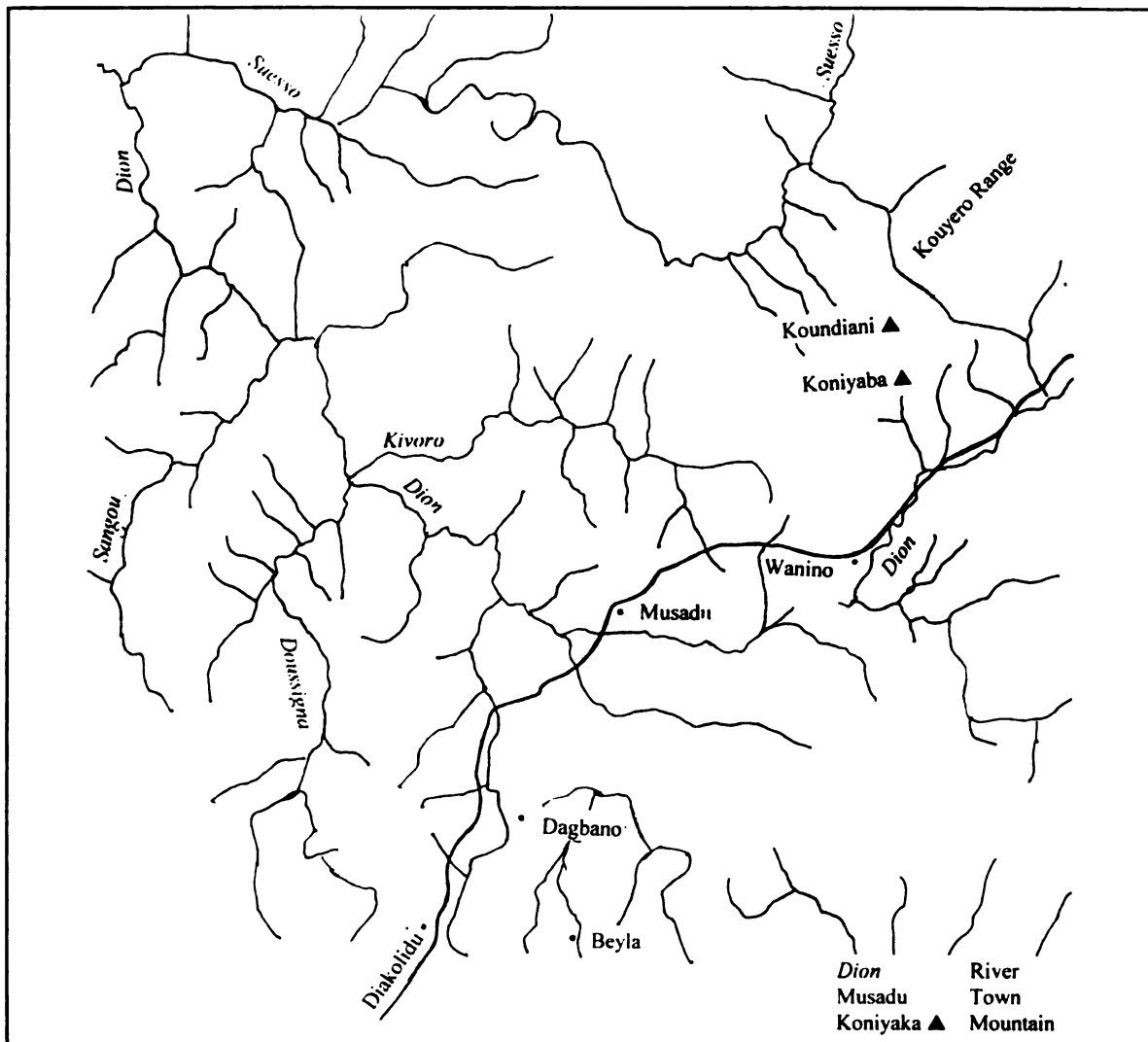


Figure 34 Konya-Mani's Rivers and Mountains

traders transported to the coast and the north. Konya-Mani is ideally situated for farming because it is positioned on the periphery of the “West African cradle of agriculture” that extends to the headwaters of the Niger River in the regions of Kissidougou and Gueckedu (Figure 34). Konya-Mani itself is located in the midst of a watershed that is situated on a plateau that is part of the Kourando mountain range (Figure 35). The Kourando mountain range spans twenty-eight miles in a east-west direction from Toumandou to

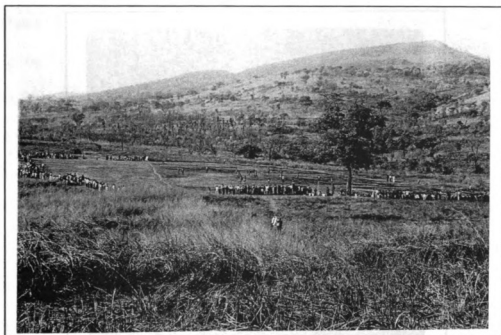


Figure 35 The Kouyero mountain range, with a Musadu-Wanino football match in the foreground

Sinko, and eighteen miles north-west from Boro to Kouroundo. Forests grow at the top and down the slopes of the Kourando. Kourando and the surrounding plateau spawns several rivers and creeks. One of mountains that form the Kourando is the Koniya from whence the name Konya-Mani derives. The slopes of the Koniya are the source of the Dion, Suéssô and Kivoro Rivers. The Dion runs along the southern edge of Musadu and connects with the Sankarani. The Kabakòni ('Kaba creek') springs from the Kabakònitini ('mountain of Kaba creek') at the southwest edge of Musadu (Figure 36).

The Dion River and the Nèlèkòlò, Gbiakò and Kaba creeks almost completely surround Musadu (Figure 31). These represent a few of the tributaries of the Beya, Doussianga, Kivoro and Suesso, rivers that start in or flow within a half-dozen mile radius of Musadu. These waterways are some of the sources of the Sankarani,

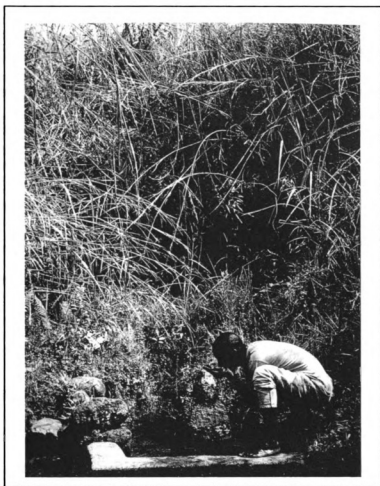


Figure 36 Baba Dole drinking from the source of the
Kabaköni, Musadu, 1993

FéréDougouba and Milo Rivers. The Lofa and St. Paul Rivers start about twenty-five miles southwest and west of Musadu.

Konya-Mani also has adequate rainfall. According to measurements that were probably taken during the late colonial era, Beyla area averaged nineteen inches of rain per year. About ten inches of rain fell in Beyla during the rainy season months from July to September; Beyla did not receive any appreciable rainfall from December to February. Most plants need four inches of rain per month to survive during farming season, so

Beyla lies well within this vegetation zone.¹⁴⁸ It was in regions like Konya-Mani, the Middle Niger and the Senegambia river basin that farmers domesticated cereal grains such as *fonio*, sorghum, millet, *oryza glaberrima* rice, kola nuts, tuber and root crops, vegetables, fruits, textile plants and oil palms. Such domestication only occurred in areas where sufficient numbers of people lived for long periods of time.¹⁴⁹

Nineteenth and early-twentieth century travelers attested to the fact that Musadu was a vibrant economic center until the mid-nineteenth century even though the landscape was probably much more barren than it was during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.¹⁵⁰ These sources indicate that some aspects of Musadu's economy were rooted in the past, and that economic factors underlay Musadu's founding.

The key nineteenth century source about Musadu's economy is the book that Benjamin Anderson published after he visited Musadu in 1868. Anderson's descriptions about Musadu's economy are particularly revealing. When Anderson visited Musadu, he went to the site of the old market and wrote:

I was shown their large market-place outside of the town, a few hundred yards from the south-western gate. From the space it occupied, it would easily have contained eight or ten thousand people. The respective places where each commodity was exhibited for sale was pointed out: country cloths, cattle, gold, (dust and manufactured), slaves, grain, salt - of which there were two kinds - the slab or rock-salt, which came on camels from the north-east, and our fine salt, gotten from the coast; ostrich feathers; leather, in the beautiful and soft tanning of which the Mandingoes are particularly expert; ivory, cotton, tobacco, and an infinite variety of domestic articles were all named, and the different places where

¹⁴⁸Church 1980:33-39.

¹⁴⁹Murdock 1959:66-71; Fairhead/Leach 1996:104; Richards 1996:294,297.

¹⁵⁰James Sims was told that there were "no trees in Maani," and that "the whole country is prairie; for firewood the people have to substitute cow dung" (1859-1860/2003). Ten years later, Benjamin Anderson described the Musadu area as "the almost treeless plains of Manding" (1870/1971:7). A French traveler made similar observations forty years later (Chevalier 1909:25-26; "M. Chevalier's Expedition in West Africa" 1909:341; Chevalier 1910:326). By the second decade of the twentieth century and on toward the present, the savannah started to recede (Sharp 1920:296; Fairhead/Leach 1996:70-77; personal observation, 1992-1993).

they were sold designated.

But war has abolished every sign of this commercial activity and life, and has introduced in its stead a barren space filled with weeds, grass, and broken skulls and skeletons of enemies - a desperate battle having been fought there between the Musardu people, aided by Blamer Sissa, and the eastern Mandingoes... [I] heard the old men of the town regret its past power and wealth. They told me that what I then saw of Musadu was only the ruins of a former prosperity.¹⁵¹

Blamer Sissa (Cissé) destroyed Musadu's market earlier in the 1860s.¹⁵² Although Anderson may have exaggerated the number of people who went to the market so he could persuade the Liberian government to extend its presence to Musadu, his description confirms the existence of a large market, long distance trade and the presence of several goods and foodstuffs.

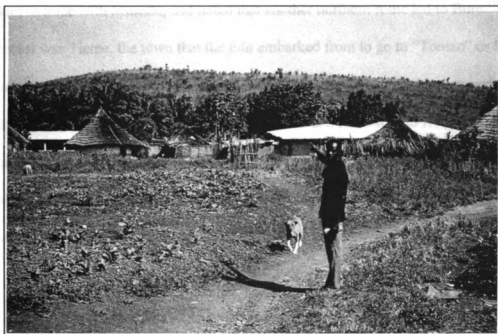


Figure 37 Man pointing to where Musadu's 'old market' was located on a distant hill, Musadu, 1992

¹⁵¹Anderson 1870/1971:92,104-105; see Fairhead et. al. 2003. The Musaduka now call this the *lòfèkòlò* or 'old market' (Figure 37).

¹⁵²Doreh 1871/1974:133.

Trade routes

Nineteenth and early-twentieth century materials indicate that Konya-Mani was located at the nexus of many trade routes. Musadu emerged as the first major center of trade in Konya-Mani, and many trade routes passed through the region. Musadu, like many other trade centers, was like the hub of a bicycle wheel with spokes that radiate toward several directions.¹⁵³ To the north was the “Kaarta-Milo Axis” that went to Kankan, Siguiri, Kita and the desert.¹⁵⁴ Kankan emerged as a main hub of trade that linked the savanna to the forest in the seventeenth century. Major towns along one of the southern routes that linked Kankan to Konya-Mani were Bissandougou, Kerouane and Goiffe. Anderson described Senegalese traders who traveled from the Futa Jalon and Kankan to trade with Musadu, and noted that another northern route led to Bure.¹⁵⁵ To the northwest was Tieme, the town that the *jula* embarked from to go to “Toman” or Loma country to acquire kola nuts.¹⁵⁶ One of the Tieme-Loma routes might have passed along a corridor that extended from the Loma forest in Buse and Konokòlò to Konya-Mani, Fuala, Sokulala, Sirana d’Odiene, Odiene, Tieme and beyond.¹⁵⁷ This route, called ‘the grand route from Beyla to Kong,’ extended from Odiene to Wanino (Mau) and Koro in the south, and further east to Kong and the Bandama river.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵³Arcin 1911:414-142; Person 1968b:106-107,118; 1990: Map 2, “Les Routes du Kola”; Roberts 1987:59-62; Ford 1991:59-61; Brooks 1993:292; Konneh 1996:13.

¹⁵⁴Curtin 1975:283-285.

¹⁵⁵Anderson 1870/1971:97,102.

¹⁵⁶Caillié 1830:331.

¹⁵⁷Beavogui 1973-74:44; Toungara 1980:69,91,100.

¹⁵⁸Blondiaux 1897:371,375.

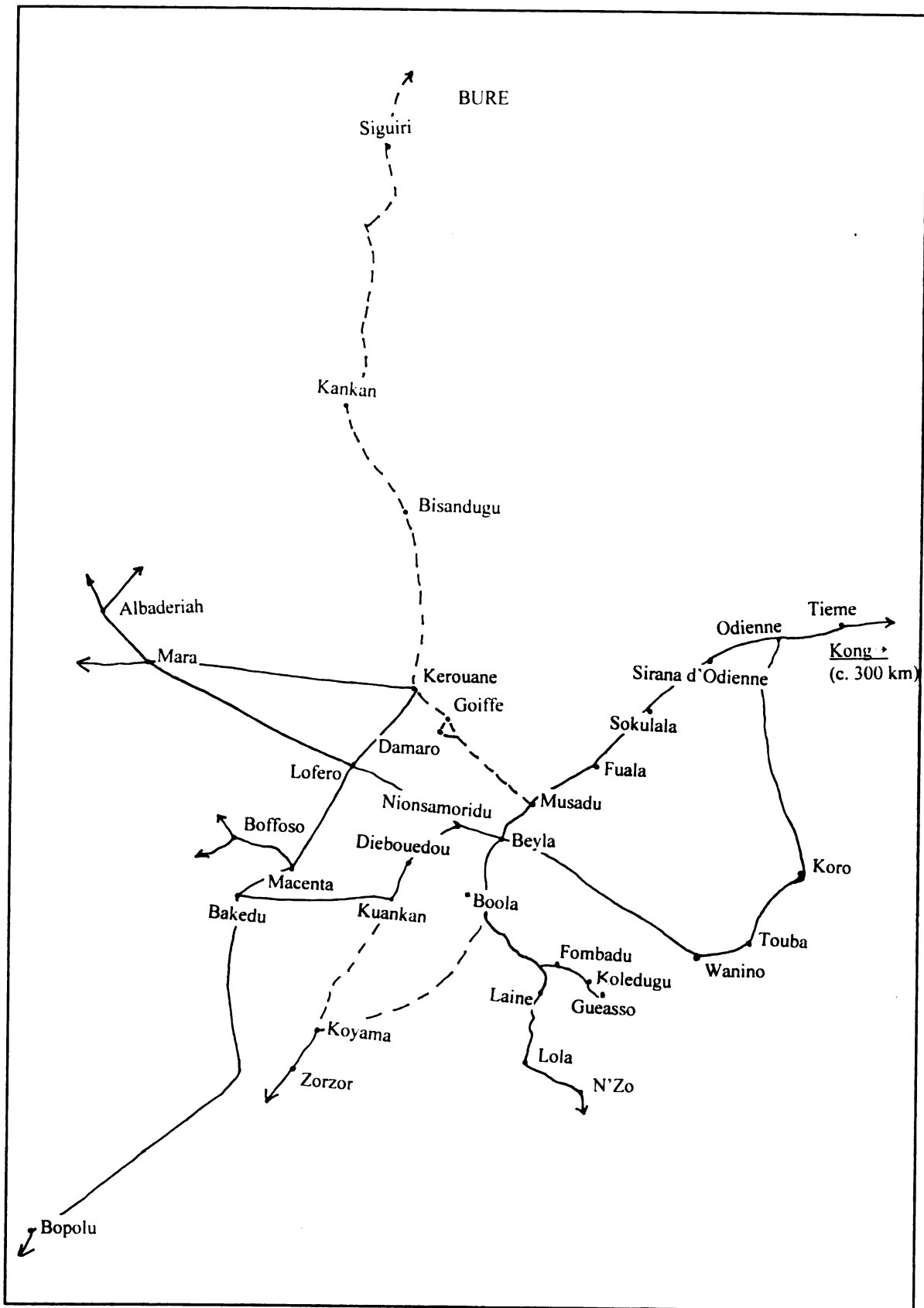


Figure 38 Major trade towns in Upper Guinea

In the southeast, one traveler noted that Lola and N'zo were part of the 'great kola routes of the country' that ran through the forest.¹⁵⁹ The principle circuits from Konya-Mani that reached these towns were Koledougou, Gueaso, Fombadu and Lene.¹⁶⁰

More to the south, the "great Misardo path" or the "great Barlain Road" went from Konokòlò and Buse to Zorzor, and then on to the coast. Another route crossed through Konokòlò to Bakedu, and then south to Bopolu and the coast.¹⁶¹

Musadu's trade to the east encompassed the "Sierra Leone-Guinea system." This trade route crossed the passageway at the Fon-Gbè mountains where Nionsamoridu is located to the forest towns of Kuankan, Diebouedou, Koyama, Vekema, Falala, Bofosso, Macenta, Lofero and into Sierra Leone.¹⁶²

Trade goods from the north

Benjamin Anderson mentioned several trade items that were either indigenous to Musadu, passed through there through distant or regional trade, or originated from Asia or the Americas. The most important items from the north were rock-salt, gold, horses, cattle and leather. The most valuable item in the south were kola nuts. Food, iron, gold and slaves were some of the other key commodities.

¹⁵⁹Chevalier 1909:27.

¹⁶⁰Arcin 1911:141; Person 1968b:106,436.

¹⁶¹Seymour 1859-60/2003; Anderson 1912/1971:8; Fairhead et. al. 2003: ch. 7; see Kaba 1971:167; Jones 1983:75. Barline was one of the nineteenth century terms used to designate today's Kpelle.

¹⁶²Howard 1976; see Blyden 1871b:170; Smyth 1879:#42; Bouet 1911:199; Person 1968b:433; Kaba 1971:167; Beavogui 1973-74:44.

Salt

One of the most important products that traders transported south was salt. Anderson observed that camels from the northeast carried rock-salt to Musadu.¹⁶³ This salt originated in the desert, and was transported through Kankan like most of the other goods. People valued desert salt more than ocean salt. The magnesium in desert salt preserved food better, added more flavor to food, and helped humans and animals retain water that they lost through perspiration.¹⁶⁴ Salt was also a symbol of power and virility for men.¹⁶⁵ Rock-salt was thus a luxury good, and was usually traded for goods of similar value like gold and kola nuts.

Horses

Horses were one of Musadu's "chief articles of trade" in the nineteenth century, and were commonplace as far south as Fooma. Anderson wrote:

This part of Mandingo is the country of the horse. There are two sizes: the large horse, used for show and parade, and the small horse, used for war. The latter is a hardy, strong little animal, capable, in his country, of bearing great fatigue... These horses are certainly well treated and cared for; and if Musardu is not characteristic for cleanliness, it is because the horse and his master equally occupy and almost equally litter up that capital.¹⁶⁶

The larger horses that Anderson described were fairly recent imports from North Africa which passed through Timbuktu and Kankan.¹⁶⁷ Musadu was good for breeding "Mandingo horses" because of its elevation and plentiful crops. The nineteenth century

¹⁶³Anderson 1870/1971:105.

¹⁶⁴Curtin 1975:224-228; Webb 1995:55.

¹⁶⁵Perinbam 1996:39.

¹⁶⁶Anderson 1870/1971:101,104; 1903:6. Horses were still common when a British visitor visited Beyla a half century later (Sharpe 1920:297), but are only rarely seen now.

¹⁶⁷Law 1980:27-28,58.

Maniyaka empire builder Samori Turé even sent a Fulbe breeder to raise horses in Musadu until the Konyaka revolted against Samori in 1888.¹⁶⁸ Smaller horses survived longer on the coast because they developed immunities from trypanosomiasis or sleeping sickness. Some horses were bred on the coast and up along the St. Paul and other rivers, while many were imported from the interior. The larger “Mandingo horses” did not survive nearly as long in the tropics.¹⁶⁹ Horses were a status symbol for the wealthy. Cavalry men or *sofa* (‘horse fathers’) also used them in battle.¹⁷⁰ The Musadu epic states that people used horses for communication, sacrifice and warfare. Some oral traditions imply that Foningama used cavalry to conquer Musadu (Chapter 5).

Cattle

Cattle were another important item that came from the north. Anderson learned that Nionsamoridu’s weekly market

contained three hundred head of cattle, which were offered at three to four dollars a head in our money... Several (cattle) died the next day after the market was over. They are the large, reddish, long-horned cattle, which we usually buy from the interior. The highlands, from which they come, explains why they do not thrive so well as the black, short-horned, and sturdy cattle of the coast, known among us as the “leeward cattle.”¹⁷¹

The large long-horned cattle are the Ndama or “Mandingo cows.” The shorter “leeward cattle” are the Dwarf Shorthorn or Muturu. Cattle were good for food, skins and milk. Anderson noted that the larger cattle were more susceptible to sleeping sickness, though this started to change by the mid-twentieth century.¹⁷² The Konya-Mani plateau was so

¹⁶⁸Person 1968b:912.

¹⁶⁹“Horses” 1850:299; Johnston 1906/1969:299; Donner 1939:122-123; Curtin 1975:221-222.

¹⁷⁰Anderson 1870/1971:95-96; 1912/1971:30-35.

¹⁷¹Anderson 1870/1971:108-09.

¹⁷²Johnston 1906:902-912; Schulze 1973:136; Church 1980:126.

good for cattle breeding that the Fulbe brought an influx of cows to the area in the eighteenth century.¹⁷³ Samori is said to have taken all of the cattle from Konya-Mani when he left in 1888, with signs of incomplete recovery still evident in the region twenty years later.¹⁷⁴ In the Musadu epic, Zo Musa's talisman is said to have eaten the symbol of Musadu's wealth, people, goats and cattle (Chapter 5).

Leather products

Nineteenth century residents of Musadu sold "leather, in the beautiful and soft tanning of which the Mandingoes are particularly expert."¹⁷⁵ Classificatory leatherworkers or *garankewu* were Muslim Soninke who were closely linked with Jakhanke clerics. The Manding and others also made leather products, although they were usually not specialists like the *garankewu*. "Long-distance trade, Islam and warfare" provided leatherworkers with new opportunities to flourish beyond the Niger river basin as the Mali empire began to fragment.¹⁷⁶ Leatherworkers made the saddles, bridles, leather leg wear, small leather bags, trade hides, talismen, war belts, sandals, hats and other leather products for clerics, warriors and everyone else.¹⁷⁷ These craftsmen are thought to have departed from Ghana empire during the tenth and eleventh centuries to seek new opportunities to practice their craft. "They probably settled in communities as foreign specialists, competing with other leatherworkers for clients at local and regional

¹⁷³Person 1968b:244.

¹⁷⁴Chevalier 1909:26.

¹⁷⁵Anderson 1870/1971:104-105.

¹⁷⁶Frank 1998:13,137,142.

¹⁷⁷Anderson 1870/1971:87,91,93,100,103; Seymour 1859-1860/2003; see Winterbottom 1803/1969:98; Frank 1998:47-50.

markets.”¹⁷⁸ They may have joined smiths as the earliest Maninka to migrate south, even though oral traditions do not recognize leatherworkers as much as smiths.¹⁷⁹

Trade Goods from the South

Kola nuts

Kola nuts were the most valuable products that *jula* wanted to secure from the forest. The goods that had the highest exchange value with kola were iron, rock-salt and gold. The *Cola nitida* is the most prized kola nut; it has an addictive stimulant with caffeine and theobromine that cleans a person’s mouth, sweetens water, quenches thirst and hunger, and is used for baby naming ceremonies, weddings and other special occasions that bind people together. Kola nuts appear in the traditions about Musadu for gift giving, medicine, oath taking, sacrifices, and payments for penalties.

The forested areas where the Kpelle, Dā, Mano, Kissi and Loma lived in today’s southeastern Guinea were rich areas of kola production. These peoples probably produced kola for commercial reasons during the thirteenth century or earlier, well before the Manding started to migrate to the forest.¹⁸⁰ Even though Konya-Mani was probably north of the kola producing zone by the fifteenth century as the climate became more dry, the Konyaka controlled the flow of kola that moved from the forest through Konya to Kankan and other depots in the north.¹⁸¹ Kromah, Kamara and Baayo smiths who went south probably became kola merchants. Kola nuts were probably one of the important items that smiths exchanged for the iron implements that they made. Smiths gradually migrated

¹⁷⁸Frank 1998:154.

¹⁷⁹Frank 1995:142.

¹⁸⁰White 1974:13-15; Brooks 1993:53-55,73; cf. Lovejoy 1980:102ff.

¹⁸¹Person 1968b:103-104; Brooks 1993:73.

south as the land became more dry so they could get the firewood that they needed to smelt iron, and gradually become involved in kola trade.¹⁸²

The Manding who went to the forest fringes and became Maniyaka sought the protection of Kpelle, Loma and Dã chiefs. They learned their languages and married their women. Although they usually did not work directly with the kola producers, they worked through their hosts who had contacts with the producers. Their hosts bridged the gap between the Maniyaka and the harvesters. The Maniyaka, in turn, were the middlemen who transferred the kola from the forest to their northern Maninka kinsmen who thought that the peoples of the forest were “cannibals.”¹⁸³

Food crops

The “Mandingoes are very attentive to their farming interests” Anderson observed, but he noted that they preferred to trade rather than farm:

About February or March, and sometimes sooner, the high grass and wild cane are cut down, to rot and manure the soil. Near the planting season, these vegetable fertilizers are turned in with the hoe; and from the crops of rice, of which there are three kinds, potatoes, ground-nuts, onions, peas and beans, large gourds, corn, pumpkins, etc., it must answer abundantly the purposes of agriculture. Tobacco is grown in plots, wherever a stream of water offers itself for frequent irrigation. The rubbish and ashes of the town form excellent beds for this plant. They are generally laid out with great care, and watered three times a day. The Mandingoes are the great tobacco-raisers and snuff-makers of the country.¹⁸⁴

Farmers still plant patches of tobacco in Musadu in the manner that Anderson described in his day (Figure 39). Today, the principle crops in Musadu are tobacco, rice, cassava, potatoes and beans. Musadu’s farmers also raise benniseed, butter pear, palm

¹⁸²Lovejoy 1980:113; see Toungara 1980:53; Brooks 1993:45.

¹⁸³Kaba 1971:328; Person 1979:263; Ford 1992.

¹⁸⁴Anderson 1870/1971:105-107.

nuts, paw-paw or papaya, yams, eddo, oranges, mangoes and peanuts.¹⁸⁵ The oral traditions mention several other crops that grow in or near Konya-Mani: bananas, bitterballs, calabash, corn, egg plant, fonio, mushrooms, okra, pepper and sugar.

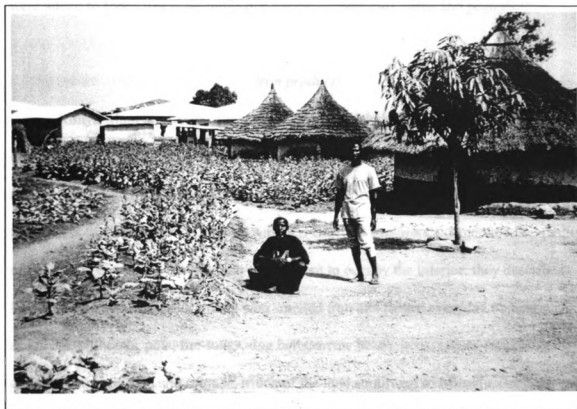


Figure 39 Baba Dole with a farmer and his tobacco patch, Musadu, 1993

Many of these goods did not exist during the early part of the Musadu epic. Citrus fruits, *oryza sativa* rice, mangos, sugar cane, onions, egg plants, peas, and certain kinds of yams and bananas originated from Asia. Cassava, peanuts, sweet potatoes, beans, papaya, tobacco, okra, corn and pumpkins came from the Americas. Merchants introduced some of these goods through the trans-saharan trade, while Europeans shipped some of them from Asia or the Americas. Onions and egg plants, for instance, were present in the

¹⁸⁵Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30.

ancient Manden as early as the thirteenth century, while mangoes probably did not arrive until the early-nineteenth century. Most of the other goods arrived after the late-fifteenth as Europeans established trade posts and colonies along the coast. Some of these goods were added to foods like indigenous rice (*oryza glaberrima*), yams and peanuts.¹⁸⁶

Iron products

Konya-Mani is adjacent also to land that has high deposits of iron ore. During the mid-nineteenth century, some Americo-Liberians believed that so much “pure” iron ore existed “in the interior” that it was “capable of being beaten into malleable iron, without the process of smelting.”¹⁸⁷ Although Americo-Liberian explorers exaggerated the quality of the iron to encourage the Liberian government to occupy the interior, they described Kpelle, Loma and Maniyaka smiths who smelted iron and forged everyday objects such as knives, billhooks, pots, fire-tongs, dog bells, arrow heads, hoes, spears, swords cutlasses, stirrups, bits and spurs.¹⁸⁸ Much of the land southwest of Musadu along the east side of the Fon-Going range consisted of “great plains of iron;” certain towns specialized in the “manufacture of iron.”¹⁸⁹ Some oral traditions, in fact, tell how Kromah smiths migrated to the Fon-Going because the ore was so rich.¹⁹⁰ Indeed, the Nimba mountain range that extends from today’s northeast Liberia up into Guinea has some of the highest quality of iron ore in the world.¹⁹¹

Blacksmiths produced currency in the form of “iron bars” (*sompe*) and “iron

¹⁸⁶Alpern 1992; see d’Azevedo 1962c:514-525; Church 1980:93-124.

¹⁸⁷Foote 1854:178.

¹⁸⁸Fairhead et. al. 2003.

¹⁸⁹Anderson 1870/1971:111; 1912/1971:26-27,36.

¹⁹⁰Lanse Kromah 1984, App. 7.2, l. 30-61.

¹⁹¹Ellis 1999:156-157.

money” (*gbèzèn*). Iron bars consisted of iron that was melted and flattened into long thin strips. Iron monies were iron strips that were twisted in the middle. Iron bars and money came in different sizes that depended on their age or location of manufacture.¹⁹² The Kromah, Baayo and Kamara might have been the main smiths (*numuw*) who forged money and other products in towns such as Konsankolo and Danfordou.¹⁹³ Loma and Kpelle smiths made iron money and other products as well.¹⁹⁴ Manding Blacksmiths also made occult items which supposedly increased in power as the smiths developed relationships with spirits. These smiths belonged to the Kòma or another one of the other important esoteric societies that originated in the Manden, and were among the most important leaders in villages.¹⁹⁵

Gold

The Musadu traditions portray gold as having been a symbol of power and an item of trade, luxury, investment, sorcery, divination, ransom, gift giving, sacrifice and decoration. In the cosmological sphere, gold is the symbol of womanhood and supercedes iron and salt as the most potent occult item.¹⁹⁶ Many historians argue that the prospects of finding gold attracted early Maninka smiths and traders to southern regions like Konya-Mani, Mau and Koro. The Maninka and Soninke traded gold for salt and copper from the north.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹²White 1974:12,14.

¹⁹³Baumann/Westermann 1948:381; Hau 1973:8; Toungara 1980:54; Sidibé 1989:17; Konneh 1992:96; Perinbam 1996:268.

¹⁹⁴Beavogui 1973-74:45; White 1974:12; Thomasson 1987:153-155.

¹⁹⁵McNaughton 1988; Brett-Smith 1994.

¹⁹⁶Perinbam 1996:259-267.

¹⁹⁷Hopewell 1958:31; Hau 1973:12-16; Niane 1975:11; Perinbam 1980:460; Gonnin 1986:108-110; Brooks 1993:51,73; Massing 2000:289; see Handwerker 1980:5; Person 1968b:98.

Anderson believed that there were gold deposits in Musadu because gold was “certainly abundant” there. Women wore large gold earrings, and Anderson traded “twelve sheets of writing-paper (kahtahsee) and four yards of calico for a large gold twisted ring.” People told Anderson that most of the gold came from Wasolon and Bure.¹⁹⁸ Bure was the site of the famous gold fields in the Siguiri region that the Kamara and others started to mine in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.¹⁹⁹ Even though Anderson probably exaggerated how much gold was in Musadu, he probably did see a fair amount of gold. Some Maniyaka told me that there are gold deposits in Konya-Mani; their stories are supported by a fact-finding survey that some British personnel conducted in Beyla province in the late-1990s.²⁰⁰ Thus, while most gold in Musadu probably came from Bure, some may have originated further south in or around Konya-Mani.

Slaves

Slaves represented wealth and provided a critical source of labor.²⁰¹ There were domestic slaves, obtained in part by those who captured others in raids, battles and wars. The slaves would have transported kola nuts, farmed, fished, mined gold, tended horses, herded sheep, fought and done any number of other things. The oral traditions mention some slaves in the Musadu epic, but not many: Musa who some said was a Kpelle slave, Zo Musa’s wife, the Bama who was owned by a Konè, and the Kissi woman who Foningama reportedly captured and married.²⁰² Being the descendant of a slave or of

¹⁹⁸Anderson 1870/1971:100-103; see Caillié 1830:281.

¹⁹⁹Levtzion 1973:53; Perinbam 1996:297; McIntosh 1998:268-272.

²⁰⁰J. Fairhead, personal communication, 9 March 1999; see Maunay 1961:295-301.

²⁰¹Holsoe 1979:69.

²⁰²E.g., Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1504; Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7a, l. 288-311. See Korvah for the story about Foningama and the Kissi woman (1995:12).

someone who enslaved others is not a matter that people easily divulge to western researchers, so it is not surprising that the Musadu epic makes few references to slaves. Slavery probably did become a major factor in the Mane invasions. As the Mane advanced to the coast in the middle of the sixteenth century, many of the peoples whom the invaders conquered became potential slaves.²⁰³ While there is some debate as to whether the Atlantic slave trade started to affect this portion of Africa's interior in the late-sixteenth century, it is certain that the transatlantic trade impacted the deep interior of West Africa by the eighteenth century, well after the time that most of the Musadu epic describes.²⁰⁴

Cloth

Anderson had little to say about cotton cloth other than that "country cloths of every variety of dye and texture" were one of "the chief articles of trade" for sale in Musadu. The cloth was dyed in blue, yellow, red and white, and was used to make gowns, lappas, caps, flags, turbans and other goods. Cotton strips do not seem to have been used as currency, although it was an important commodity that people traded for other goods.²⁰⁵ Cloth is said to have been one of the items that was being sold in Musadu's market when Saji Kamara attacked Musadu in 1873.²⁰⁶

What does our knowledge of Musadu's nineteenth century economy say about economic conditions that might have existed in the distant past? Oral sources state that those who migrated south were traders and smiths, and that Musa supposedly hunted,

²⁰³Fage 1980:306.

²⁰⁴See Jones/Johnson 1980:30; Fage 1980:292; Fairhead et. al. 2003.

²⁰⁵Anderson 1870/1971:12,44,55-56,61,76,78,100,104.

²⁰⁶Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29, 1.1205-1221.

fished, farmed and traded after he founded Musadu. The presence of a well developed market system at the time of Anderson's visit suggests that Musadu was part of a trade network that existed long before the mid-nineteenth century. Musadu became an important "terminal caravan town" that facilitated trade between the savannah and the forest.²⁰⁷ Market places generally required peace, long-distance trade, immigrant traders, exchange between peoples of different social backgrounds, the presence of buyers and sellers, and enough consumers to absorb the goods.²⁰⁸

Conclusion

Oral traditions reveal that a race of small people and the ancestors of the Kpelle, Loma, Mano, Dã and Gola numbered among the first people who lived in Konya-Mani. Several Maninka and Soninke clans might have started to migrate from the Manden to Konya-Mani as early as the thirteenth century. The narratives indicate that some of these immigrants were hunters. Others were traders who sought to gain direct access to kola nuts and other goods that the peoples of the forest produced. These early *jula* traded forest commodities for rock salt, horses and other goods that originated in the north. Smiths moved south to mine iron ore and perhaps even gold, and to reside close enough to trees to acquire wood that they could use to fire their forges as climate conditions started to become more dry in the savannah in the thirteenth century. According to many oral traditions, the first clans that moved south were the Kromah, Konè, Donzo and Sanoe. The Kromah were especially important because they traced their ancestry to the archetype sorcerer-smith Fakoli who was supposed to have used his spiritual and physical

²⁰⁷Handwerker 1980:14.

²⁰⁸Handwerker 1980:4-5.

powers to help Sunjata defeat Sumaworo. The traditions claim that a Kromah named Musa founded Musadu, and that Musa and his descendants developed Musadu into an important commercial town. Others such as the Baayo, Kamara, Dole and Traoré seem to have arrived later on, but before Foningama Kamara went to Musadu and ousted a later Kromah named Zo Musa from town. The argument is made in the next chapter that Foningama went to Musadu because it had become an important center of trade in the transition zone between the forest and the savannah. He successfully took control of the town and used its wealth to make himself and some of his descendants become powerful.

CHAPTER 5

FONIṄGAMA DEFEATS ZO MUSA KROMAH

This section represents the high-point of the epic by recording the mighty sorcery duel that Foningama and Zo Musa Kromah fought. Foningama eventually defeated Zo Musa with the help of some *morilu*; his victory explains how the Maniyaka came to dominate the physical, political, economic and religious landscape of Konya-Mani. The Maniyaka, Kpelle, Loma, Konor, Mano and Dã state that Zo Musa was a sorcerer who had a powerful talisman called a *saafê* or 'sheep horn.' Zo Musa was probably once regarded as a descendant of Fakoli Kromah, marching through Konya-Mani and the forest region performing great deeds of sorcery and healing just as Fakoli is said to have done.¹ Some Maniyaka say that Zo Musa belonged to the Kòma (Komo), Nyana or Poro male initiation societies which play central roles in every aspect of communal life where they are strong.

According to numerous Maniyaka traditions, Foningama summoned a *mori* from the north to help him defeat Zo Musa. Foningama seems to have been a powerful warrior who claimed the prestige of his Kamara ancestors who fought in the Manden during Sunjata's time, but needed some outside help because he was not strong enough to defeat Zo Musa. The *mori* allegedly tied a potent amulet around a frog, and placed the frog in an area where Zo Musa's sheep horn would find it. When his horn 'ate' the frog, the amulet exploded and destroyed the horn and Zo Musa's power. The Maniyaka remember these events from the victor's point of view; the others recall these happenings from the

¹D. Conrad, personal communication, 3 March 2002.

perspective of the victims.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section identifies the *morilu* who helped Foningama defeat Zo Musa. The next two parts respectively summarize what the traditions say about Zo Musa and Foningama. The interpretative part argues that the non-Maniyaka who the traditions seem to compress into a Musa-type figure used initiation associations as defensive mechanisms to thwart immigrants such as Foningama who threatened to undermine their way of life. These societies also seem to have been institutions that effectively helped the proto-Loma, Kpelle, Gola, Mano and others establish broad notions of cultural identity that set them apart from each other and the Maniyaka. Zo Musa's alleged association with initiation societies additionally signified population growth and environmental deterioration. The last part of the interpretative section explains how Foningama's triumph over Zo Musa marked the domination of hunter-warriors and *morilu* over smiths and traders in Konya-Mani, encouraged the growth of Islam, and extended Maniyaka power from the savannah to the upper edge of the forest where Musadu was located. The migrations of the Foningama-Kamara and other clans toward the forest probably started to intensify during the fifteenth century as the Mali empire deteriorated from within and its tributary states started to revolt on the periphery.

From the mid-thirteenth to the mid-fourteenth centuries, Sunjata's successors expanded the Mali empire's influence west to the Atlantic ocean, and north into the sahara desert well past the trading centers of Timbuktu and Gao (Figure 5).² Although Mali's political influence probably did not directly diffuse any further south than the Bure

²Except for references to Brooks (1993), this summary of the Mali empire's political history is from Levtzion (1980: ch. 7-9).

goldfields, many Maninka went beyond Bure and to the forest edge where they expanded the social, economic, cultural and ethnic influence of the empire. Some traditions suggest that Donzo hunters might have been the Maniyaka forerunners to Musadu. George Brooks cogently argues that smiths and traders then went to Konya-Mani and founded Musadu.³ Some of these traders are said in the Musadu epic to have been Kromah and Konè.

A new group of Maninka warriors, bards and *morilu* followed the blacksmiths and traders south as the Mali empire started to deteriorate in the mid-fourteenth century. The Musadu traditions explain how the Kamara conquered Musadu and took power away from the non-Maniyaka and Maniyaka who earlier settled in Musadu. The oral sources variously claim that Jabateh, Kromah, Kuyateh, and Keita or Masare bards accompanied the Kamara to Musadu. Soninke leatherworkers who made amulets, fighting gear and equipment for horses might have also accompanied many of the warriors and *morilu* who went south.⁴

The Mali empire's problems started in the 1340s when Sanhaja Berbers overran northern commercial centers like Awdaghust and Tadmekka. As a series of inept rulers started to weaken the empire from within in the decades that followed, other towns and tributary states along the periphery started to break away from Mali. In the 1430s, the Tuareg conquered Timbuktu and Walata, and Jenne asserted its freedom. The former Soninke successor states to the northwest started to declare independence during the same time, and the Mossi began to raid Mali's lands in the west. The Songhay of Gao broke away from Mali in the late-fourteenth century and started to fill the "political vacuum"

³Brooks 1993: ch. 6.

⁴Brooks 1993:89; Frank 1995:133,142; 1998:15,148-154.

that developed as Mali weakened. They conquered Mema in the mid-fifteenth century, defeated the Mossi in 1483, took Timbuktu from the Tuareg in 1468, overcame Jenne in 1473, and continued west until the Malians stopped them along the Middle Niger. The Mali empire regained some of its power during the first half of the sixteenth century when the Songhay went north to conquer more lands, but Songhay redoubled back to Mali in 1542/3 and raided its capital Niani. Mali won some of its freedom after the Moroccans conquered Songhay in the 1590s. Mali's Niani Mansa Mamudu Keita tried to protect the empire from Bamana and Fulbe invaders, but was crushed when he tried to conquer Jenne in 1599.

Many Maninka fled south as the empire disintegrated at the center and the Songhay pressured the empire from the east.⁵ Warriors from the empire followed the trade routes that earlier Maninka traders had forged. Some warriors were mercenaries who sold their services to the highest bidder and seized power whenever possible; others directed their movements to places where Maninka migrants asked for assistance in situations where they were having disputes with their hosts.⁶ Each of these reasons might partially explain why Foningama went to Musadu. The Foningama-Kamara seem to have settled in Musadu by the late-fifteenth century, meaning that their movement into the forest edge might have been accelerated by the larger numbers of people who started to migrate south as the empire started to fracture. Warriors like Foningama throughout West Africa founded "conquest states," forced traders to pay tribute, imposed their Manding languages on the peoples they conquered, and worked from trading towns like Musadu to continue their raids and rule the lands they conquered. The Musadu epic thus provides

⁵Holsoe 1974:9; Massing 1985:39.

⁶Brooks 1993:106; Person 1984:312.

evidence of the competition for power that developed as warriors and clerics clashed with smiths and traders for political and cultural ascendance.⁷ Tension, of course, also often developed between warriors who fought, sought political power and drank alcohol, and clerics who were more pacifist and less political.⁸

Musadu's *Morilu*

Morilu, sometimes translated 'clerics,' accompanied warriors to forest edge towns like Musadu and challenged smith-dominated societies. Some probably also joined the first traders and often doubled as traders to make a living. New groups of *morilu* joined warriors during the second stage of expansion that began in the late-fourteenth century as Mali's leaders started to lose control of the empire and the sahel began its third century of dry climate conditions.⁹ *Morilu* were usually the "agents of Islam." *Morilu*, more than traders, more actively established mosques and schools, and tried to make Islamic beliefs and customs more accepted in society.¹⁰

Al-Idrīsī and Ibn Battūta's statements that Turé imams were present in the Middle Niger in the fourteenth century suggest that the origins of scholarly tradition among the Soninke probably started in the twelfth century, and that the Turé's teachers were Sanhaja scholars who came from the Almoravid empire of North Africa. The Almoravids observed the Maliki school of law, the brotherhood that most Muslims eventually adopted in West Africa.¹¹ The Malikes stressed the importance of the *sunna* or 'living tradition' of

⁷Brooks 1993: 4,46-47,97-114; Bird/Kendall/Tera 1995:32-34.

⁸Levtzion 1987a:22; Holsoe 1987:140-141; Launay 1997b.

⁹Brooks 1993:115-118.

¹⁰Levtzion 1987b.

¹¹Person 1979:261; Hunwick 1999:xxxvi. The Maliki school is one of the four main legal traditions in Islam (Schacht 1953:320-324; Heffening 1953:324; Wilks 1968; Mansour 1981). Its founder,

Muhammad that circulated in Medina during the century that followed Muhammad's death.

The oral traditions suggest that some *morilu* migrated to Musadu at roughly the same time as the Foningama-Kamara. Others, however, do not seem to have reached Musadu until the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries. The *morilu* who the traditions say migrated to Musadu during the same era that Foningama went there were the Bèrèté, Dole, Jabateh, Kaba, Kanè, Koesia, Sanoe, Sherif, Silla, Sumaworo and Turé. Indeed, three of these clans, the Sherif, the Kanè and the Bèrèté, were respectively the first, second and third most important imams in Musadu during the early-1990s.¹² The oral traditions maintain that several other *morilu* like the Sware, Dukule, Fofana, Cissé and Sanoe helped Foningama become powerful after he became the chief of Musadu. Many of these *morilu* were part of the Jakhanke tradition that became influential in West Africa after the second half of the fifteenth century (Chapter 7).

The Bèrèté and Dole

The Bèrèté and Dole are the Soninke *morilu* who the narratives most consistently associate with Foningama when he first went to Musadu. Bèrèté (Béété, Bility) origins

Mālik ibn Anas (d. 795) wrote the *Al-Muwatta* which recorded his legal opinions (Malik c. 1300s/1985). Two other Maliki works that are popular in West Africa are the *Risala* of Ibn Abu Zaid (d. 996) and the *Mukhtasar* of Sidi Khalil (d. 1374) (Khalil c. 1300s/1980). Abū Hanīfa (d. 767) established the Hanafi school in Iraq. Hanīfa favored the free expression of opinion for individuals and scholars. The Shāfi'i school was named after Muhammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi'i (d. 819) who studied under Mālik and developed the core principles of *sharia* or Islamic law. al-Shāfi'i said that individuals should follow the *sharia* and the *hadith* or 'traditions of the prophet' rather than their own personal opinions. Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 855) started the Hanbalī school. Hanbal became the most conservative of the law school founders; he assiduously followed the Qur'an, stressed the logic of al-Shāfi'i's reliance in the *hadith*, and became intolerant of those who disagreed with him (Kaba 1973:335, fn. 2; Rahman 1979:82; Denny 1985:224-226).

¹²Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35.

allegedly go back to the mythical Soninke ancestor Dinga in a few accounts.¹³ Although one of the nine sorceresses of Manden was Sosouma Bèrètè, Sunjata's stepmother, most oral traditions associate the Bèrètè with Islam. Alhaji Ibrahim Béétè of Musadu said, for instance, that his ancestor migrated from Jaa (Jafunu) with 'papers,' and that he had 'the religion.'¹⁴ Many commonly acknowledge that the Bèrètè were one of the five most distinguished clans in pre-Sunjata Manden along with the Cissé, Jane, Silla, Sherif and Turé.¹⁵ According to one historian, the Kababale-Bèrètè migrated from the Manden to the Dioman with the Keita, and then went up the Milo River valley and settled in Baté.¹⁶ Some continued south and became Foningama's *morilu*. According to Person, the Bèrètè 'furnished the marabouts of the Kamara during the time of the great migration towards the Konyan during the sixteenth century.' These same Bèrètè reportedly later left Musadu and founded Beyla.¹⁷

Some sources imply that the Dole were long time residents of Musadu before Foningama arrived (Chapter 4). According to Yaya Dole, Fuomuo Dole and his 'brother' Fuomuo Sima migrated from Manden to Dialu and eventually settled in Musadu. They were *jula* or 'traders' like the Kromah and Sanoe, and are the ancestors of the two main

¹³Person 1968b:177; see Jansen et. al. 1995:132. Any clan would enhance its prestige by attributing their origins back to the supposed patriarch of the Soninke.

¹⁴Kante 1960:10; see Kouyaté, in Niane (1980:15-17); Kouyaté 1987, in Conrad (1999b:168,191). Béétè (1993, App. 7.35) implies here that he was a Muslim.

¹⁵Kante 1960:18; Kouyaté, in Niane (1980:78); Conde 1974:23; Kouyaté 1988, in Conrad 1999a:60. Some say that a Tombonon Manjan Bèrètè was an important Muslim during Sunjata's father's time and one of Niani Mansa Kara Kamara's friends (Cissé/Kamissoko 1991:68, fn. 16; Condé c.1981, in Conrad 1999a:153, n. 1538; see Person 1968b:177). One cannot be sure that this Bèrètè existed, let alone being able to say if he was a contemporary of Sunjata.

¹⁶The Bèrètè might have introduced Islam to Baté (Kaba 1973:328). They otherwise propagated the faith and led some Qur'anic schools in Upper Guinea (Leynaud/Cissé 1978:155). Other traditions imply that the first Bèrètè who went to Musadu was Va Jiliwu, and that he immigrated from Tiniwulèn ('red mountain') near Kankan (Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7a, l.144-150; Alafā Konè 1992, App. 7.31, l.16-46).

¹⁷Person 1968b:177; Geysbeek/Kamara 1991:67.

Dole lineages that live in Musadu today.¹⁸ Although some of the early Dole like Masama do not seem to have been Muslim, the sources say that the Fuomuo Dole who many identify with Foningama was Muslim.¹⁹ Some say that Fuomuo was one of the key *morilu* who helped Foningama defeat Zo Musa, or that he was one of those who summoned a more powerful *mori*. An informant in Beyla stated that Konya-Mani's first imam was a Dole, and a French scholar similarly recorded an oral narrative which stated that there was an early Dole presence in Konya-Mani and that some members of this clan were early converts to Islam.²⁰ He reported that a Soninke named Mori Koumbala Dore migrated south and introduced Islam to Konya-Mani and other places during the twelfth century. By the mid-nineteenth century, the Dole were the leading Muslim clan in Konya-Mani.²¹

Sherif

The Sherif (Sefu, Salifu) are a Soninke clan that first appear in the Musadu epic as one of the *morilu* who helped defeat Zo Musa.²² Sherif derives from the Arabic word *sharīf* which means 'noble' or 'exalted.'²³ West African Muslims highly regard the Sherif

¹⁸Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.14, l.20-36,220-226.

¹⁹Mammadi Kènè said that an individual named Masama, who seems to have been a Dole, made sacrifices with Musa at Koniya Mountain (App. 7.18, l. 200-218).

²⁰Alafā Konè 1992, App. 7.31, l.446-494; Rivière 1969:321. Rivière did not explain why he dated Mori Koumbala Dore's migration to Konya-Mani to the twelfth century, making the date speculative. Pierre Duprey similarly wrote that Sultan Ahmed the Dole introduced Islam to Côte d'Ivoire (1962:29). Most of the published literature about the Dole in Upper Guinea concerns the important role that they played as Musadu's chiefs in the nineteenth century (Person 1968b). Although Dole is not common in the north, they are equivalent to the Kanè, Bama and Sumaworo (Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Ibrahima Béété 1993, App. 7.35, l. 616; Conrad 1984:45,51).

²¹Person 1968b:287; Fairhead et. al. 2003.

²²Sérifou and Chorfa are alternative spellings. Sherif, also known as the Haidara or Haydara, are the same (Beavogui 1973-74:31; see Jansen 1996b:109, n.71). According to Donzo, the Sherif did not migrate to Musadu until after Foningama became chief (App. 7.36a).

²³Van Arendonk 1953:529-531.

because they are said to be descendants of Muhammad and one of the five original Muslim clans in the Manden.²⁴

The ancestor of the Sherif in the Musadu traditions is Talata. Talata's name reportedly derives from "Talhatou ibn Abidallah" according to an early-twentieth century Arabic manuscript.²⁵ This Talhatou or Talata seems to be one of two men in early Islamic history. One, Abū Talha b. Sahl reportedly gave property to Muhammed after he became a convert, and rode behind Muhammed when the Muslims defeated Khaybar.²⁶ Muhammad allegedly also went to Abu Talha's house and blessed some bread that miraculously fed more than eighty men.²⁷ Talhah ibn Ubayd Allah spied on Meccan caravans before the battle of Badr, helped Muhammed stand up after the Meccans wounded him at Uhud, and killed a Jew who refused to obey Muhammed.²⁸ Though Talha or Talhah were minor figures in the life of Muhammed, Islamic history recorded their sincere devotion to the Prophet. Because the Prophet blessed them for their good works, the Talatas and their descendants had direct access to special powers that could benefit those who sought their help.

Liberian and Guinean traditions state that Talata was an Arab or 'light-skinned' person who came from Timbuktu, Mali, the savannah or Touba.²⁹ Kabine Kromah said that the ancestor of Tiyeyle Kanaka (Kanè) and Talata Sefu (Sherif) was the same individual, but that the Kanè later separated from Sefu because Sefu started to sell

²⁴Arcin 1911:90; Humblot 1918:522, 537, 1921:137; Dieterlen 1957:125; see Kabine Kromah 1993, App. 7.34:413-421.

²⁵Humblot 1919:405.

²⁶Ishaq, in Guillaume (1955:498, 511, 570).

²⁷Rodinson 1971:304-05.

²⁸Hykal 1976:83, 217, 266, 447.

²⁹Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1992, App. 8.2; Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Seku Saiyòn 1970, App. 5.2; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29.

medicine.³⁰ According to Kromah, Talata Sefu sold *lisimu* made out of Qur'anic writings as he traveled through the savannah with Foningama.³¹ Several said that Talata married a Sumawolo or one of Foningama's daughters who some name Mayāmoi (Magāmbouy), Ngowe and or Sa-weka.³² Foningama is said to have rewarded Talata with one of his daughters either after he defeated Zo Musa, made an important sacrifice, or helped him expand his power later in life.³³ The sources agree that Talata Sherif did not die in Musadu. When Talata left Konya-Mani, he hoped to return home or visit his brother. Two interviewees said that he arrived at his stated destination; one of these named Timbuktu.³⁴ The others, however, stated that he died during his journey, either at Bilasana (Biasana) or Tina where many Kromah lived.³⁵ Seku Salifu gave the most detailed history of his ancestor.³⁶ In addition to saying that Talata immigrated from Mali, married one of

³⁰App. 7.34, l. 443-456.

³¹App. 7.29.

³²Sumawolo 1984, App. 6.1; Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19. Sumawolo (App. 6.1) said that his ancestor gave his daughter to Talata to reward him for helping him have a son. According to Bouyssou's sources, 'Magnambouy married Mori Konaté, the first foreign marabout coming from the north who introduced Islam to the region' (Lelong 1949:24, App. 4.3). Three others said that Talata married someone, but they did not give her name (Asumana Jabateh 1992, App. 7.22; Fisher 1971:ix-x; Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5).

³³Sources also claimed that Talata had three sons. They generally concur about their names, their position in the birth order, and their occupations (Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19). Jala, the first born, became a warrior and went to Konokòlò and the coast. Musa, the second born, became a farmer or trader and went to Konokòlò or Bundu. Ansumana (Usman, Usumana), the third born, became a scholar who went to Kassakòlò, Bakedu or Cape Mount. One said that Jala was a *mori*, not a warrior, and that his descendants went to Konokòlò, Koligblama and Gboni (Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5). Several stated that Sherif left his sons behind when he left Konya-Mani. The sources allege that his sons stayed in Musadu with Molikòlò, or in the care of Fila Layi Kanè, Foningama or Sumawolo (Fisher 1971:ix-x; Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3; Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Sumawolo 1984, App. 6.1). Entrusting the care of one's child to another person bespeaks the formation of a special relationship between the participating families. The Sherif-Kanè relationship seems most likely. Sumawolo's contention that Sherif empowered his ancestor or Foningama to care for his children appears contrived, a way to elevate the role of his ancestor and clan in the epic. He is the only source who said that Sherif married a Sumawolo, or that Sherif entrusted his children to Sumawolo when he left Konya-Mani.

³⁴Fisher 1971:ix-x; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19. Kamara said Tumutu.

³⁵Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35; Sumawolo 1984, App. 6.1. Bilasana is not identified. Tina was an important town where the Kromah lived (Ch. 4).

³⁶App. 5.1.

Foningama's daughters and had three sons, Salifu claimed that Talata left his Qur'an in Konya-Mani and returned to Gbèlekanò where he died. He added that Talata and his son Jala fought for all of the land that stretched from Musadu to Liberia, and claimed that the Sherif are the spiritual protectors of Musadu and Liberia because they conquered the land. Although some of his information seems to be credible, he exaggerated the role of his ancestors' conquest of the land from Musadu to Liberia. The speaker embellished the status of his clan when Svend Holsoe interviewed him because he believed that Holsoe might someday use his testimony for historical purposes.

The Kanè, Kaba and Koesia

According to some sources, a Kanè helped Foningama defeat Zo Musa. A Mori Kanè appeared earlier in the epic as one of the renown *morilu* who migrated to Mau with Musa Baayo; they assisted Kònsaba Kamara, and he founded Ferentela (Chapter 3).

The Kaba are Soninke Muslims who traveled from Jafunu to Baté and founded Kankan in the sixteenth or seventeenth century.³⁷ Claims that the Kaba helped Foningama are either anachronistic because the Kaba did not found Kankan until after Foningama went to Musadu, or indicate that some Kaba migrated to the forest before other lineages founded Kankan. In either case, none of the oral traditions indicate that the Kaba propagated Islam in Konya-Mani in the same active manner that they did in Baté.³⁸ One source claimed that the Kaba, Bèrètè and Konè introduced Islam to Beyla before the

³⁷See Person (1968b:156) or Kaba (1973) and Osborn (2001) respectively for sixteenth and seventeenth century dates for the Kaba settlement in Kankan and the establishment of the Maninka Mori state of Baté.

³⁸Kaba 1973:337,340; Hunter 1976:436, fn. 2, 439, fn. 15.

Sherif settled there.³⁹

A Koesia is alleged to have helped destroy Zo Musa's *saafè*. Two oral traditions indicate that the Koesia are an ancient Muslim Soninke clan. The Koesia are said to have fled south with the Dukule after non-Muslims destroyed Jafunu, or introduced Islam to Konya-Mani '1,100 years ago.'⁴⁰ One interviewee more broadly linked the Koesia to the Sumaworo and several other clans, and said that they migrated to Musadu by way of the town of Ferentela that Mori Kanè founded (Chapter 3).⁴¹

Zo Musa Kromah Ascends to Power in Musadu

The sources indicate that Zo Musa was a particularly powerful sorcerer (*zo*) known for his command of important secrets, knowledge of herbal medicine and effectiveness as a healer and spiritual guide [117].⁴² If Zo Musa's ancestors were sorcerers, then Zo Musa surpassed all of them. As Alhaji Kabine Kromah stated, 'Zo Misa Kòma got his name because his father was a *zo*. He used his medicine more successfully than his father.'⁴³ Traditionists seem to have partially modeled Zo Musa after Fakoli who is said to have been the celebrated sorcerer, smith and warrior who helped

³⁹Alafā Konè 1992, App. 7.31, l. 797-810. Note also the claim that Musa stayed at Kabakòni before he settled at Donzola (Ch. 4). Kabakòni can either be translated 'small (*ni*) rocky (*kaba*) creek (*kò*)' or 'Kaba creek.' If the latter is true, it suggests that the Kaba might have moved to Konya-Mani at an early date.

⁴⁰Alafā Konè 1992, App. 7.31, l.1 616-1651; Fomba Donzo 1992, App. 7.28, l. 378-396. This statement about the defeat of Jafunu and the flight of the Soninke is a memory about things that occurred in the sahel before the time of Sunjata.

⁴¹Vase Kamala n.d., App. 7.38, l.3 34-344.

⁴²Seku Saiyòn 1970, App. 5.2; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20; Jala Kamara 1992, App. 7.27; Alafā Konè 1992, App. 31; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 20; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 19; Beavogui 1973-74:48; Johnson 1974:2, App. 8.1; Holas 1952:19, App. 4.7; Germain 1984:76-77, App. 4.5; see Harley 1941:11; Zetterström 1980:49; Ellis 1999:225.

⁴³App. 7.29, l. 197-198.

Sunjata defeat Sumaworo. This does not mean, however, that Zo Musa is a figment of everybody's imagination who is based on the legendary hero of Sunjata's era; the fact that the Dã, Gola, Konor, Kpelle, Loma, Maniyaka and Mano remember him strongly suggests that he was an influential person who lived in Musadu and migrated to the forest after Foningama or the Kamara forced him to leave. The secrecy associated with sorcerers underscores the intrinsically difficult process of getting reliable information about them. One thus usually has to rely more on stories that people tell about their supposed power rather than what is known for a fact. Two informants said that Zo was added to Musa's name after he became a *zo*, thus appending to his name the title that corresponded to his social role.⁴⁴

Zo Musa's saafè

The Kpelle, Konor and most Maniyaka said that Zo Musa's talisman was a *saafè* or 'sheep horn' (Figures 20, 27, 40) [118].⁴⁵ The *saafè* was a hollowed out sheep horn that was stuffed with spells and occult-laden substances (*dawali*) and medicines including herbs, charcoal, tobacco, beads and Qur'anic script.⁴⁶ Some Maniyaka implied that Zo

⁴⁴Tènu Kamã Kamara 1992, App. 19; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20.

⁴⁵Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1, Seku Saiyòn 1970, App. 5.2; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7a; Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8, l. 15, 72-77, 89; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Tènu Kamã Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Moriké Sidibé 1993, App. 7.33c; 1997:86, l. 302; Alafã Konè 1992, App. 7.31; see Dauvillier c. 1905, App. 3; Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1992, App. 7.17a; Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30a; Mammadi Dole 1985, App. 6.2; Fisher 1971:ix-x; Sumawolo 1984, App. 6.1; Appendix M, fn. 1. Also pronounced *saakèlè* (Sidibé 1997:84, l. 253) or *saakili* (Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35).

⁴⁶Korvah 1960/94:55; Mammadi Dole 1986, App. 6.2; Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5; Yaya Dole 1986, in App. 7.17a; Geysbeek/ Kamala 1994; Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1992, App. 7.17a; Tènu Kamã Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Holas 1952:19-20, App. 4.7; Germain 1984:77, App. 4.5; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20. The speakers may have assumed that Zo Musa made his own talisman as two sources claim (Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Tènu Kamã Kamara 1992, App. 7.19). Others reported that a *mori* made his talisman (Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1992, App. 7.17a).

Musa's talisman was neutral.⁴⁷ Most, however, said that it was malevolent or was made in the sphere of his traditional religious background [119].⁴⁸ They claim that Zo Musa's sheep horn 'ate' or 'swallowed' human beings and virtually any kind of domestic animal including sheep, goats, dogs, chickens, roosters and calves.⁴⁹ The sheep horn is otherwise said to have 'jumped and swallowed when it turned around,' 'swallowed' babies who

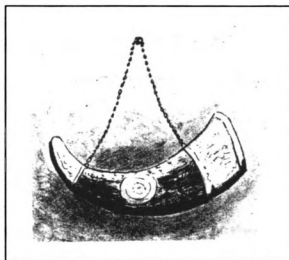


Figure 40 "RAM'S HORN SET IN SILVER

(Johnston 1906/1969:978)⁵⁰

were lying on mats to dry, 'cut the throats of the babies' after Zo Musa killed their mothers and cut open their wombs to see if the babies were still alive, shielded Zo Musa 'against the evil forces of nature,' protected his house when he went into the forest, made

⁴⁷Korvah 1960/94:55; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20.

⁴⁸See Sumawolo 1984, App. 6.1; Alafā Konè 1992, App. 7.31; Sidibé 1997:86; I. 304.

⁴⁹Sumawolo 1984, App. 6.1; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28; Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5; Alafā Konè 1992, App. 7.31; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30; Mammadi Dole 1985, App. 6.2; Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a; Dauvillier c. 1905, App. 3; Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7a-b; Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Seku Saiyón 1970, App. 5.2; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29. One said that it progressed from eating sheep and goats to people (Mammadi Dole 1985, App. 6.2).

⁵⁰The caption reads: "A common ornament worn under the arm by Mende and Vai women, and adopted also by the Kru women."

ritual objects talk, treated his followers, cured those whom it failed to kill, and gave Zo Musa the power to act out things that he dreamed.⁵¹

Published accounts about “saphines” which date back to the late-eighteenth century state that *saafê* is a general term for sheep horns and other amulets. People wore *saafêlu* around different parts of their bodies or placed them in strategic places in their surroundings. As in Zo Musa’s case, people used *saafêlu* to protect themselves, their possessions or their towns. Some writers associate sheep horns with Islam, showing how Muslims and traditional religionists can co-opt the same objects to fight, protect, solve problems and achieve gain.⁵²

Zo Musa and initiation societies

Many oral traditions claim that Zo Musa was not only a sorcerer, but that he belonged to the Kôma, Nyana or Poro male initiation societies.⁵³ These organizations have central functions in the social, religious, economic and political spheres in the areas where they are strong. They are, as one writer describes for the Poro, man’s attempt to communicate with and use the spirit world to cope with problems and succeed in life.

The Poro may be thought of as an attempt to reduce the all pervading spirit world to an organization in which man might contact the spirit world and interpret it to the people... Deeper truths about the destiny of individuals and the course of events are considered to be ambiguous, ruled by forces which have their origin in

⁵¹Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30; Alafā Konè 1992, App. 7.31; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Moliké Sidibé 1993, App. 7.33c; Seku Saiyòn 1970, App. 5.2; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35; Korvah 1990/94:50; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 20; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19. Faliku Sanoe that it was an old custom in the Dã-Maniyaka part of Nimba county in Liberia for women to lay children on mats to dry.

⁵²Park 1799/2000:92-95; Caillié 1830:375-376; Whitehurst 1836:210; Besolow 1891:27; Johnston 1906/1969:893,978; Cashion 1982:192-193; Schwab 1947:402; Prussin 1986:80; McNaughton 1988:62; Sanneh 1989:208-209. For a further discussion of *saafêlu*, see Appendix M.

⁵³Some linked his sheep horn with Kôma (Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a; Ibrahim Béété 1992, App. 7.35) or *nyana*, a ‘bad medicine’ (Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1992, App. 7.17a).

the invisible world of God and spiritual beings. The workings of these invisible entities may be revealed to human beings by signs and portents and interpretation by specialists... The ultimate source of power lies in the invisible world of gods and spirits, which leads to a variety of arrangements to control or communicate with these spiritual forces. The resulting religious institutions also function as mechanisms of social and political control.⁵⁴

The Komo, or Kòma as it is known in the south, is part of a complex of societies that travelers, administrators and scholars have written fairly extensively about for more than a century. The Komo is mostly active among the Manding in the savannah, although reports indicate that some Komo branches have been organized in the upper limits of the forest. Considerable literature has also been produced about the Poro. The Poro is mostly located among several non-Maniyaka peoples who live in the forest. Less information is available about the Nyana that seems to have originated in the Manden. The Komo and Nyana are spread throughout many parts of the greater Niger region and Upper Guinea, and coexist in some areas.

Some interviewees who lived on both sides of the Fon-Going Mountains stated that Zo Musa belonged to the Nyana society. Many on the east side of the mountains said that Zo Musa was Kòma. Only informants south and west of the Fon-Going range claim that he was Poro.⁵⁵ The way that the sources closely associate these groups is evidenced in the attempt that Layi Kèwulèn Kamara made to counter claims that Zo Musa was Kòma because that was his last name. Kamara explained that ‘His name was Misa. Since he was a *zo*, he was called Zo Misa. That Kòma name was just given to him. I don’t think he ever had Kòma, but he had Nyana instead.’⁵⁶ Mammadi Kènè stated that Zo Musa

⁵⁴Ellis 1999:13,34,202-203.

⁵⁵People further to the north and west in Konya-Mani and environs might not equate Zo Musa with the Poro because the Poro is weak there.

⁵⁶App. 7.16, l. 782-789.

belonged to the Nyana and Kòma, and related his dual membership in these organizations to his shift in ethnic identity.

- Djobba Kamara: What was Zo Misa's group?
525 Mammadi Kènè: Zo Misa,
Zo Misa's group is not known.
He changed and became Kpelle.
Kpelle, èh-èh...
That is what Zo Misa was.
530 Eh, he-they...
The one that they call Bama, Bama...
Zo Misa Kòma was a Bama.
Zo Misa Kòma was making medicine when he fixed his own thing:
The Nyana business,
535 Kòma business.
He was involved in everything that people did,
Eh-èh-èh, because he was stubborn.⁵⁷

The significance of the disagreements about which society that Zo Musa was affiliated with mostly concerns the fact that he was a renown sorcerer who many claim because he adds luster to the power of their own sorcerers. Multiple claims to Zo Musa also evidence his transcend importance with the traditional sphere of beliefs.

Sacrifices, Scarification and Circumcision

Zo Musa is said to have made sacrifices, scarified people and performed circumcisions near Musadu. These activities were part of the pre-Islamic milieu in which all of the Musas operated, and are activities that the Kòma, Nyana and Poro conducted. It is sometimes hard to distinguish whether the sources are talking about Musa the founder, Zo Musa the sheep horn owner, or another Musa, so Zo Musa is referred to in this

⁵⁷App. 7.18.

discussion unless a source specifies otherwise.

Zo Musa is said to have made sacrifices on 'large stones that were located in front of the fetish house' in Musadu.⁵⁸ Two Maniyaka interviewees later provided more rare descriptions about some of the sacrifices that their ancestors conducted in early times. The first passage is from a discussion that Baba Dole conducted with his 'older brother' Morifin Dole in Musadu in 1993.⁵⁹

Baba: Can you talk about Koniyaaba, the cave that is in Koniyaaba? It can be opened and closed. What do you know about it?

Donzo: Ah, it is on this side,
But a rock door covers it.

I have seen it but it has a rock door.
Nothing is inside,

80 But they used to give offerings to it.
When they gave offerings to it,
And when it accepted the offerings,
Then its door would open.
When it did not accept the offerings,
85 It would not open.

The second excerpt is from an interview narrated by Mammadi Kènè, a resident of Macenta who came from Beyla.⁶⁰ Kènè digressed from a broad discussion about Musadu's history to talk about Masama Dole who made sacrifices at Mt. Koniyaaba in Konya-Mani.

... [Masama] used to live up the big mountain.
Kòeyã [Konya] - Kòeyã is named after that.
His name was given to the Kòeyãka [Konyaka].
Eh, he used to make offerings at the big mountain,
210 At Kòeyã.
There were five towns in Kòeyã.
Masama was the one who made offerings.
When they had anything to offer,

⁵⁸Lamole 1909:529, App. 4.2.

⁵⁹App. 7.36.

⁶⁰App. 7.18.

They would give it to him.
 215 He poured the water...
 [He made] an offering to the land.
 That is what he did.
 But it was those three people,
 The real inhabitants of the land who offered sacrifices for the land.

Zo Musa or one of his companions allegedly scarified the backs of the Loma and Kpelle.⁶¹ A few sources claim that Zo Musa scarified people to set himself and his followers apart from the Maniyaka.⁶² Two individuals also stated that Tumaningèmè and the ‘owners of the Kòma’ marked people.⁶³ Identifying Tumaningèmè and the Kòma leaders with Zo Musa as scarifiers is consistent given their common Kromah identity and probable affiliation with the Kòma. We remember a Kpelle claim that Zoho Missa Coma was the ‘great fetish priest’ who initiated others before he initiated himself.⁶⁴ Scarification was part of the initiation process that the peoples of Upper Guinea used in the past, so the claim that Zo Musa initiated himself could partly be a reference to scarification.⁶⁵

Many sources claimed that Zo Musa and others scarified people at a rocky area about two miles northeast of Musadu called Doofatini or Doofatu (Figure 41) [120].⁶⁶ Doofatini may be best translated ‘hill where scarification is practiced’ or ‘hill where the scarification society meets.’⁶⁷ Doofatu means ‘forest where scarification is practiced.’ The

⁶¹Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29. See also Briama Kromah (1990, App. 7.14) and Moriké Sidibé (1993, App. 7.33c).

⁶²Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Jala Kamara 1992, App. 7.27; Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1992, App. 7.17a; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29.

⁶³Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 20; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35.

⁶⁴Germain 1984:77.

⁶⁵Kalous 1995:328.

⁶⁶Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Yaya Dole 1986, in App. 7.17a; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 20; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; Moriké Sidibé 1993, App. 7.33c; Ibrahim Béété 1992, App. 7.35; see Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14; Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30; Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1992, App. 7.17a.

⁶⁷For a discussion of these translations and other sites that derive from *doo*, see Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8, ln. 13.



Figure 41 Doofatini, with Mohammed Chèjan Kromah and a friend sitting in the center in front of the trees and rocks, near Musadu, 1986

rocks at Doofatini are about thirty to sixty feet in height, and are set in a lightly wooded area. When Mustafa Kromah took his son Mohammed Chèjan and myself to Musadu in 1986, he introduced us to Musadu's former chief Yaya Dole. Dole agreed to tell us about Musadu, and began his interview by explaining that Zo Musa and Jufa Konè used to go to Doofatini to scarify people. Dole said:

I am Layi Yaya Dole.
 They say that the person we met here when we came was a slave of the Kamèna
 people,
 But that they could not control him.
 They were Zo Misa and Jufa Koni.
 5 He was Loma.
 Zo Misa was a Sanyo.
 Jala Misa was a bard.

The *doo* activities started here.

They went into the heavily wooded area and marked each other because God did it.

- 10 I will show you the place after *sefana*.⁶⁸
That is where they used to have the *doo fa*.
That was where the *doo fa* originated.
That is the area that they call Doofatini.
The wooded area is there,
15 And a very big rock is there.⁶⁹

Dole added later in the interview that Musa's *doo* or 'secret' was revealed in the *gbanda* or in the region now known as Gbanda.⁷⁰ Dole also said that Doofatini was the place where a big python used to emerge from an opening in the rocks, and that people used to travel from Doofatini to Gbanda to attend the final ceremony after initiates were scarified.⁷¹ Another interviewee independently said that the Kpelle Sanoe's *nyana* or 'masked dancer' used to appear at the *gbanda* or the region of Gbanda.⁷²

The Maniyaka-Kòma are also said to have circumcised people at Doofatini, and passed the practice of circumcision to the Kpelle.⁷³ According to another account, the Maniyaka, Loma, Kpelle, Fula, Kissi and Kuranko circumcised girls and boys at Musadu. Musa (a Maniyaka) and Zo Musa (a Loma) in this account are later said to have separated the sexes so men could solely control circumcision.⁷⁴ One source claimed that Foningama had to pay a fine because he circumcised boys and girls together.⁷⁵

⁶⁸*sefana*, the early afternoon prayer. Yaya took us to Doofatini after *sefana*.

⁶⁹App. 7.8. The 'we' in line 2 refers to the ancestors of the Dole. The Kamèna are the Kromah.

⁷⁰Lines 249-257 of the same interview.

⁷¹In Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1992, App. 7.17.

⁷²Alafà Konè 1992, App. 7.31.

⁷³Baba Dole 1993, App. 7.30. For one discussion about the history of circumcision and related societies in Upper Guinea, see Kalous (1995).

⁷⁴Mammadi Konè 1992, App. 7.23.

⁷⁵Fisher 1971:ix.

Zo Musa and the Nyana society

Several oral traditions linked Zo Musa with Nyana [121]. Nyana is an initiation association like the Poro and Kòma that has its own belief system and practices. People also more narrowly say that *nyana* means ‘spirit,’ ‘masked dancer,’ ‘medicine,’ ‘scarification’ and ‘circumcision.’⁷⁶ Nyana has existed in recent times among the Minyanka of eastern Mali, southwest Burkina Faso and northern Côte d’Ivoire, among the Vai of western Liberia, and among the Kpelle and Loma of eastern Guinea as discussed here.⁷⁷

The Maniyaka in today’s Beyla and Macenta provinces retain strong memories about Nyana. Some informants claimed that the Nyana originated in “Mali” or that it was brought by the Maninka.⁷⁸ Oral traditions from Mali attest to the presence of a “Nyanan” society and a ‘sacred fetish’ called the *nyana* that seemingly originated from Sunjata’s arch-nemesis Sumaworo.⁷⁹ Also, the name of a celebrated *nyaga* (pl., *nyagaw*) or

⁷⁶Nyana appears with an upper case /N/ when referring to an organization, and with a lower case (/n/) in the other instances.

⁷⁷The Minyanka of Burkina Faso have a society called the Nya or Nyanan (V. Vydrine, personal communication, 27 Nov. 1998). *Nyana* or *nyéna* otherwise only means ‘wild yam’ in Manding (Bazin 1906:449,462). The oldest written records about the Nyana come from the Vai. S. W. Koelle wrote that “Nyána” was a “‘spirit, demon, ghost; devil’ which was supposed to live deep under water, or in the bowels of the earth” (1854a/1968:204). “Béri-nyána” was a “‘beri demon, or beri-devil,” a “masked man who acts the part of a being from the unseen world.” “Béri” was a “religious institution” for men that involved back scarification, circumcision and instruction in secrets and certain practical matters (1854a/1968:147-148,209). This “Béri,” called *bè’i* or *beli* today, is the “Belly-parro” recorded in the seventeenth century and is the Vai name of the Poro society today (Holsoe 1980:97; Jones 1983b:39). Years later, Sir Harry Johnston added that the “Beri-nyana” was “the devil which looks after the men’s school amongst the Vai” (1906/1969:1032). Lastly, a Vai folklorist told a story about a “shrine” that was dedicated to the “Sande-Nyana” which he said “was the women’s devil-god, dangerous and cruel” (Kaikai n.d.:128).

⁷⁸Fata Bakari Kromah 1990, App. 7.10, l. 225-232.

⁷⁹The Nyanan is centered around Mt. Nianan Kuru or Kulikoro where some say Sumanguru disappeared or was fatally wounded in his last great battle. Bamana and Maninka adherents of the Nyanan believe they received some of Sumaworo’s powers after his demise. The sacred objects of the society are baobab trees and stone shrines. Adherents make sacrifices at the base of such trees and over the stone shrines (Bulman 1990:399-404). One bard claimed that Sumanguru ‘dried up’ and became a *nyanan* or ‘sacred fetish’ as Sunjata was about to capture him. The ‘sacred fetish’ is “a glove-shaped stone.” The main “priest” of the Nyanan ‘fetish’ is a Kulibali, and the “protectors” of the stone are the Jara or Konè

sorceress in ancient Manden was Nyana Jukudulaye.⁸⁰ If the *nyagaw* got their name from the female association called the Nyaguan or Nyagwan as some conjecture, then Nyana might be related to the *nyagaw* and the Nyaguan.⁸¹ Nyana, Nyaguan and *nyagaw* bear the same prefix, and the first part of Jukudulaye's name was Nyana. A hypothetical link between the Nyana and Nyaguan suggests that the Nyaguan might be a female counterpart of the Nyana. The Nyana may have also been connected to the Komo; oral traditions claim that Sumaworo was a leader in the Komo, and some scholars think that the Nyaguan might have been the female double of the Komo.⁸² *Nyana* is also the word that the Malian Manding use for the 'spirits' that protect initiation societies. Association members offer sacrifices to the *nyana* to secure their favor.⁸³

Whereas some southern Maniyaka claim that the Nyana was a Manding institution, they now acknowledge that the Nyana in the forest is either a Kpelle or Loma association.⁸⁴ Mammadi Kènè claimed that although Zo Musa was a Bama who belonged to the Nyana and Kòma, the Loma came to control the Nyana after Musa left Musadu.⁸⁵ Mammadi Konè, likewise, said that the Maniyaka and Fula initially 'owned' the Nyana society, but that the Nyana was eventually passed on to the Loma. He implied that the Loma or Toma got their name "Tònba" or 'mother of the law' after they became the

(Fa-Digi Sisòkò, in Johnson 1986:176,218, ln.2884).

⁸⁰Conrad 1999b:194-196,212. See Kaplan (1994:46) for a modern example of the unique means that Nyana Jukudulaye is said to have used her buttocks to defeat her enemies.

⁸¹Conrad 1999b:195, fn. 7; see Brett-Smith 1994:242.

⁸²McNaughton 1979:17; 1988:19; Conrad 1992:157-158.

⁸³McNaughton 1979:5.

⁸⁴Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29. See Bakari Kromah (1992, App. 7.10) for the Loma reference. The difference in opinion about whether the Nyana is Kpelle or Loma seems to be one of geography. Those from the eastern and southern side of the Fon-Going Mountains where the Kpelle predominate say that the Nyana is a Kpelle organization. Individuals in the west where the Loma are the most numerous state that the Nyana is for the Loma. The constant variable is that the Nyana is prevalent among South-West Mande speakers of which the Kpelle and Loma are the oldest (Dwyer 1973).

⁸⁵Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18.



Figure 42 Nyana dancer (Illustrated by Majôngbè Mohammed Chèjan Kromah, 1992)⁸⁰

⁸⁰This illustration is based on a Nyana dancer that the artist saw in N'Zerekore in the mid-1960s.

owners of the Nyana.⁸⁷

One of the early-arriving Maniyaka who settled in Musadu, Zo Musa Jala Kromah the *ngana*, is also said to have belonged to the Nyana.⁸⁸ Fofin Sumawolo implied that the Nyana carried out some of their activities at Gbana, and stated that the Nyana's leaders fought to keep the Loma out of Gbana.⁸⁹ Vase Kamala claimed that the Kpelle conducted their ritual activities at the *doo kò* or 'sacred place' on Gban hill in Gbana, and added that the Musa who founded Musadu came from Gban hill.⁹⁰ Claims that Gbana was a Nyana stronghold are substantiated by a nineteenth century Musadu chief who stated that the people of Gbana fiercely resisted Islam.⁹¹

The Maniyaka also relate *nyana* to scarification, circumcision, spirits and masked dancers. One person said that 'scarification' is *nyana* in Maniyakã and *ngafui* (*gafui*) in Loma.⁹² Another stated that the 'Bamana *ngafui*' was a spirit, and that the Nyana circumcised Musadu's boys and girls at the hole of the *ngafui* ('to mark') *suluku* ('hyena').⁹³ Nyana also means 'masked dancer' among the Vai, Loma and Kpelle.⁹⁴

People feared the Nyana. One stated that the Nyana was more dangerous than the Kòma, that it had its own 'medicine' and *doo* or 'secret,' and that it was organized to

⁸⁷Mammadi Konè 1992, App. 7.23. Kènè said also that the 'Bamana *ngafui*' was the supreme Nyana spirit, and a Loma historian similarly wrote that "Koma Suluku" is the name of the 'supreme spirit' of the Poro society (Beavogui 1973-74:59). The *suluku* or 'hyena' might be a holdover from the north. In today's Mali, some Komo masks and musical instruments are made from bamboo shoots called "Komo suruku" (Brett-Smith 1996:30, fn. 14; 32, fn. 19).

⁸⁸Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28; "Monographique/Beyla" n.d., App. 4.8.

⁸⁹App. 7.7. The Nyana leaders in this context might have been Kpelle and perhaps Maniyaka. Yaya Dole also said that the Nyana conducted some of their important activities in the Gbana (App. 7.8).

⁹⁰Vase Kamala n.d., acquired in 1990 and not reprinted.

⁹¹Doreh 1870/1974:131.

⁹²Fata Bakari Kromah 1990, App. 7.10, l. 54-55.

⁹³Mammadi Konè 1992, App. 7.23. For a note on several other terms that are similar to *nyana*, see Fata Bakari Kromah 1990, App. 7.10, ln. 55.

⁹⁴Koelle 1854a/1968:147-148,204,209; Johnston 1906/1969:1032; Kaikai n.d.:128. See Golovayaa (1972/1994:48) for the Loma citation, and Mohammed Chèjan Kromah (1992, App. 17a) for the Kpelle one.

frighten people.⁹⁵ Wata Mammadi Kamara highlighted the power of the Nyana at a critical juncture in the Musadu epic. He said that when Fènyabu Kromah asked Fakoli if he could invite Foningama to live in Musadu while Kòma was still there, Fakoli asked Fènyabu - ““Are you looking for another *nyana* to put them together?””⁹⁶

Are the Nyana (Nyanan) organizations in Upper Guinea and Burkina Faso related? If not, how did the Maniyaka, Minyanka and Vai come to have associations with the same name? If they are connected, when did the Nyana start to filter out from its homeland - presumably the Manden? What beliefs and practices have people preserved or changed over space and time? Of course, as outsiders, and not having the gift of time travel, it is impossible to definitively answer these questions. It is reasonable to postulate, however, that some of the Maninka who departed from the Manden formed Nyana chapters when they went south. If so, the oral traditions from Guinea and Liberia indicate that the Nyana eventually spread to non-Maniyaka peoples like the Kpelle, Loma and Vai. These peoples who are not Maniyaka might have incorporated some of the beliefs and practices of the Nyana into their societies that already existed, and simultaneously mixed elements from their cultures with the Nyana that they transformed and eventually dominated. The Maniyaka might have lost control of the Nyana as they became more Muslim and their non-Maniyaka hosts gradually took over its leadership positions.

Zo Musa and the Kòma (Komo) society

The Maniyaka who live in the south refer to the Komo society as the Kòma.⁹⁷

⁹⁵Blama Kamara 1992, App. 7.33c.

⁹⁶Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37.

⁹⁷McNaughton 1979:17. The Musadu-related sources only gave scattered information about the Kòma. Mohammed Chèjan Kromah gave the most encompassing description. He stated that the Kòma

Several informants implied that Zo Musa was associated with the Kòma society [122].⁹⁸

Kabine Kromah, for instance, said that Zo Musa and Jufa Konè were members of the Kòma who scarified others after they fled from Musadu.⁹⁹ More than two dozen sources indirectly linked Zo Musa to the Kòma by adding Kòma to his last name (Appendix D). Moreover, it seems likely that the Kromah smiths who migrated to Konya-Mani and founded Musadu also belonged to the Kòma.¹⁰⁰

The southeast Guinean traditions state that Kòma is a Manding institution that came from Mali or Mecca.¹⁰¹ One claimed that individuals retrieved Kòma medicine from the Ka'ba in Mecca before Prophet Muhammed destroyed everything that non-Muslims stored in the Ka'ba.¹⁰² This story is a southern adaptation of oral traditions from the north which explain how one of several Musas went to Mecca and returned to the Manden with the Komo and Muslim books.¹⁰³

made laws, governed, protected the people, and frightened children to make sure that they did the right thing. Women also had their own Kòma to drive rice and grass-eating maggots from farms. The Maniyakā word for 'masked dancer,' he said, is *kòma*, and the forest people's term is *nyana* (App. 7.17a). According to Bakari Kromah, the Kòma instructed people and punished those who broke its laws, and that only the most powerful joined the Kòma's highest ranks. He also claimed that Kòma dancers in the Macenta area wore masks that had bird feathers (App. 7.10). Some called these 'masked dancers' *masafin* (lit., 'chief's thing'). Earlier, Kònsaba reportedly sent the Kòma *masafin* to kill Foningama in Gbè (Ch. 3). Others stated that circumcision was a Maniyaka-Kòma practice, and that the Kpelle acquired this practice from the Maniyaka (Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30; Blama Kamara 1992, App. 7.33c.).

⁹⁸Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30; Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20; Ibrahim Béété 1992, App. 7.35; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a; Blama Kamara 1992, App. 7.33c; Moriké Sidibé 1992, App. 7.33, l. 260-273.

⁹⁹Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29, l. 459-491.

¹⁰⁰Ch. 4; Brooks 1993:44-46.

¹⁰¹Bakari Kromah 1990, App. 7.10; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Asumana Jabateh 1992, App. 7.22; Alafā Konè 1992, App. 7.31; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35; implied by Mohammed Chèjan Kromah (1992, App. 7.17a); and Bakari Kromah (1992, App. 7.10). Someone also said that the Kuranko from modern-day Kissidougou and Farana founded the Kòma (Blama Kamara 1992, App. 7.33c)

¹⁰²Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1992, App. 7.17a; see Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5.

¹⁰³Farias 1989:156-159; Conrad 1992:152-155. The interconnection between the Komo and Islam justifies how some Muslim *morilu* and Kòma *zolu* reportedly work together. In some instances, *morilu* reportedly initiate the process of making Kòma medicine. Kòma *zolu* add their own ingredients to make the final product (Boakai Yamah 1992, App. 7.17b; Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1992, App. 7.17a).

Patrick McNaughton has summarized the importance, history and function of the Komo in the following way:

The *kòmò* association is owned by smiths. While every Mande male can join, only blacksmiths can be leaders in it, and only smiths can make the masks and dance them. The cult gives smiths great political clout, because it is extremely influential spiritually, and political leaders cannot be successful without spiritual alliances... *Kòmò* is one of several Mande secret initiation associations called *jow*. It is a male association, but many Mande say it has a woman's counterpart called *nya gwan*. *Kòmò* is one of the most widespread of the men's associations, known from the western Maninka lands to the Burkina Faso border.¹⁰⁴ It may be as old as the Mali Empire; a variety of oral traditions associate it with the legendary Fakoli, blacksmith, general, and principle strategist of Sunjata.

Most young men join *kòmò* right after circumcision. In it they begin to participate in the deep affairs of their communities, because *kòmò*'s primary mission is to protect society from acts of natural and supernatural violence and to enhance the individual well-being and quality of life of every society member who petitions it... The Mande feel that the blacksmith-leaders of *kòmò*, at least the very good ones, can bring rain, neutralize malevolent sorcerers, even subdue capricious wilderness spirits.¹⁰⁵

George Brooks argues that one of the old "power associations" like Komo might be the "precursor" of similar associations in the south like the Poro.¹⁰⁶ Brooks partly bases his argument on the notion that several similarities characterize the Komo, Poro and other male initiation societies: control by smiths, the importance of secrecy, the overarching authority of these institutions over other cultural groups, the induction of children who symbolically die and are reborn, the emphasis on community over lineage, the wearing of masks, raffia and cloth by association leaders, and anonymity for those

¹⁰⁴In Upper Guinea, the *Kòma* can be found among the Kissi near Kissidougou (Rosberry 1934:191; McNaughton 1979:17), among the Konor in Saouro canton (Holas 1952b:44,46-47), among the Loma in Guinea (Riviere 1969:338), and among the Maniyaka in northwest Liberia and throughout the Guinea forest (Holas 1952b:47; "The Tribes of the Western Province and the Denwoin People" 1955:32; Weisswange 1969:58; Beavogui 1973-74:59; McNaughton 1979:17; Millimono 1989:23,48; Conrad 1999b:201).

¹⁰⁵McNaughton 1988:130-131.

¹⁰⁶Dominique Zahan earlier postulated that a society called the Dyo might have been the "primordial society" from which Komo and the other Bamana associations emerged (1960:34, in Imperato 1983:23).

who visibly manifest the spirits.¹⁰⁷ He theorizes that Maninka smiths probably established new Komo lodges when they migrated, and cites similar practices and ideas.¹⁰⁸ In a later work on horizontal masking traditions in West Africa, McNaughton seems to support Brooks when he concludes the “possibility of Komo influence” in masks carved by the Senufo, Bandi, Kissi, Loma and Mende Poro.¹⁰⁹

Zo Musa and the Poro society

A few Maniyaka, Kpelle and Loma oral traditions claim that Zo Musa either founded the Poro society, belonged to the Poro, or joined the Poro after he left Musadu [123].¹¹⁰ Although several peoples throughout Upper Guinea have the Poro, the Poro is a

¹⁰⁷Brooks 1993:44-45.

¹⁰⁸Brooks 1993:44-46.

¹⁰⁹McNaughton 1992:82-83. Several other items can be added to this list of institutions and practices that certain branches of the Komo and Poro hold in common: the important role of women in their foundation (Sayers 1927:24; Brett-Smith 1996:92, fn. 12; d’Azevedo 1980:15-16; Spindel 1988:304), the formation of some branches for defensive purposes (McIntosh 1998:181; d’Azevedo 1962c:516; Jones 1983b:40), the use of ‘swallowing’ or ‘eating’ as a metaphor for referring to the initiation process (Bulman 1990:252-253; Arnoldi/Ezra 1992:106-108; Zahan 1974:21; Schwab 1947:284; Little 1949:200; Bledsoe 1980:145), the important role of hyenas (Brett-Smith 1996:30, fn. 14; Beavogui 1973-74:59), smiths as founders and leaders (Conrad 1992:157; Brooks 1993:46; McIntosh 1998:179-181), the control of spirits over the spiritual and physical world (Brett-Smith 1994; Siegmann 1980; Ellis 1999:34), spirit possession of the land (Zahan 1979:121; Conrad 1981a:83; Wright 1997:32; Little 1965:354; Murphy 1980:195; Ellis 1999:202,225), spirit manifestation through masks (McNaughton 1988; Siegmann 1980:3; Ellis 1999:199), the power of masks (Little 1965:354; Siegmann 1980:90-93; McNaughton 1988:130-131), the political, social and economic importance of each group (McNaughton 1979:2,22; Little 1949:205; 1965:350; Fulton 1972:1218,1229; Lovejoy 1980:109; Bellman 1984:14), the adjudication of difficult cases (McNaughton 1979:22; Fulton 1972:1228; Jones 1983b:39-41), initiation as a means of socialization (Little 1965:357; Zahan 1974:1; Bulman 1990:253; Bellman 1980:76; Zetterström 1980:46), the importance of restricted knowledge and secrecy for remembering the past, making decisions and swearing oaths (McNaughton 1979:22; McIntosh 1998:179-180; Murphy 1980; Brooks 1993:44-45), the symbolic value of the color red (Brett-Smith 1996:42, fn. 56; Schwab 1947:267), comparable female organizations (McNaughton 1988; Holsoe 1980), and the possibility of interrelated forms of secret writing (Hau 1973:39). Although many of these traits are typical of societies across the continent that do not have any relation to the Komo or related societies, there are enough similarities to merit further investigation. What is needed is one or more comparative studies that examine the ideas and practices of these societies (see Højbjerg forthcoming). It is important to note that the Manding did not unilaterally impose their ways on the people among whom they settled. In some instances, they discarded many of their own institutions and joined other associations (Fairhead 1996:111-113; see Weisswange 1976).

¹¹⁰Jala Kamara 1992, App. 7.27, l. 396-430; Korvah 1960/94:55; Johnson 1974:2, App. 8.1; Germain 1984:77. Kamara implied that Zo Musa was Kpelle. Korvah said that he was Loma. Musa was a

“diversity of associations that generally share some ritual practices... [They] have the ability to establish communicative and political alliances with each other that transcend ethnic and linguistic boundaries.”¹¹¹ The ability that some Poro branches have to communicate across great distances with different peoples can be partly traced to theories that the Poro may have originated in the savannah, and that the numerous Poro societies in Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia, Côte d’Ivoire, southern Mali and western Burkina Faso might be related.¹¹² According to Yves Person,

‘One supposes that all the Poro have a common origin that probably ascends to the epic where the ancestors of the Kpelle, towards Beyla and Sinko, were neighbors with the Senufo who went up to the region of Odiénne towards the sixteenth century. It thus concerns an institution from the north and one can admit that it is also of the Mande race.’¹¹³

The Gola, Loma and Kpelle who traditionists link with Musadu’s early history have formidable links with the Poro. The Gola and the Mende of Sierra Leone who make some of the strongest claims for having founded the Poro “represent the oldest and most intensive occurrence of Poro-type organizations in the West Atlantic region.”¹¹⁴ Some Loma say that their ancestors began the Poro in southern Guinea.¹¹⁵ The Poro is also an old institution among the Kpelle, though its claims to antiquity do not seem to be as ancient as those for the Mende, Gola and Loma.¹¹⁶ The Poro is not as strong among the

Kpelle Poro in Johnson’s story. Germain wrote that Zoho Missa Coma was a ‘great fetish priest’ of ‘animist Mande’ heritage who started the Poro. After he left Musadu, he and his followers were initiated into the Poro when they assimilated with the local inhabitants.

¹¹¹Bellman 1980:61,77.

¹¹²Rodney 1967:244-246; 1970:66-67; Hau 1973; Person 1968b:63; Lovejoy 1980:109; Kalous 1995:322; Ellis 1999:229; see Højbjerg 1990; Jones 1983b:39-40.

¹¹³Person 1968b:63; 1971:686. For information about the Senufo Poro and their possible link with the Poro in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea, see d’Azevedo (1962:516), Sakou (1983:13), Bellman (1984:15-16), Arnoldi/Ezra (1992:111, n. 6), McNaughton (1992:83) and Brooks (1993:44).

¹¹⁴d’Azevedo 1962b:50-51; 1980:14,19; see Rodney 1967:244; Wylie 1977:23; cf. Somah 1995:28.

¹¹⁵Korvah 1960/1994:55,61; Beavogui 1973-74:36-37; Sakou 1983:12-13; Bellman 1984:88-89.

¹¹⁶Person 1968b:63; Bellman 1984:88-89; Germain 1984:77; cf. Fulton 1972:1225.

Mano. Although some Mano claim that their ancestors independently invented the Poro, most scholars hold that the Mano borrowed the Poro from the Kpelle or Loma.¹¹⁷

The Dã, Konor and Maniyaka do not generally have the Poro. The Dã have masking traditions and some of their own initiation associations, but no Poro.¹¹⁸ The northern Konor have masks that they say derive from the Kamara and which they reportedly passed on to the Dã.¹¹⁹ Some Maniyaka have joined the Poro, though the Poro is not a Maniyaka institution.¹²⁰ In most cases, the Maniyaka who are members of the Poro are those who have become enculturated with other peoples like the Kpelle, Loma, Kissi and Senufo.¹²¹ Some Maniyaka have also joined the Poro to preserve or enhance their social status in some of the forest areas where they live.¹²² One Loma historian even argued that Foningama became initiated into the Poro so he could use the Poro to ‘impose himself on the population of Moussadou.’¹²³

Foningama and some *Morilu* Defeat Zo Musa

Oral traditionists claim that Foningama and some *morilu* went to Musadu and defeated Zo Musa and his *saafê*. The traditions also state that Zo Musa and Foningama were contemporaries who had different relations to Islam and northern Maniyaka culture. These differences became dramatized when Foningama went to Musadu and confronted Zo Musa.

¹¹⁷Harley 1941:6; Schwab 1947:267; Zetterström 1980:41; Kalous 1995:325.

¹¹⁸Fischer 1980; see Siegmann 1980:89; Kalous 1995:325.

¹¹⁹Holas 1952:84; Donner 1939:138.

¹²⁰Harley 1941:6; Currens 1974:15, fn. 8; Wylie 1977:23.

¹²¹Bellman 1984:39-40; Weisswange 1969:58; Beavogui 1973-74:60; Højbjerg forthcoming; Fairhead/Leach 1996:113; Launay 1982:18.

¹²²Fisher 1971:xi; Beavogui 1973-74:60.

¹²³Beavogui 1973-74:59.

Several sources describe the circumstances that led Foningama to Musadu [124]. Foremost among all of the claims is that Foningama was a warrior. He supposedly led “a great band” to Musadu, directed twelve groups of warriors to Musadu, fought for the chief of Musadu, helped Tumaningèmè fight Kònsaba, or was a warrior who immigrated from the desert.¹²⁴ One source added that Foningama became a wealthy farmer after he settled in Musadu.¹²⁵ These images complement theories which state that “horse warriors” from the north “raided along caravan routes and founded conquest states” in places like Musadu and eventually defeated the Mande-speaking smiths and trader who lived there, and that Foningama was a horse warrior who invaded Konya-Mani.¹²⁶ Foningama thus seems to have been one of many warriors who left the Mali empire and created colonies that claimed the prestige of the empire.

Musadu's 'Strangers'

The oral traditions give the impression that the late-hosts of pre-Foningama Musadu were divided into two Kromah lineages; one associated with Zo Musa and the other with Tumaningèmè. Zo Musa and his followers represented the longer established inhabitants of the area and the first Maninka smiths and traders who migrated south. Tumaningèmè was probably a smith, but was more accommodating of Foningama and the *morilu* who joined him.

¹²⁴Korvah 1995:11; Sumawolo 1984, App. 6.1; Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Moriké Sidibé 1993, App. 7.33c; Jala Kamara 1992, App. 7.27; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29. Sani Sayon, with the same number of soldiers, joined Foningama (Sumawolo 1984, App. 6.1). Sidibé said that Kònsaba chased Foningama to Musadu.

¹²⁵Korvah 1995:11. One translation assistant, Adama Talawole, said that Foningama and his sons also farmed *fonio* after they moved to Musadu, and that Foningama used some of the slaves that he captured in war to farm.

¹²⁶Brooks 1993:4,46,102; Person 1968b:912; 1971b:113; Law 1980:11.

Several oral narratives allege that ‘three strangers’ moved to Musadu; Foningama and two other persons [125]. The sources placed the immigrants into three categories: Foningama, his bards, and some *morilu*. The sources collectively say that his bards were Jabateh, Keita (Masare), Kromah, Kuyateh and someone named Fèzuma. The *morilu* most consistently associated with him at this early stage were Dole, Bèrètè, Jabateh, Kanè, Sanoe, Sherif and Sumaworo. Individuals from these clans and others not recorded in the oral traditions might have traveled with Foningama or gone to Konya-Mani at approximately the same time. Foningama could have traveled with several of his kinsmen and a group that numbered from dozens of people to a few hundred. Other “landless peoples” and adventurers could have traveled in the same general direction as Foningama. Although they could have formed temporary connections with groups permanently associated with Foningama, the traditionists now tend to link most people who went to Musadu during this period with Foningama.¹²⁷

The oral traditions consistently named Foningama as a stranger, and positioned the arrival of other strangers within the context of their relationship with Foningama.¹²⁸ Some stated that Tumaningèmè was a stranger because he was a contemporary of Foningama who helped him defeat Zo Musa.¹²⁹ Others listed Tumaningèmè as a host

¹²⁷Taken from d’Azevedo’s discussion about the “migrant band” (1989:103). Brooks writes that “these marauding refugees may have been more like a hoard than an army” (1993:298).

¹²⁸Appendix N. For sources that identify Musadu’s strangers, see Seku Saiyòn 1970, App. 5.2; Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3; Monograph/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8; Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28; Yaya Dole 1985, App. 7.4e; 1986, App. 7.8; Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5; Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16, l. 51-76; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; 1993, App. 7.34; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a; Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7. For others who closely associated people with Foningama but who did not classify them as ‘strangers,’ see Dauvillier (c.1905, App. 3), Seku Salifu (1965, App. 5.1), Person (1968b:177), Fisher (1971:ix-x), Johnson (1974, App. 8.1), Sumawolo (1984; App. 6.1), Kaamòò Dòlè (1990, App. 7.13), and Wata Mammadi Kamara (n.d., App. 7.37).

¹²⁹Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a.

because they viewed him as having resided in Musadu before Foningama arrived (Chapter 4).¹³⁰

Foningama and Zo Musa

The oral traditions provide some contradictory images of the relationship that existed between Zo Musa and Foningama [126]. Minimally, Lt. Dauvillier's informants seem to have been as informed as anyone else when they said that the people of Musadu were divided when Foningama arrived; some welcomed him, and others supported Zo Musa.¹³¹ Many of the Maniyaka sources stated that Foningama was a warrior who migrated to Musadu while Zo Musa's talisman was creating unrest, and that he helped some *morilu* defeat Zo Musa. A few interviewees said that Foningama's initial relationship with Zo Musa was cordial, but that the relations between the two deteriorated. For instance, Musa in one story became Foningama's 'stranger-father' when he first went to Musadu.¹³² Others said that "King Musa protected him from being killed" by his "kinsmen" after Foningama fled from Mali, or that Foningama initially settled with Zo Musa on friendly terms.¹³³ If a period of relative stability existed when Foningama first went to Musadu, his relationship with Zo Musa eventually turned contentious.

Foningama's 'Hosts'

The Maniyaka traditions uniformly state that the Kamara eventually took power

¹³⁰“Monographique/Beyla” n.d., App. 4.8; Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7a; Seku Saiyòn 1970, App. 5.2.

¹³¹ App. 3.

¹³² Moussa Kièlè 1992, App. 7.21.

¹³³ Korvah 1960/94:54-55; 1995:11; Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5.

away from Zo Musa with the help of *morilu*. A few claim that some *morilu* forecast Foningama's arrival to Musadu [127].¹³⁴ Notwithstanding stories which claim that Foningama stayed with Zo Musa when he first went to Musadu, he more likely settled with his 'uncle' Tumaningèmè as others state.¹³⁵ Also feasible is Tènu Kamã Kamara's story that Fèmu Dole became Foningama's 'host' after he arrived in Musadu, and that the Dole presented Foningama to Tumaningèmè.¹³⁶ Kamara's tale substantiates other claims that some Dole held important ritual or political positions in Musadu along with the Kromah. Also, the practice of introducing people through intermediaries is common in Manding culture.

According to Vase Kamala, Tumaningèmè asked the Dole, Dukule, Sware, Konè, and Sherif *morilu* to divine for Foningama when he reached Musadu [128]. Tumaningèmè's brother Fènyabu had escorted Foningama to Musadu with his Kuyateh *jèli* after they fled from Kònsaba. The *morilu* divined and learned that Foningama would become great in the land.¹³⁷

Foningama defends Musadu

Two oral sources claim that Foningama helped protect Musadu from attack [129]. In an earlier part of the epic, Moliké Sidibé said that Foningama acquired the *saafè* or symbol of Kamara chieftaincy when he succeeded his father. Kònsaba, however, feeling

¹³⁴Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Tènu Kamã Kamara 1992, App. 7.19.

¹³⁵"Monographique/Beyla" n.d., App. 4.8; Moriké Sidibé 1989, App. 4.15; 1997:84, l. 228-234. Tumaningèmè is said to have lived either in Musadu, Wanino or Nèlèkòlòkòni.

¹³⁶App. 7.19. Kamara also said that Sani Sayon agreed to accept Foningama.

¹³⁷App. 7.6. Wata Mammadi Kamara said that the Kromah called a meeting after Foningama arrived, but he did not say that *morilu* participated in the meeting (App. 7.37).

that he should succeed his father because he was the older brother, chased Foningama to Konya-Mani and tried to kill him (Chapter 3). Foningama first went to Nèlèkòlò on the outskirts of Musadu where Tumaningèmè was living, but retreated to Musadu's center with Tumaningèmè where they fended off Kònsaba's attack.¹³⁸

Seku Salifu told a similar story but interjected different characters. He said that Foningama helped the chief of Musadu fight the people from Kaagbè.¹³⁹ Foningama became Musadu's leading fighter, beat back the Kaagbèka, married the chief's daughter, and later became the chief of Musadu. Many oral traditions hold that Tumaningèmè or a Kromah was Musadu's chief when Foningama arrived.

Morilu destroy Zo Musa's talisman

The epic then explains how Foningama and some *morilu* subdued Zo Musa's *saafè*. The main episodes say that a *mori* came from afar and successfully countered Zo Musa's *saafè*. After he destroyed the *saafè*, the Maniyaka drove Zo Musa from Musadu. As is normal in oral traditions which only recall particularly memorable events and people, there is a break between the episodes that describe the nascent stages of Musadu's origins and the later period that involved the defeat of Zo Musa. Several Soninke and Maninka clans are said to have moved to Konya-Mani during the era of Musadu's founding, but none were specifically identified with Islam in this case. The traditions depict the later arriving Muslims as having been less willing to mix their ways with the

¹³⁸ App. 4.15.

¹³⁹ App. 5.1. Salifu said that this chief was a Traoré. Given what is currently known about the sequence of clans who settled in Musadu, Salifu seems to have mistaken Kromah for Traoré. If one replaces a Kromah for Traoré in the story, then Foningama helped a Kromah fight an outsider when he went to Musadu, just as Sidibé claims. Could Kaagbè be Kalagba?

initiation associations and the area's traditional religious systems. Musadu's new Maniyaka leadership sought to make Islam the most dominant religion in the region even though many of the Kamara do not seem to have become Muslims.¹⁴⁰ Oral traditions link the immigration of these new Muslims with the *morilu* who are associated with Foningama. The sources most commonly associate Femo Dole with Foningama, but some also list the Bèrètè, Kanè, Sherif, Jabateh and Sumawolo- Dole-Kanè-Bama. Musadu had become perhaps the important center of Islam south of Kankan-Baté by the mid-nineteenth century.¹⁴¹ This did not happen quickly. Musadu had to develop an infrastructure to support an educational system that attracted students from Upper Guinea well before the mid-nineteenth century. Thus, claims that Islam's first major victory in the forest occurred when the *morilu* defeated Zo Musa are plausible.

The people of Musadu reportedly had to summon a *mori* to fight Zo Musa because their *morilu* and political elite could not overcome him [130]. Accordingly to Dauvillier's informants, Foningama persuaded *morilu* to help the economy by creating the Dion River, making diverse crops grow on Mt. Koniya, and producing a fruit tree forest. Musadu's chief *mori* then made the talisman that defeated Zo Musa's 'gris-gris.'¹⁴² None of the later story-tellers recount the miraculous feats that Dauvillier's sources described, but they

¹⁴⁰Fisher 1971:ix; Person 1968b:428; 1979:263; Turé 1972-73:108; see Arcin 1911:82; Humblot 1921:137; Marty 1922:129; 1927:72-75; Nagel, App. 10.5; Sidibé 1989:17. Even some of the Kamara like Foningama who seem to have been classificatory *funé* are not strongly identified with Islam in the oral traditions. Although Foningama is said to have used *morilu* to further his own means (Ch. 5,7), the traditions do not portray him as having been a devout Muslim. Such "half islamized" *mansalu* were common in other parts of West Africa (Levtzion 1968:54, 109-110); "they did not identify themselves as Muslims, but neither were they considered infidels by the Muslims" (Levtzion 1985:95).

¹⁴¹"Beautiful Manuscripts from Negroes in Africa" 1863:21; Tracy 1869:237-241; Anderson 1870/1971:92; Blyden 1871:137; 1874, in Lynch (1978:173); Schieffelin 1871:65,70,72,83,90,144; Marchand 1897:105; Morrison 1897:90; Chatelier 1899:162; Johnson 1975:220-221; Person 1979:263; Konneh 1996:19,72; see Sanneh 1989:263; Fairhead et. al. 2003: ch. 7; see Sidibé 1989:30. Thanks to James Fairhead and Melissa Leach for informing me that the "Mossadek" in the "Beautiful Manuscripts" article is probably a reference to Musadu (personal communication, 29 July 2002).

¹⁴²App. 3.

recognize the important role of Foningama and said that a powerful *mori* defeated Zo Musa. The persons who are alleged to have sought outside help to deal with Zo Musa were Foningama, Konya-Mani's *morilu*, Femo Dole, Tumaningèmè, Musadu's strangers and the people of Musadu.¹⁴³ The messengers who traveled to get the *morilu* are said to have been Sanè Sayon, Mue Sware, Masama Dole, Femo Dole, Foningama and Fila Layi (Alhaji) Kanè.¹⁴⁴ According to the traditions, the messengers went as far away as: Timbuktu, Mali or Touba to get Talata Sherif; Kingui (Mali) to get Molefolay Jaro; Ferentela, Kobila, Jasodu or Nyamina to get Mori Kanè; and Kèwa to summon Femo Dole.¹⁴⁵ The Bèrètè, Fofana and Dukule were other important *morilu* who reportedly helped defeat Zo Musa.¹⁴⁶ Virtually any cleric of the region would be likely to claim to have helped Foningama because this would embellish his reputation.

Three of the most detailed stories of Zo Musa's demise involved the Kanè. Alafā Konè said that when the people of Musadu asked a Kanè to help, he summoned his younger brother Fila Layi who was in Nyamina. He tied a *lisimu*-message around the neck of a crocodile in the Dion, and sent the crocodile down river to Nyamina. Women washing clothes in Nyamina retrieved the *lisimu* and gave the message to Fila Layi who

¹⁴³Dauvillier c. 1905, App. 3; Seku Saiyòn 1970, App. 5.2; Fisher 1971:ix-x; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35; Vase Kamala, App. 7.38; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a; Yaya Dole 1985, App. 7.2e; 1986, App. 7.8; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35; Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30; Alafā Konè 1992, App. 7.31; Others mistakenly said that Zo Musa also called for help (Fisher 1971:ix-x).

¹⁴⁴Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Fisher 1971:ix-x; Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8; Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1990, App. 8.2; Seku Saiyòn 1970, App. 5.2. Masama was the 'older brother' of his more famous brother Femo Dole (App. 7.18).

¹⁴⁵See Seku Salifu (1965, App. 5.1), Mohammed Chèjan Kromah (1990, App. 7.17) and Seku Saiyòn (1970, App. 5.2) for Talata Sherif; Fisher (1971:ix-x) for Molefolay Jaro; Yaya Dole (1986, App. 7.8), Mammadi Kènè (1992, App. 7.18), Baba Dole (1992, App. 7.30) and Alafā Konè (1992, App. 7.31) for Mori Kanè; and Vase Kamala (1985, App. 7.6) for Femo Dole. Kobila, Jasodu and Nyamina are not identified.

¹⁴⁶Sidibé 1997:86; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37. The Cissé, Dukule, Fofana, Kaba, Kièlè, Konè and Turé also allegedly helped defeat the *saafè*. Most of these seem to have been later arriving *morilu* who are discussed in Chapter 7.

had just dreamed about the crocodile. Fila Layi went to Musadu and defeated Zo Musa.¹⁴⁷ According to Tènu Kamā Kamara, when Tumaningèmè asked Foningama to help him defeat Zo Musa, Talata Sefu (Sherif) joined Musadu's *morilu*. Sefu, unable to defeat Zo Musa, summoned Fila Layi Kanè who went to Musadu and neutralized the horn's power.¹⁴⁸ Seku Sherif claimed that Sela Kanè of Musadu sent Layi Sanoe to Timbuktu to summon Talata Sherif.¹⁴⁹ In this instance, the speaker might have elevated the role of his ancestor as he did in other parts of the epic by saying that his ancestor took the lead role.

Morilu prepared a counter-talisman

Fila Layi Kanè, Talata Sherif or another *mori* is said to have produced some kind of occult device or medicine to control Zo Musa's *saafè* [131].¹⁵⁰ The sources called this talisman a *sèbè* ('paper,' 'book') or *lisimu*.¹⁵¹ Two of the earliest accounts appear to contain fragments of dimly recalled motifs. According to Dauvillier's informants, 'The marabouts gathered all of the population, made them put the gris-gris on the ground and reflect in prayer, then their chief wrote some invocations on a small horn which he thrust in the mouth of a frog.'¹⁵² In 1970, Seku Saiyòn stated that Talata Sherif made two *lisimu*. Sefu struck a rock with the first talisman and made three birds fly out from under the rock. Sherif put the talisman in a hole that was in the rock, and tied the other talisman

¹⁴⁷ App. 7.31.

¹⁴⁸ Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19.

¹⁴⁹ App. 5.1.

¹⁵⁰ Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20; Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1990, App. 7.17; Moriké Sidibé 1993, App. 7.32.

¹⁵¹ Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Fisher 1971:ix-x; Seku Saiyòn 1970, App. 5.2; Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8; Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a; Alafā Konè 1992, App. 7.31.

¹⁵² App. 3.

around a frog's neck.¹⁵³ Although the more recent oral traditions do not mention these stories, they do base them around two items that Dauvillier and Saiyòn mentioned, a talisman and a frog. Others later also claimed that a *mori* stuffed a talisman in the frog's mouth, or tied an amulet around the frog or its neck.¹⁵⁴ The only non-Maniyaka account of this episode is from the Konor who said that Zoumassa Koro's Muslim Malinke 'brothers' had a 'toad, an impure animal.'¹⁵⁵ Some of the Konor are descendants of the Maniyaka who supposedly fled south with Zo Musa (Chapter 6), which explains why some of their oral traditions are so similar to the Maniyaka traditions.

Morilu destroyed Zo Musa's saafè

Stories about how the *morilu* destroyed Zo Musa's *saafè* are the most climactic part of the Musadu epic [132]. The basic elements of the story are present in Dauvillier's report which states that the 'frog... jumped into the air and fell on the evil gris-gris which cracked in two.'¹⁵⁶ The destruction of Zo Musa's sheep horn rendered it unable to kill or eat any more people or animals.¹⁵⁷ The following is Mammadi Kènè's fairly typical account of what happened, beginning with his description of what Zo Musa's *saafè* did:¹⁵⁸

Zo Misa Kòma, he was there.
His *saafè*,

¹⁵³ App. 5.2.

¹⁵⁴ Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30; Mammadi Dole 1985, App. 6.2; Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; Sumawolo 1984, App. 6.1; Yaya Dole 1985, App. 7.8; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a.

¹⁵⁵ Holas 1952:19-20.

¹⁵⁶ App. 3. Sumawolo also said that it 'jumped' (App. 6.1).

¹⁵⁷ See Conrad 1999a:167,198, ln. 463.

¹⁵⁸ App. 7.18. Kènè also said that the Kanè and Musadu's *morilu* protected Musadu, Kolo, Bala, Gbè and Farana after they drove Zo Musa away. Kènè might have made the Kanè more eminent to give special tribute to his ancestor.

- It used to swallow babies and... and... and teenage boys.¹⁵⁹
 [It only swallowed] males,
 45 Whether they were sheep or goats or chickens.
 It used to jump and jump.
 They say that it would swallow what it saw when it turned around.
 It would swallow whatever it saw.
 He was there.
 50 They said that Misa-Misa-Misa got out of control.
 The babies...
 [They said,] “Do not even think about your babies because it will swallow them.”
 It swallowed human beings and all.
 It swallowed chickens.
 55 It swallowed sheep.
 It swallowed goats.
 Then the *moi* agreed to stop,
 What Misa was doing.
 Ancestor did the work.
 60 They say that ancestor did the work.
Lisimu.
 He made a *lisimu*,
 And gave it to a toad.
 Toad.
 65 The toad jumped, “jakii, jakii.”
 He fastened it around the toad’s neck,
 And left the toad.¹⁶⁰
 The toad jumped near Zo Misa Kòma’s *saafè*.
 Upon seeing it [the toad], the *saafè* chased it.
 70 When it [the *saafè*] swallowed it [the toad],
 It [the *saafè*] immediately burst, “poo!”
 It [the *lisimu* on the toad] destroyed its [the *saafè*’s] power in that area.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹For similar claims that Zo Musa’s *saafè* swallowed or ate the *mori*’s talisman, see Fisher 1971:ix-x; Mammadi Dole 1985, App. 6.2; Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1990, App. 7.17; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30; Moliké Sidibé 1993, App. 7.32; 1997:86, l. 308; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35; Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.4; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Sumawolo 1984, App. 6.1; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37.

¹⁶⁰Some said that the new talisman waited along a path where Zo Musa’s *saafè* usually traveled (Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29). One said that the *morilu* placed their amulet in a corner (Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37).

¹⁶¹Dauvillier’s informants stated that Zo Musa’s talisman ‘cracked in two.’ Later speakers similarly said that it was destroyed when it landed on the ground (Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1990, App. 7.17; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Mammadi Dole 1985, App. 6.2; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30; Seku Saiyòn 1970, App. 5.2; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Moliké Sidibé 1993, App. 7.33; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20; Sumawolo 1984, App. 6.1). Someone said that the ‘strangers’ used their ‘juju’ to ‘defeat’ Zo Musa, correctly placing the emphasis of their work on Zo Musa, not his *saafè* (Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3).

The man [Zo Misa] said, “Aye!
Behold, èh-èh - so this is how it is.
75 You have destroyed my town.
You came to give me a hard time.
I can’t stay here anymore.”

The Konor similarly say that Zo Musa’s brothers placed a toad on the ‘magic’ ram horn, and that it spoiled the horn’s occult power.¹⁶²

Sacred Animals of the Dion River

Tènu Kamã Kamara told fragments of two stories that no other sources mention. In one instance, he stated that Zo Musa went to the entrance of Foningama’s door and ‘challenged’ him. This is the only episode in the epic in which the two men are said to have personally confronted each other. Kamara also said that many crocodiles lived in the Dion at the time, and that one of the crocodiles used to ‘eat’ people [133]. Amara Cissé, one of my assistants, told a tale about a white boa constrictor that vaguely resembles the crocodile story.¹⁶³ He said that a boa constrictor used to come out of the Dion River on Friday and rest on the bank while women washed their clothes. One day, Foningama advanced toward the Dion on his white horse to kill the snake. His horse, however, refused to go to the river because it feared that Musadu would become ruined if Foningama killed the snake. Foningama’s gun dropped when he tried to shoot. That night, a wind blew down Musadu’s big cotton tree and destroyed many houses.

The Cissé story of a snake on a riverbank appears to contain vague echoes of the Wagadu tradition of Bida. Bida allegedly provided Wagadu with its gold supply. After Djabe Cissé decapitated Bida, Bida cursed Wagadu. He said that it would not rain in

¹⁶²Holas 1952b:19, App. 4.7.

¹⁶³Personal communication.

Wagadu for seven years, and that Wagadu's gold supply would diminish.¹⁶⁴ Some argue that Bida's curse is a cliché that recounts when the goldfields of Bambuk were depleted, or when the Soninke replaced their old religion for Islam.¹⁶⁵ Others question whether this or anything else of historical value can be read into the Wagadu epic.¹⁶⁶ Does Musadu's crocodile or snake represent the 'owner of the land,' Zo Musa? Crocodiles and snakes were two popular forms that spirits took in the Manding world. Hunters sought to kill them to absorb the occult power that they released when they were killed, believing that this would enable them to control the "sacred landscape" of well-irrigated land.¹⁶⁷ The cotton tree might connote the "extraordinary capabilities" that Musa needed to found Musadu, and could have represented the contract that Musa made with the spirits when he settled the land.¹⁶⁸ Foningama's attempt to kill the snake, and the story about the cotton trees crashing on several houses might, therefore, minimally signify the conflict that transpired between "Zo Musa" and "Foningama."

Zo Musa driven from Musadu

The Maniyaka and non-Maniyaka claim that Zo Musa's defeat eventually led to the forced migration of Zo Musa's ancestors and their companions into the forests of southern Guinea and west-central Liberia (Chapter 6). Several Maniyaka claim that

¹⁶⁴E.g., Sylla/Silla 1965-1977/1997:4-7. Wagadu, or Ghana in the Arabic accounts.

¹⁶⁵Levtzion 1973:47,155.

¹⁶⁶Moraes Farias 1974:484-485.

¹⁶⁷McIntosh 1998:27.

¹⁶⁸See Fairhead/Leach 1996:89.

Foningama and the *morilu* ‘drove’ or ‘expelled’ Zo Musa from Musadu.¹⁶⁹ A few say that Foningama and Zo Musa fought [134].¹⁷⁰ The non-Maniyaka also recall the time when a Musa-type figure had to leave Musadu. One Kpelle version equated the plight of their ancestors with Zo Musa when it said that the Maniyaka invaded Konya-Mani and drove the weaker, less populous and more peaceful Kpelle south.¹⁷¹ Other Kpelle traditions claim that the Maniyaka ‘expelled’ Zo Musa for ‘religious reasons.’¹⁷² The Konor believe that Zo Musa Koro’s brothers made him leave.¹⁷³ The Mano similarly say that Zo Musa or one of his sons left Musadu because of inter-sibling conflict or Maniyaka conquest.¹⁷⁴ Some Gola claim that Musa traveled to Kongba in today’s western Liberian interior with other Gola after the Maniyaka conquered Musadu.¹⁷⁵

Zo Musa’s Revenge

Many Maniyaka claim that Zo Musa cursed Konya-Mani after the *morilu* destroyed his *saafê*, and that he blamed Konya-Mani, the Maniyaka or Foningama for his

¹⁶⁹Dauvillier c. 1905, App. 3; Lamole 1909, App. 4.2; Bouyssou 1913, App. 4.3, in Lelong 1949:25; Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Fisher 1971:ix-x; Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3; Beavogui 1973-74:48; Kromah 1985, App. 7.4d; Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7a-b; Moussa Kièlè 1992, App. 7.21; Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Mammadi Dole 1985, App. 6.1; Zetterström 1976:18, fn.1; Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3; Fisher 1971:ix-x; Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14.

¹⁷⁰Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1. The only exception to this Maniyaka picture of conquest and flight comes from Paul Korvah’s Maniyaka informant Soko Konneh whose testimony Korvah interjected into some of his stories about Loma history. According to Korvah, Zo Musa voluntarily left Musadu to avoid religious conflict with the Maniyaka (1960/94:55). Korvah’s oral traditions must be read within the larger context of the Americo-Liberian historiography of the Tubman era which tried to “unify” Liberia’s ethnic groups during the 1950s and 1960s (Sawyer 1992:207-209; Ellis 1999:211-219). Korvah, like his Americo-Liberian counterpart S.J.M. Johnson, sometimes tried to minimize or even eliminate stories about conflicts between the “tribes” to enhance the unification process. He wrote that Zo Musa moved from Musadu to give the Maniyaka - who he had befriended, more room to build (1974:2).

¹⁷¹Lamole 1909:529, App. 4.2.

¹⁷²Germain 1984:77, App. 4.5.

¹⁷³Holas 1952b:19-20, App. 4.7.

¹⁷⁴Zetterström 1976:18; 1976:18, fn.1.

¹⁷⁵Asmana Kpo 1967, App. 2.1.

downfall [135].¹⁷⁶ In essence, Zo Musa said that Konya-Mani's strangers would be honored more than its citizens because Konya-Mani supported Foningama's bid to unseat him. Someone also said that Zo Musa prohibited the Kamara from having any houses in Musadu, effectively barring them from establishing permanent residence in the town.¹⁷⁷

Another talisman made for Zo Musa

In Vase Kamala's words, a Sware or Kanè *mori* made another *lisimu* for Zo Musa, and Zo Musa placed the talisman in another *saafè* [136].¹⁷⁸ Kamala's propensity to insert Islamic elements into the Musadu epic suggests that this is another episode that he might have added to the story. Tènu Kamã Kamara claimed that Zo Musa pieced his *saafè* back together.¹⁷⁹ In the Konor version, Zo Musa used his Qur'an and prayer beads to replace the 'magical powers' that the toad 'spoiled.'¹⁸⁰

Interpreting the Oral Traditions

In the first two portions of this chapter I summarized how the oral traditions say that Zo Musa used his *saafè* to gain power in Musadu, and explained how Foningama allegedly worked with some *morilu* to neutralize the *saafè*'s power. A careful reading of the Maniyaka stories indicates some of the underlying conditions that permitted a

¹⁷⁶Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7a-b; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; 1993, App. 7.34; Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5; Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; see Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14.

¹⁷⁷Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30. Stories about the banning of the Kamara from Musadu reappear later in the epic (Ch. 8). The famous nineteenth century Maniyaka warriors Saji Kamara and Samori Turé reportedly also cursed Konya-Mani because the people of Konya-Mani betrayed them (Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7a-b). Although both were 'citizens' of Konya-Mani like Zo Musa, the people of Konya-Mani solicited the support of outsiders to remove them from power.

¹⁷⁸Sware in Vase Kamala (1985, App. 7.6); Kanè in Vase Kamala (n.d., not printed).

¹⁷⁹App. 7.19.

¹⁸⁰Holas 1952b:19, App. 4.7.

confrontation to develop between Zo Musa and Foningama. The oral traditions magnify the religious and political problems, but economic and environmental factors also seem to have been involved. As the Maniyaka exerted pressure on Konya-Mani, Zo Musa did many things to preserve the relative status quo. He particularly used initiation societies to organize resistance. These societies reflected an advanced form of political organization that Foningama later built upon to form a Maniyaka state. According to the Maniyaka narratives, Foningama and the *morilu* reordered the religious, ethnic, social and political orientation of Konya-Mani after they defeated Zo Musa.

Zo Musa's 'eating' saafê:

Human sacrifice, political opportunism, environmental change

All of the Maniyaka's complaints about Zo Musa revolve around his *saafê* which supposedly 'ate' human beings, animals and crops. Interpreting this cliché can identify some of the problems that might have contributed to the unrest which is said to have developed in Musadu. The Maniyaka traditions associate Zo Musa's *saafê* with "power." The most apparent interpretation of the *saafê* which 'ate' human beings is that Zo Musa engaged in ritualistic cannibalism or human sacrifice to "secure the favor" of the spirit world. The historical record indicates that some of the people who lived in Upper Guinea did engage in such practices because they believed that those who ate the body parts of strong individuals would acquire their strength and courage.¹⁸¹ Two sources, for instance,

¹⁸¹Law 1985; Ellis 1999:144-149,221-223,231-235. For examples, see de Almada (c.1594/1984:II,16/3), Whitehurst (1836:275), Lamole (1905:523), Beatty (1915), Seabrook (1931), Schwab (1947:93), Fahnbulleh (1969:42), Korvah (1971:33), Kaba (1973:328), Hair (1968a:48) and Huband (1998:40).

claimed that Zo Musa's *saafê* ate 'important people' or chiefs.¹⁸² Killing human beings was the supreme form of sacrifice; only the most powerful could make such a sacrifice.¹⁸³ The same charge is made against Foningama later in the epic, though usually in a more subtle form. Zo Musa or Foningama - or whoever they represented, could have killed and eaten people for ritual purposes as the traditions imply. It seems, however, that the significance of this cliché goes beyond this surface analysis.

At the next level of interpretation, the *saafê*'s alleged 'eating' may also refer to "powerful people who are thought to show an excess of selfish individualism." This is the mind set that led many to sacrifice humans.¹⁸⁴ In many parts of Africa, people often believed that their presidents, kings or chiefs symbolically "owned" them, and that their leaders could eat them much like herders could use, sell or kill their own cattle. Many ambivalently viewed eating as a natural part of the political process, but decried eating when power-hungry leaders abused their authority to acquire wealth through corruption and the needless squandering of goods.¹⁸⁵ One speaker, for instance, said that Zo Musa's *saafê* forced people to fill his empty sheep horn with tobacco, and that the horn took the tobacco to Zo Musa. If the people of ancient Musadu used tobacco as a common barter item as they did in the nineteenth century, such pilfering could have been detrimental to trade.¹⁸⁶ In this regard, claims that Zo Musa 'ate' humans and animals could also be clichés for slavery and stealing livestock. The mid-nineteenth century history of Musadu typifies some of the things that Zo Musa and others might have done generations earlier.

¹⁸²Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19.

¹⁸³Ellis 1999:232.

¹⁸⁴Ellis 1999:221.

¹⁸⁵Taken from the "Ngwenyama Etymology and Meat" discussion thread in H-Africa (www.h-net.msu.edu/~africa/threads/ngwenyama.html). This discussion is still relevant today.

¹⁸⁶Fairhead et. al. 2003: ch. 7.

According to one eyewitness, one Maniyaka warrior stole chickens, goats, cows, sheep, children, women and slaves from Musadu in the 1860s.¹⁸⁷ The Maniyaka imagine Zo Musa as having abused his power and unjustly ‘eaten’ resources that did not belong to him. Zo Musa became too authoritarian and abusive with time, as happened with Sumaworo before him and Foningama’s sons after him. According to the Maniyaka versions, the people of Musadu only gained a respite from his tyranny after Foningama joined forces with Tumaningèmè and some powerful *morilu* to defeat Zo Musa.

Images such as the *saafè* eating tobacco might also refer to environmental and demographic change. Historians agree that the approximate late-fifteenth century to which we provisionally date Foningama’s migration to Musadu was near the end of a three hundred year period of drought that plagued much of West Africa’s interior.¹⁸⁸ Dauvillier’s sources claimed that Zo Musa’s ‘charm’ produced poor farming conditions, suggesting a drought.¹⁸⁹ Kaamòò Dòlè linked some of Musadu’s problems to population growth, saying that after Tumaningèmè became chief,

- ‘God agreed that the town started to grow popular.
 40 They said that problems would come.
 This thing...
 [They said], “We need to pray to God because the population is rising.
 Jealousy will come.
 People will become jealous.
 45 We must do something great so we can remain unified.”’¹⁹⁰

The presence of initiation associations in this part of the epic, in contrast to the

¹⁸⁷Doreh 1870/1974:132 see Anderson 1870/1971:131. This warrior was Ibrahima Cissé. One could say that Samori Turé ‘ate’ Musadu when he went there in the 1880s to put down a revolt. He destroyed much of the town, captured its chief, exiled some of its population, and stole all of its cattle (Chevalier 1909:26; Person 1975:1132).

¹⁸⁸Brooks 1993:46-47; Webb 1995:5; McIntosh 1998:72-73.

¹⁸⁹Dauvillier c. 1905, App. 3.

¹⁹⁰Kaamòò Dòlè 1990, App. 7.13.

relative dearth of material about such associations during Musa-the-founder's time, suggests that there was a significant enough population base to support initiation schools, medicine and specialists to run them, and a political system that was complex enough to permit cross-cutting associations like these to exist. If the savannah had retreated as far south as Musadu when Foningama arrived, then it would have taken a large enough settlement to develop small forested areas where society members could shield their activities.¹⁹¹

Dòlè's claim that population increase led to strife, jealousy and disunity is plausible even if he totally fabricated the story. Rapid population growth and drought could have strained Musadu's ability to adequately feed its population, and taxed its leaders ability to deal with increased social and economic problems. According to many Maniyaka sources, Zo Musa and his *saafè* created unrest. They got out of control, made the town suffer, caused 'misery among other families,' treated the people poorly, and made Musadu fell apart.¹⁹² Kaamòò Dòlè also said that the Musadukalu chose Tumaningèmè to solve Musadu's problems while Zo Musa was still there.¹⁹³ His statement agrees with other oral traditions which imply that Tumaningèmè was the chief of Musadu when Foningama arrived. Some narrators say that Tumaningèmè and Zo Musa were antagonists. Zo Musa was threatened from within by Tumaningèmè or other rival-Kromah, and externally by Foningama who moved to Musadu and initially became one of Tumaningèmè's clients. While Tumaningèmè and Zo Musa seem to have been relative equals politically and militarily, Foningama tipped the balance in Tumaningèmè's favor

¹⁹¹Horton 1985:106-109; d'Azevedo 1989:103; Fairhead/Leach 1996:111.

¹⁹²Dauvillier c. 1905, App. 3; Seku Salifu 1965, App. 6.1. Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Korvah 1960/94:55.

¹⁹³App. 7.13.

when he arrived with his warriors, *morilu*, bards and others who might have been his clients.

Zo Musa and Initiation Societies

Motifs which state that Zo Musa's *saafê* devoured people may best be interpreted as masked dancers in initiation associations who euphemistically "eat" their initiates and later throw them up. This process symbolizes the training that transforms them into adults.¹⁹⁴ The Maniyaka and some Loma do claim that Zo Musa was a member of the Nyana, Kòma or Poro society, and the Poro and some Komo "eat" or "swallow" initiates in this manner.¹⁹⁵ It is in this regard that some Maniyaka, Konor, Kpelle and Loma frame the conflict in religious and cultural terms; Zo Musa used initiation associations to oppose the new Maninka immigrants. Many of the peoples who lived in Musadu and other settlements along the savannah-forest transition zone formed initiation societies or reinvigorated existing ones to stop the newcomers from completely dominating their culture, authority and power. While most of the oral traditions indicate that Muslims came into conflict with non-Muslims, people from various initiation societies could have opposed each other.

Warren d'Azevedo theorizes that people formed societies like the Poro to defend the "traditional principles of ranked-lineage authority" against "the rise of secular, individualistic political principles represented by new war lords, conquest, and immigrant

¹⁹⁴E.g., Schwab 1947:284; Gibbs 1965:222; Little 1965:357; Bellman 1980:64;145; Murphy 1980:196; Siegmann 1980:94; Zetterström 1980:43; Bulman 1990:252-253; Arnoldi/Ezra 1992:106-109; see Højbjerg 1990:164.

¹⁹⁵ Little 1949:200; Bulman 1990:252-253; Arnoldi/Ezra 1992:106-108; Zahan 1974:21; Schwab 1947:284; Bledsoe 1980:145. Scarification does not seem to be widespread among the Komo, so it seems that they are more likely to say that their initiates are "swallowed." The Poro scarify, so they have more of a tendency to state that their masked dancers "eat" (or mark) their inductees.

populations imposed upon the older system.” He explained that “In a highly mobile and diversified adaptive situation” that characterized the eastern Sierra Leone and western Liberia, “the Poro provided a sacred and secret arm of political authority and intergroup diplomacy that helped to maintain stability through appeal to the gerontocratic and hierarchal principles derived from the ideal model of the ranked-lineage structure of the past.”¹⁹⁶ Roderick McIntosh essentially broadened d’Azevedo’s thesis to include other important initiation organizations that operate in West Africa. He argued that “Smiths invented early expressions of *Komo*, *Ntomo*, and *Poro* (or any other initiation or power association) in order to resist attempts by anyone, including other smiths, to build vertical power.”¹⁹⁷ While one must not uncritically accept the presupposition that initiation associations were formed to protect the integrity of a certain region, this argument does seem to explain what supposedly happened in Konya-Mani. The sources indicate that Zo Musa used an initiation society to try and prevent Foningama and the influx of Maniyaka immigrants from usurping their authority and challenging their way of life.

Oral tradition and history underscore the notion that the people of Upper Guinea have created or employed power associations in many situations to protect their ways of life from outside forces. Adam Jones argues that the “Belly-parro” society which the seventeenth century Dutch trader Olfert Dapper described “was an indigenous institution which safeguarded existing beliefs and social arrangements.” Even though the leaders of the Maniyaka-ruled Kquoja kingdom “infiltrated” the Poro and “may have sought to adapt it to suit their own purposes,” the Poro “remained a conservative, defensive

¹⁹⁶d’Azevedo 1962c:516; see Wylie 1989:79,81.

¹⁹⁷McIntosh 1998:5,8-9,181,229-230; see Horton 1985:106-109; Murphy/Bledsoe 1987:129,139-140.

mechanism, capable of absorbing newcomers without being overwhelmed by them.”¹⁹⁸

Other examples include the seventeenth century Gola Poro that bound “the King and all the chiefs to the ancient laws of the people,”¹⁹⁹ the formation of the Mende Poro to help the otherwise loosely confederated Mende unify and resist outside hostilities,²⁰⁰ the induction of the Loma ancestor Fala Wubo into the Poro to conquer his enemy near today’s Macenta and Voinjama,²⁰¹ the “Mendeland Uprising” that the Poro organized in 1898 to protest the “hut tax” that the British imposed in Sierra Leone,²⁰² the Leopard Society that emerged within the Poro at the turn of the twentieth century to resist Liberian colonialism,²⁰³ Poro and Sande efforts to counter Christian missionary destruction of Sande groves in Liberia,²⁰⁴ and Sande protest movements against men over farming practices in Sierra Leone.²⁰⁵ The Loma Poro seem to have played an important part in founding the Lofa Defense Force and *gilibai* “traditionalist movement” in the 1990s to counteract Maniyaka intrusions on their land and the destruction of their religious symbols during Liberia’s ongoing civil war.²⁰⁶

Initiation Associations and the Formation of Ethnic Unity

Closely linked to the argument that Zo Musa might have used initiation societies as defensive instruments to maintain the status quo is the notion -- which is admittedly very speculative -- that these societies and local opposition to Maniyaka domination

¹⁹⁸Jones 1983b:40.

¹⁹⁹Jones 1983b:41.

²⁰⁰Richards 1973:70-73.

²⁰¹Korvah 1995:11-19.

²⁰²Richards 1973:73; Abraham 1978: ch. 3.

²⁰³Fulton 1972:1228; Jackson 1990:70-72; Ellis 1999:235.

²⁰⁴Richards 1973:73-75.

²⁰⁵Rosen 1983.

²⁰⁶Højbjerg 1999:551; forthcoming.

might have commensurately allowed some Loma to enhance their respective internal differences and develop a broad sense of “cultural affinity” and “self-consciousness.”²⁰⁷ Conquest has often led the defeated to “refine their sense of difference” in world history; this trend could have occurred in the more distant history of Upper Guinea and not just during more recent times in the colonial and post-colonial era.²⁰⁸

For example, a few oral traditions illustrate how the Loma allegedly used the Poro and their anti-Maniyaka sentiments to develop a sense of shared cultural identity. Jala Kamara said that Zo Musa’s joining of the Poro ‘caused the separation’ between him and Foningama.²⁰⁹ According to Paul Korvah, when the Maniyaka started to become numerous and make everyone convert to Islam, Musa “thought of a society that could override that of the Mandingoes. So he started the Poroh Society...” Korvah also claimed that the Loma got their name from Fala Wubo who later joined the Poro after Musa left Musadu. When Fala Wubo went west, he “joined” the Poro to get the support that he needed to defeat his enemies and settle the land. Korvah stated that the Maniyakã word for ‘join’ is *Loma*, and that Fala Wubo’s descendants became known as the ‘joiners’ or *lommerlu*. The *lommerlu* are now called Loma.²¹⁰ Mammadi Konè related the etymology of “Loma” to another initiation association, the Nyana. He said that when the Toma or Loma supplanted the Maniyaka as the owners of the Nyana, they became known as the “Tònba” or the ‘mother of the law.’ The Nyana owners subsequently became known as the Toma instead of Tònba.²¹¹ In the most detailed Kpelle version of the Musadu epic, Zo

²⁰⁷Højbjerg forthcoming.

²⁰⁸Bulliet et. al. 2001:325.

²⁰⁹App. 7.26, l. 425.

²¹⁰Korvah 1960/94:55. Although *loma* is not the Maniyakã word for ‘to join’ so far as I know, Korvah’s point remains the same.

²¹¹App. 7.23.

Musa the Kòma is said to have distinguished himself from everyone else by becoming a 'great fetish priest' who 'assimilated into the Poro' after he settled in the forest.²¹²

One scholar suggests that this increased awareness of ethnic self-consciousness and need to band together among some Loma might have begun in the early-seventeenth century as the Maniyaka slowly started to dominate their trade routes, settle in some of their areas, take some of their land, become some of their chiefs, and enslave some of their people.²¹³ Loma-Maniyaka hostilities sporadically intensified in the mid-nineteenth century when the Maniyaka started to migrate into Loma areas in increasing numbers. Maniyaka-Loma relations worsened in the 1880s when the Maniyaka started to assert their authority over the Loma after Samori Turé conquered the forest, and then later when the Loma took revenge after Samori left. The Maniyaka took advantage of the Loma when they helped the French conquer and administrate the land in the 1890s and early into the next century. Relations between the Maniyaka and Loma began to normalize after the French divided the chieftaincies between the two groups. The Maniyaka regained ascendance when Sekou Turé became the President of Guinea in 1958. Turé favored the Manding, championed Islam, and tried to suppress initiation associations. It was only when Lassana Conté became the President of Guinea in 1984 and withdrew his support from the Maniyaka that the Loma again started to reassert some cultural and political independence. The Liberian and Guinean Loma respectively formed the Lofa Defense Force and the Gilibai movements in the 1990s to, in part, resist the Maniyaka. The

²¹²Germain 1984:77.

²¹³Højbjerg forthcoming; see Massing 1977-78; Leopold 1991:35-37; Ellis 1999:95-97. Still, in the mid-nineteenth century before the advent of Samori's incursions and the conquest of the Liberians and French, many of the groups who are now recognized as different Loma clans did not view themselves as being part of the same ethnic polity (Anderson 1868/1971:81; Leopold 1991:42-43; Fairhead et. al. 2003: ch. 7).

Maniyaka, likewise, formed their own ethnically based faction, the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia - Kromah (ULIMO-K).

The Loma began to regard themselves as a single ethnic group in the more modern way that people use the term as separate Loma clans and regional polities increasingly found themselves having to join ranks to resist the Maniyaka, Liberians and French after the mid-nineteenth century. Stories that traditionists tell about the confrontation that developed between Zo Musa and Foningama suggests that the ancestors of some of today's Loma might have started to culturally differentiate themselves from the Maniyaka at the time that some sort of conflict is said to have emerged between Zo Musa and Foningama. This hypothesis may not only relate to the Loma, but also to some of the Kpelle and Gola who have strong Poro societies and who also supposedly left Musadu during the same era.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I interpret the traditions to say that Musadu was originally a relatively homogenous town that the Kromah founded, but that became dominated by the Maniyaka. The Mali empire's fall instigated the influx of Maninka strangers to Musadu who had stronger economic, religious and political ties to Manden than Konya-Mani. These strangers allegedly numbered, among others, Foningama and the *morilu* who eventually worked with Tumaningèmè in Musadu to defeat Zo Musa. The traditions characterize Tumaningèmè and Zo Musa as having been rivals for power in Musadu. Both men were Kromah who signified different generations and outlooks on life. Zo Musa represented the original landowner-smiths who founded Musadu. Tumaningèmè, it

seems, was a later-arriving Kromah who might have taken political control of Musadu away from Musa's descendants. He might have been a smith-chief who played a leading role in an initiation association like the Kòma, and at least tolerated Islam for the sake of political expediency. As a likely association leader, Tumaningèmè could have employed one branch of an initiation society to fight against the Kòma or other associations that Zo Musa represented. Zo Musa thus might have formed or energized power societies as defensive mechanisms during Tumaningèmè's time, and increased their activities after Foningama arrived.

Tumaningèmè solicited Foningama's help because Zo Musa was getting stronger and challenging his political authority. Tumaningèmè needed a warrior like Foningama and the additional spiritual power that his *morilu* represented to subjugate Zo Musa. The traditions hardly mention that there was a physical confrontation between the antagonists; they frame the conflict in the spiritual setting, that of a mighty sorcerer and celebrated *mori* clashing in a sorcery duel that resulted in the *mori* forcing the *zo* to flee. Zo Musa's trek into the forest set off a whole other series of migrations that intensified, according to many oral traditions, the settlement of the Kpelle, Loma, Mano, Dã, Gola and others into the forest.

Lastly, sixteenth and seventeenth century Portuguese and Dutch traders recorded a series of invasions that the "Mane" extended to the coasts of today's Liberia and Guinea during the mid-sixteenth century. Several historians tentatively accept Yves Person's hypothesis that some of Foningama's descendants who lived in Konya-Mani started the invasions in the early-sixteenth century.²¹⁴ Person's argument is persuasive. The

²¹⁴Person 1971:679; Rodney 1971:51; Massing 1985:35; Brooks 1993:289; cf. Hair 1968a:67, n. 67; 1975; Jones 1983b.

Maniyaka and non-Maniyaka versions of the Musadu epic indicate, however, that the conflict that emerged between Foningama, the *morilu* and Zo Musa produced a significant disruption in Konya-Mani that might have contributed to an earlier group of people who headed toward the coast.

CHAPTER 6

ZO MUSA'S SOUTHERN JOURNEY: MANDE AND WEST-ATLANTIC SPEAKING PEOPLES SETTLE IN THE FOREST

This chapter chronicles Maniyaka, Dã, Mano, Kpelle and Konor accounts of Zo Musa's travels into the forest to Zota, Laine, Lola and other places after he left Musadu. These groups tell a story about Zo Musa to explain how some of their ancestors started to migrate from the savannah to their present locations in Guinea and Liberia several generations ago. They highlight the "pilgrim" aspect of Zo Musa's character that befits the "Musas" who are said to have gone to Mecca and the ones who founded Musadu. Zo Musa is a larger-than-life charismatic figure who represents the healing, sorcery, divination and Kòma society that accompany the indigenous system of belief and practice. The fact that so many people still tell variants of Zo Musa's story signifies the enormous importance of Zo Musa in the history and culture of Upper Guinea.

Some historians link Foningama's descendants in Konya-Mani to the interior phases of the mid-sixteenth century Mane invasions that European traders recorded along today's Liberia-Sierra Leonian coast.¹ While some of the later episodes of the Musadu epic seem to support this position (Chapter 8), the episodes discussed in this chapter that reportedly tell how several groups associated with Zo Musa were forced to leave Musadu also explain the origins of the invasions and identify part of the route that the invaders used. Historians generally agree that while the Mane leadership was Manding, many of their followers were not Manding. In time, the cultural character of the Manding elite was

¹E.g., Person 1971a:676-677; Rodney 1970:51.

subsumed by their non-Manding cohorts.² Many Musadu traditions similarly indicate that while Zo Musa was Maniyaka, and that some Maniyaka departed with him, most of the people who left Musadu were non-Maniyaka: Kpelle, Mano, Dã, Gola and so on. Some Kpelle and Mano versions of the story even claim that Zo Musa or one of his descendants went deep south into the center of what is today's Liberia, along the same route that some historians speculate that the Mane used.

In the early twenty-first century, we speak of the Kpelle, Konor (Kònò), Dã, Mano, Maniyaka and so forth - entities that people today call "tribes" or "ethnic groups." Many of these broad-brushed designations are the creation of modern colonialism. Before the mid-nineteenth century, origins, customs, language, occupation, territory, social structure, kinship, taboos and religion were some of the categories that people used to identify themselves.³ "Ethnicities" and "clans" were more fluid than they are today.⁴ People who migrated to new areas often forged new identities to become successfully integrated into host communities; they did so by intermarrying, learning new languages, adapting new religions, changing jobs, switching political allegiances and joining associations that cut across lineage and clan ties. The ancestors of some current ethnic groups belonged to peoples who were, by today's standard, different.⁵ Indeed, some of today's ethnic groups are mixtures of older groups. For example, the Konor are from the Maniyaka, Mano and Kpelle, and the Vai are from the Manding, Gola, Dei and Krim.⁶ The people of Upper Guinea usually identified with small political units. Even though

²Hair 1968b:48; Rodney 1970: ch. 2; Person 1971a; Massing 1985:24; Brooks 1993:304.

³d'Azevedo 1989:99; Frank 1998:3.

⁴Conrad 1984:47.

⁵Kopytoff 1987:7; d'Azevedo 1989:99; Wright 1991:402-403; 1997:56.

⁶Holas 1952b, App. 4.7; d'Azevedo 1989:98.

multiple groups who lived in the same region spoke the same language and shared similar cultural traits, they viewed themselves as separate entities and gave no thought to fighting each other when it was in their best interest.⁷ This is not to say that all of today's ethnic groups are colonial creations. Labels like Soninke and Manding, for instance, are ancient, even if their meanings have altered over time.⁸ The Kpelle, Loma, Mano, Dã and especially the Konor are more recent. Nonetheless, ethnic identities and clans were important at various places and times in the past, and can be used along with the other factors mentioned above for trying to reconstruct the past.⁹

When the British, French and Liberians started to colonize Upper Guinea in the mid-nineteenth century, they viewed Africa from their own images of physiognomy, language, political organization, intelligence, race and history.¹⁰ Because languages, origins and nation-states were important to the colonizers, they tried to classify people in similar ways to govern, control and tax them more easily. Administrators and other westerners often used linguistic and ethnic criteria to map out the land without seriously considering people's historical backgrounds, patterns of mobility and cultural pluralism.¹¹ They also often chose the name of one sub-section of a linguistically related people to label the whole group even though the other groups in that language family did not use the name.¹² The result is, one century later, that outsiders now popularly view today's

⁷Ellis 1999:34; Fairhead et. al. 2003: ch. 7.

⁸Ellis 1999:196.

⁹Buhnen 1994:22.

¹⁰E.g., Johnston 1906/1969.

¹¹Kopytoff 1987:4; d'Azevedo 1989:91-95. Imagine how different colonial maps would have looked if westerners divided Africa by totems.

¹²For instance, two groups who comprise today's Kpelle were known as "Kpelley" and "Pessah" during the mid-nineteenth century. They spoke the same language and shared cultural traits. Nonetheless, they did not view themselves as one people and often fought each other (Sims 1859-1860/2003; see Ellis 1999:196-197; Højbjerg forthcoming).

ethnic groups as homogenous peoples who settled in their present locations long ago and have not changed much over time.¹³

Oral traditions that link some of the ancestors of the Kpelle, Loma, Mano, Dã and Konor to Musadu help us better understand the rich mosaic of people who live in this section of West Africa. Although these groups of people have traditions of origin that refer to places other than Musadu, Musadu is the town that links all of their traditions of genesis. According to the epic, the Maniyaka defeated Zo Musa and forced Zo Musa and his followers to migrate into the forest. Most Maniyaka claim that Zo Musa was Kpelle, though some state that he was Maniyaka. As some of the Kpelle, Konor, Mano, Dã and Gola also claim that this Musa figure was their ancestor, these traditions effectively claim that Zo Musa's defeat triggered the events that resulted in the migration of some of their enemies into the forest.

Ethnographers and historians explain how the ancestors of these ethnic groups successively pushed their neighbors south in a domino pattern as the Maninka encroached from the north. The Maninka drove the Loma, Kpelle and Gola from Konya-Mani in the fifteenth or sixteenth century. The Loma and Kpelle in turn pushed the Mano, Bassa, Krahn and other peoples south. All of these groups migrated deeper into the forest as the Maninka increased their pressure.¹⁴ The pattern of migration, especially seen in the splits that are said to have occurred between Zo Musa and some of his associates, are reminiscent of Warren d'Azevedo's "migrant band" that was:

composed of a leader accompanied by a group of his kinsmen together with any number of unrelated followers and slaves. Bands of this kind varied in size from

¹³Kopytoff 1987:7.

¹⁴Person 1961:49; 1968b:566; see Terrier 1912:339-340; Humblot 1921:137; d'Azevedo 1962c:528,535; 1969:5; Schroeder/Massing 1970:5; Beavogui 1973-74:40.

less than a score of persons to hundreds. They were landless groups moving from place to place, forming temporary attachments with permanently established units, then continuing on in search of advantageous situations. This process might take a generation or more involving constant fissioning into subgroups, each recruiting new members and seeking their separate fortunes.¹⁵

Bands like this comprised “different ethnic groups... Since military and political factors were more important than linguistic or even kinship affinities, the groups that emerged were ethnically diverse and politically unstable. Indeed, competition among kinsmen was a common cause for group fission.”¹⁶ As Europeans on the coast opened trade depots in the sixteenth century, interior demand for European goods like weapons, beads, liquor, cloth and iron products attracted more people south.¹⁷

Oral traditions recorded in Guinea, Liberia and Côte d’Ivoire view these movements from local perspectives. It is at the micro level where more of the nuances of short population movements, sporadic wars of conquest, population change and diversity of origins are revealed. The discussion of the Musadu traditions that follow begin with the preparations that Zo Musa made before he left Musadu. Discussions and summaries of the Maniyaka, Gola, Mano, Dã, Kpelle and Konor accounts are then given.

Zo Musa Prepares to leave Konya-Mani

Zo Musa allegedly took some tree branches, water and stones from Musadu. These were spirit-laden items that Zo Musa used to accumulate supernatural power. Trees, water and rocks represented three of the most fundamental elements that comprised the sacred landscape because they were the prime places that ancestor spirits,

¹⁵d’Azevedo 1989:103; see Person 1971a:674.

¹⁶Murphy/Bledsoe 1987:124.

¹⁷Jones 1983b:30; Brooks 1993:292.

jina and other spirit beings inhabited. Musadu was especially sacred, and Zo Musa was determined to transport some of Musadu's spirituality with him. Muslims did the same thing; the Musas and Jigis who went to Mecca returned to the Manden with the sacred literature and instruments that made Mecca powerful.¹⁸

The Konor and Kpelle respectively claim that Zo Musa took branches from a *kapok* or *tagba* tree [137].¹⁹ The Maniyaka say that he seized roots from a big tree, or branches from cotton (*bana, bumu*), baobab (*sila, sira*) or *dubalèn* trees.²⁰ Many Manding associate these trees with the spirit world, politics and settlement patterns. They believe that they contain *nyama* or 'occult power,' and they they are the homes of spirits and departed ancestors. Firstcomers make offerings at tree stumps to keep their lines of communication open with the spirits, request favors, and remind others of their status in society. Mortal experts can direct the power of the *nyama* into the human arena. Blacksmiths and sculptors fell these trees, and craft ritual objects that people use to communicate with spirits and harness occult energy. Herbalists and clerics use the roots, leaves and bark of trees like these to make medicine.²¹ *Kapok* and *dubalèn* wood is soft and is linked with termites and fertility. Some associate termite homes with land spirits that help move water underground. The spirits moisten and enrich the soil, and thus help increase agricultural yields. Some Mande speaking peoples also believe that *dubalèn* trees

¹⁸D. Conrad, personal communication, 9 March 2002.

¹⁹Lamole 1909:529, App. 4.2; Holas 1952b:20-21, App. 4.8.

²⁰See Moliké Sidibé (1997:89) for the big tree, Seku Saiyòn (1970, App. 5.2) and Vase Kamala (1985, App. 7.6) for the cotton tree, and Vase Kamala (1985, App. 7.6; n.d. 10-31-90 purchase) for the baobab. For cotton and baobab trees as burial places, see Ibrahim Béété (App. 7.35, ln. 488).

²¹McNaughton 1988:15; Tamari 1991:225; Brett-Smith 1994:119-130; Hunter 1977:477-478. The leaf of the *taba* or *Detarium senegalese* is used as part of a solution to heal trypanosomiasis (Imperato 1977:153).

have protective powers.²²

The Manding also link some of these trees with political authority. They often planted baobab, cotton and *kapok* trees when they founded new towns. Fast growing cotton trees reduced fires and encouraged the growth of vegetation and nascent forests under their limbs. Baobab trees provided shade and reminded immigrants of the savannah.²³ A particular tree might have been given the name of its founder. The Konor, for instance, call the *tagba* tree that Zo Musa planted in Lola ‘the tree of Zo Musa Kromah.’²⁴ It is therefore no coincidence that the Maniyaka and Kpelle claim that Zo Musa took roots or limbs from Musadu that are linked with smithing, sculpturing, sorcery, medicine, and political domination.

Early-twentieth century Kpelle informants and several Maniyaka said that Zo Musa dumped water from several creeks into calabashes or pots and took them south [138]. Many said that he took water from the Dion, Nyawulèn and Jiakò (Yakò) creeks, but a few also mentioned the Kaba, Miyanwiyan (Mayanmoi), Gbeaku and Nèlèkòlò creeks (Figure 31).²⁵ Mande speaking peoples are said to believe that water spirits lived in all rivers and creeks, and that there is a “fluid network of underground watercourses” that link sacred spaces throughout the landscape.²⁶ The traditions lend one to surmise that Zo Musa believed that the water which he took from Musadu would augment his power. Zo Musa or the traditionists who later told the story might have believed that the water

²²Conrad 1990:81, ln. 913; Brett-Smith 1994:121-123; Fairhead/Leach 1996:49,166-169,316-137; see Zahan 1974:8.

²³Fairhead/Leach 1996:78,89,107-109.

²⁴Holas 1952b:20-21, App. 4.7.

²⁵Lamole 1909, App. 4.2; Mammadi Dole 1985, App. 6.2; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8, l. 95-107; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19. For the last three named creeks, see Mammadi Dole (1985, App. 6.2) Yaya Dole (1985, App. 7.4e; 1986, App. 7.8, l. 95-107), Vase Kamala (1985, App. 7.6) and Tènu Kamā Kamara (1992, App. 7.19).

²⁶McIntosh 1998:144; see Sibley/Westermann 1928:76; Brooks 1993:36.

contained spirit beings or was empowered by the spirits. Zo Musa went into the “wilderness” where “*nyama* runs rampant and chaotic” and, according to the oral traditions, overcame many challenges.²⁷ In each instance he controlled the *nyama* that was released when he acted, and in doing so accumulated more power. Water could also be a cliché that represents agricultural production and power. Musadu became a major farming town because it was located in the midst of several tributaries. Its strong agricultural base helped the population grow and led them to become economically and politically viable. Musadu thus seems to have been a model that Zo Musa wanted to replicate and probably surpass when he moved south.

Also telling of Zo Musa’s power were the stones that he allegedly took from Konya-Mani [139]. One Kpelle source claims that he took some large stones that were located in front of the ‘fetish house’ where sacrifices were made. The Maniyaka state that Zo Musa extracted dirt from the hills and seven valleys that surround Musadu, rocks from a hill, a shard from a rock that was in the center of town, or a chip from the Nyamoikaba or “Nyamoi rock’ that was located in front of the mosque.²⁸ These rocks, like the branches, were ritual objects or *boliv* upon which Zo Musa made sacrifices to influence the spirits and obtain more *nyama*.²⁹ Zo Musa left Musadu with enough *nyama*-saturated devices to help him revive the power that he developed in Musadu.

²⁷McIntosh 1998:27-38.

²⁸ Seku Saiyòn 1970, App. 5.2; Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8, l. 95-109; Sidibé 1997:87, l. 336-343; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6. Kamala’s claim that Zo Musa took a portion of the Nyamoikaba that was placed near the mosque may be another attempt to add an Islamic to the story. The last two stories may refer to the same rock; the mosque is situated in the center of town, and a sacred rock is presently located near the mosque that some Musaduka also associate with the ‘sacrifice of one thousand’ or some executions that people attribute to Foningama (Ch. 7-8). Nyamoi is probably a reference to Foningama’s supposed daughter Mayāmoi (Bouyssou 1913, App. 4.3, in Lelong 1949:25). The translators also said that Nyamoikaba is very similar to the word *nyèmòòkaba* that means ‘leader (*nyè*) people (*mòò*) rock (*kaba*)’ or ‘rock that the leader took.’

²⁹Zahan 1974:10; Conrad 1990:3; Johnson 1999:16.

Zo Musa's Companions

The Maniyaka and Konor claim that Zo Musa departed from Musadu with a wife [140].³⁰ According to several Maniyaka sources, her name was Jòò (Jòòn, Yòyò).³¹ Mustafa Kromah stated that Zo Musa had two wives - one who was pregnant.³² Others said that she was Kpelle.³³ My assistants differed about whether or not Jòò means 'slave' (*jòn*). Dauvillier's informants told him that Zo Musa's 'captives' or slaves did not follow him because he had so much 'bad luck.'³⁴ Some of the informants said that the Dion River was named after Zo Musa's wife in an incident that happened when he left Musadu. When Zo Musa's wife did not follow him out of town, Zo Musa supposedly stopped at the river and yelled - "Jòò!" The Gola tell a similar story that seems to reflect a shared memory, emphasizing Zo Musa's importance. Asmana Kpo said that the woman who left Musadu was the wife of Musa's leader Gwui. When Gwui was getting ready to leave, he told his wife Mabu - "I am going down." In both cases, the woman joined her husband and left Musadu.³⁵

The oral traditions claim that other people left with Zo Musa [141]. According to one Kpelle tradition, a Zo Musa Kòma and a Zo Musa Kromah led several people from Musadu.³⁶ Given that the other oral traditions essentially say that a single Zo Musa

³⁰Holas 1952b:20-21, App. 4.8.

³¹Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30. Sumawolo said that Yòyò had a child named Wiyè. Wiyè sounds like a Kpelle name.

³²App. 7.20, l. 353-374.

³³Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.32; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6.

³⁴App. 3.

³⁵App. 2.1.

³⁶Germain 1984:90-91, App. 4.5. One Kpelle set of traditions made a distinction between Zoho Missa Koro (Zo Musa Koro) a Maniyaka Muslim sorcerer, and his 'brother' Zoho Missa Coma (Zo Musa Kòma) a 'great fetish priest' (Germain 1984:76-77, App. 4.5).

migrated south, it is possible that there was only one person.³⁷ The Konor state that Zo Musa's companions were his family and the 'few intimate friends who remained faithful to him.' The Konor, Mano and Gola believe that Musa was one of their ancestors.³⁸

One Maniyaka source claimed that some Kpelle, Mano, Loma, Konor and Konè left with Zo Musa.³⁹ Others said that several Soninke and Maniyaka also joined Zo Musa: his cleric Vani Traoré, Jufa Konè, and a Kromah, Kanè, Dole, Kamara, Sayon and Traoré.⁴⁰ Some smiths whose ancestors migrated to Musadu during the host or late-host era probably stayed in Musadu and eventually assimilated with the new Maninka immigrants and their Maniyaka descendants who came to dominate Konya-Mani.⁴¹

Zo Musa's Journey into the Forest

Stories about Musa or his companions who left Musadu represent some of the origin traditions that describe how the Gola, Mano, Dã, Konor and Kpelle claim that they became distinct groups, and partly explain how their ancestors started to migrate to their present locations in Liberia and Guinea. Many of these accounts are told in the form of popular etymologies that explain how various landscape features got their names.

Some episodes are unusually long, like those which tell what happened at Zota. Others just mention a few towns in passing. Portions of the stories that these people remember mainly depend on where they live. The Maniyaka, Kpelle and Konor recall the

³⁷The informant could have confused two separate traditions about Zo Musa, or the translator could have made a mistake. Some of the possible confusion might have been due to the names Kromah and Kòma that identified Zo Musa; he was probably known as Zo Musa Kromah the Kòma.

³⁸Holas 1952b; Asmana Kpo 1967, App. 2.1; Zetterström 1976:17-18.

³⁹Sidibé 1997:89, l. 424.

⁴⁰Seku Saiyòn 1970, App. 5.2; Sidibé 1997; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29, l. 416-418; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Mammadi Dole 1985, App. 6.2.

⁴¹See Brooks 1993:290.



Figure 43 Zo Musa's Southern Migrations

most episodes because they live in the land just to the west and south of Musadu where Musa is said to have migrated. The Maniyaka best explain how Musa journeyed from Musadu to Zota. Some Maniyaka claim that Zo Musa or one of his sons continued on into central and western Liberia. The Kpelle and Konor, who live further south, generally skip the journey from Musadu to Boola and talk mostly about his expedition from Boola to Lola. The Mano, Dã and Gola, who reside the furthest away from Konya-Mani, only remember Musadu and a few areas that they allegedly visited in today's Guinea and Liberia.

All of the accounts, with the exception of the Mano and Dã, are dissimilar enough to be treated separately. Although towns that the Maniyaka, Kpelle and Konor mention are largely different, the testimonies coincide in some places. They have analogous 'mushroom' stories about Boola, claim that Zo Musa founded Zota, and contend that he transplanted some stones, water and trees from Musadu. Differences in memories about what happened are indicative of the development of separate traditions as the various peoples became culturally and geographically separated over time. Nonetheless, the fact that they all either recall Zo Musa or claim him for themselves indicate how important he was in the past.

Maniyaka Accounts

Several Maniyaka sources named two dozen locations where Zo Musa or his associates stopped after they left Musadu. The story tellers elaborated on what happened at Mt. Kanikokela, Gbolo river, Mt. Yewula and Zota. Vase Kamala and Kabine Kromah's testimonies are the most comprehensive; Kamala's version is selected because

he told a detailed but condensed story.⁴² Starting with the branch, rock and water that Zo

Musa took from Musadu, Kamala said:

- 1490 He got ready to leave.
He cut a branch from a *dubalen* tree and a cotton tree.
He took a piece of the Nyamoi rock that was in front of the mosque,
And he put all of those things in his load.
He took some water from Nèlèkolomako Creek.
- 1495 He took some water from the Nyawulani River.
He took some water from the Dion River.
He took some water from the Yakò River.
He put water from each of the rivers in separate calabashes and left with his
people.
They stood and waited for his wife near the Dion.
Musa said, “Has this women not come so we can go?”
She met him there and they began to walk.
They named the river Dion.
The Dion was named after Zo Musa’s wife Jòò.
- 1505 That is the Dion River near Misadu.
They passed Nyanzamolidu and climbed the mountain.
At the top of the mountain he cried, “Kanikoke.”
In Kpelle, “Kanikoke” means, ‘We are happy.’
“I have left Fòningama and the bad *mue* today!”⁴³
- 1510 Then they went by Ndèdèmòyadu.
They passed Kangòlò, Koesi Banangòlò, Wawakò, Manakò,
And rested near a large river.
He took some tobacco dust from his snuff can and put the snuff in his mouth.
After they left he said in Kpelle, “I left my snuff can behind.
- 1515 I left my snuff can behind.”
They returned to get the can,
And they called the place Gbolò.
Gbolò is between Mafeledu and Ndwadu.
This is the boundary between Gbana and Maana.
- 1520 It goes down to Ngolima and up to Feleduba.
That is the Gbo river that I am talking about.
They went to the mountain that overlooks Boola.
When they reached the mountain he said in Kpelle, “It is night.
Let us sleep here.”
- 1525 At daybreak they began to leave,
And they called the mountain Yewula.
They passed Boola and Gbòma.

⁴²App. 7.6. Kromah’s account is not selected because it is longer, more repetitious, and scattered throughout two separate interviews (App. 7.29; App. 7.34).

⁴³*Mue* (pl., *muewu*, below), or *mori* (pl., *moriwu*).

- They went along the eastern side of Kule and the western side of Zalikwèlè,
And settled in Zota.
- 1530 In Zota, the water that he carried...
He poured the water in separate ditches,
And rivers started flowing that look like those in Misadu:
Nèlèkolomako Creek, Nyawulani River, Jiakò River, and Dion River.
He planted the branches of the cotton tree and the *dubalen* tree,
- 1535 And placed the Nyamoi rock there.
They all looked like the ones in Misadu.
When you go to Zota and Misadu, they look alike.
The *nyana* that was made from the *saafèlè*...
Whenever there is a big feast in Zalikwèlè,
- 1540 This *nyana* dances better than the other *nyana* in Zalikwèlè.
Who fixed that *nyana*?
The *muewu* in Misadu did that for Zo Musa.

From Musadu to Mt. Kanikokela

Several Maniyaka traditions were recorded throughout the twentieth century that tell how Zo Musa traveled from Musadu to Mt. Kanikokela [142-145].⁴⁴ The variant collected by Captain Dauvillier indicates that Zo Musa traveled west into the Loma forest after he left Musadu.⁴⁵ Many Maniyaka later said that Zo Musa first headed west, but then turned south. Another early Maniyaka oral tradition claimed that Zo Musa led a Konè and someone else to Zota after they were expelled from Musadu.⁴⁶ From 1984 to 1993, several more traditions were collected that told about Zo Musa's journeys. According to

⁴⁴Each episode is numbered by a place where Zo Musa or one of his companions is reported to have passed or settled. Even though the simple mention of a town may seem trivial and not worthy of being categorized as an episode, we know very little about what the people who live in those towns remember about Zo Musa. For instance, five Maniyaka simply said that Zo Musa passed Boola. One informant, however, said that Boola derives from the Kpelle word *kpoola* which means 'mushroom.' It turns out that the Kpelle and Konor tell fairly detailed stories of how Boola was named after mushrooms. I would thus rather assume that more can be known about a place that was mentioned instead of presuming that nothing else can be learned just because the traditions that have been gathered do not have any further information.

⁴⁵App. 3.

⁴⁶Bouyssou 1913, App 4.3, in Lelong 1949:25. The Liberian folklorist S.J.M. Johnson wrote that Zo Musa left Musadu and built another town (1974:2, App. 8.1). Johnson might have been confused about the name of this town that Zo Musa built. The town that Zo Musa allegedly founded after he left Musadu derived from the first part of his name - Zota or 'Zo's town,' not Musadu or 'Musa's town.' For a short Guinean account, see Beavogui (1973-74).

Mustafa Kromah, Zo Musa left Musadu with both of his wives.⁴⁷ One escorted him to Sanwu creek and returned to Musadu. Zo Musa's other wife, who was pregnant, traveled on with him. Four miles after they left the Sanwu, she laid her *kuan* or 'morterpestle' down and rested at another creek. This creek became known as the Kuan. They passed Nionsamoridu and went to Mt. Kanikokela where Zo Musa's wife delivered her baby.⁴⁸ Kromah claimed that God created a pool at the top of the mountain because no water was there. Another speaker said that Zo Musa took his Musadu water to Mt. Kanikokela, and that he called the 'secret name' of the place in Kpelle after he ascended the mountain.⁴⁹

Several oral sources state that Mt. Kanikokela was the first important place where Zo Musa went after he left Musadu.⁵⁰ Many echoed Vase Kamala's claim that Zo Musa went to the top of this mountain and shouted - "'I am leaving Foningama and his bad clerics, Kanikoke!'"⁵¹ Mt. Kanikokela is situated at the edge of an important divide in the Fon-Going Mountain that has served as a strategic line of transportation and communication for centuries. Numerous blacksmiths have migrated to the area and founded villages because this part of the mountain is rich in iron.⁵² Blacksmiths, with their connections to sorcery, have contributed to the spiritual, economic and political importance of this area.

⁴⁷App. 7.20, l. 353-374.

⁴⁸Others also said that Zo Musa went to Nionsamoridu (Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14).

⁴⁹Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19.

⁵⁰Mammadi Dole 1985, App. 6.2; Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8, l. 114-125; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Sidibé 1997:88, l. 359-363.

⁵¹Mammadi Dole (1985, App. 6.2) is the only interviewee cited in the previous footnote who did not tell this story that Vase Kamala cited here. The Guinean linguist Bangaly Kourouma recorded information about "Kanikoékoé" in his memoir that tells the meaning of several place names in Konya-Mani. Kourouma translated Kanikoékoé - 'friendship' (*kani*) and 'shouts of joy (*koékoé*),' and wrote that Kanikoékoé is a place where two friends met to announce the delivery of a baby girl (1989-90:28). His data seems to derive from the same body of oral traditions that are related here.

⁵²Person 1968b:251; Kaba 1971:167.

Others who regard Mt. Kanikokela as a mountain of historical and spiritual significance are the Loma, and perhaps even the Kpelle and Mano. Paul Korvah published a Loma tradition about “Kanikokoi” which is similar to some Maniyaka stories.⁵³ Because Korvah used information from Maniyaka informants like Soko Konneh, he might have combined fragments of the Musadu epic with the story that he told about Fala Wubo. According to Korvah, after Fali Kama (Foningama) became the chief of Musadu, he enslaved a Kissi woman who had one of his sons, Fala Wubo. Fala Wubo became an accomplished warrior, hunter and blacksmith when he grew up. He decided, however, to leave Musadu because his step-brothers taunted him for being “the son of a slave mother,” and said that he was not eligible to inherit any of his father’s property. After he left Musadu, he climbed a mountain that overlooked the “green thick forest” toward the west and cried “Kanikokoi” or ‘rejoice.’ In an account by an earlier author, Kpelle and Mano *zolu* reportedly used to cry “Kani Kokoe” or ‘all is well’ after they scarify initiates.⁵⁴ Although this custom is not directly connected to Mt. Kanikokela, there may be a connection given the common themes and significance of Mt. Kanikokela in other accounts.

Mt. Kanikokela is thus a sacred place given the story about the birth of Zo Musa’s son, its connections with sacred water, claims that Zo Musa or Fala Wubo rejoiced there after they left Musadu, and the fact that some Kpelle and/or Mano might remember this mountain in their initiation rituals. The traditions also indicate that Mt. Kanikokela was the place where Zo Musa accumulated more *nyana*, and the location where he felt like he became free from the Maniyaka. Mt. Kanikokela thus seems to have represented the

⁵³Korvah 1995:11-13.

⁵⁴Duffner 1934:48.

westernmost extent of Maniyaka influence at the time. As is recorded below, the Maniyaka also say that Mt. Minian, Mt. Yewula further south near Boola, and Kogota well below Boola were important locations that later indicated the limits of Maniyaka influence. The mention of these places as boundary markers are anachronisms that have been transposed into one epic.

From Mt. Kanikokela to Zota

According to Vase Kamala, Zo Musa broke to the southeast after he departed from Mt. Kanikoke and traversed to Ndèdèmòadu, Kangoro (Kangòlò), Koesi Banangòlò, Ouauakora (Wawakòlò), Manakoro (Manakòlò) and stopped at a river [146-163]. After Zo Musa departed from this river, he realized that he left his snuff can there. The group returned to retrieve it, and the river was subsequently named Bòò.⁵⁵

Zo Musa then traveled another dozen miles south to a mountain located on the northern outskirts of Boola. Here, according to several sources, Zo Musa said “*yèlawula*” or ‘goodbye’ in Kpelle after he left the mountain.⁵⁶ The mountain was hence named Mt. Yelawula. Zo Musa then reportedly went to the area now known as the town of Boola.⁵⁷ Someone particularly said that the area was named Boola because Zo Musa found numerous mushrooms (*kpoola*) there.⁵⁸ We recall the Konor claim that Boola received its

⁵⁵Kpelle words for ‘snuff’ are *bòò*, *gbòò*, *gbòlò* or *gbuwo*.

⁵⁶Also, *yèlewuli*, *yèlewule*, *yewula* or *jewu*. Mamadi Dole 1985, App. 6.2; Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5; Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16; Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8, l. 114-125; Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; 1993, App. 7.34. Vase Kamala (App. 7.6) and Wata Mammadi Kamara (App. 7.37) did not narrate any particular story; they just mentioned that Zo Musa went to Mt. Yelawula. Some state that Zo Musa just said goodbye to the Maniyaka. Others stated that he directed his farewell to Foningama.

⁵⁷Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; 1993, App. 7.34; Alafā Konè 1992, App. 7.31; Sidibé 1997:88, l. 369-374.

⁵⁸Sidibé 1997:88, l. 371-374.

name after Zo Musa placed a big mushroom on a termite hill.⁵⁹ From Boola, Zo Musa went to Wenzu, Kpologbiyani, Bòma, Pampara (Kpanpala), Kelema, Kule, Duyaladu, and Weyafinta before he reached Zota.

When Zo Musa went to Zota or founded Zota, he supposedly transplanted the earth spirit symbols that he took from Musadu.⁶⁰ Several also said that Zo Musa and his descendants became powerful because Zo Musa brought his spirit power (*nyana*, *saafê* or *Kòma*) with him,⁶¹ and used his new *saafê* that he got in Musadu to appropriate more *nyana*.⁶² One stated that Zo Musa had two snakes (*tuzu*) that chased everyone away when he arrived.⁶³

Two informants from Liberia claimed that Zo Musa or one of his sons ventured even further south. The men, Jigbè Kamara and Seku Saiyòn, were conversant with the stories that their relatives told in the north because they had been raised in Musadu, and evidently heard stories about how their ancestors migrated south after they moved to Liberia. They thus had the advantage of being able to combine the northern and southern perspectives into their accounts. Interviewees in Konya-Mani, on the other hand, can usually only explain how far their ancestors traveled a few dozen miles in any direction.

According to Jigbè Kamara, Zo Musa traveled south from Musadu and met a chief

⁵⁹Holas 1952b:20-21, App. 4.7.

⁶⁰Bouyssou 1913, App. 4.3, in Lelong 1949:25; Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.2, l. 45-50; Seku Saiyòn 1970, App. 5.3, l. 216-218; Lanse Kromah 1984, App. 7.2; Mammadi Dole 1985, App. 6.2; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Jala Kamara 1992, App. 7.27; Alafā Konè 1992, App. 7.31; Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Sidibé 1997:88-89, l. 393-401.

⁶¹Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18. *Nyana* translates in these instances as 'masked dancer.'

⁶²Geysbeek/Kamara 1994:74; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16, l. 782-807.

⁶³Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; 1993, App. 7.35.

named Gbolo whose daughter struggled during childbirth. After Zo Musa delivered the baby, he founded Zota. Zo Musa then continued south to Fokwèle where he died. Fokwèle is in today's Zota chiefdom in northcentral Liberia [164-165].⁶⁴ Kamara's story is remarkably similar to a mid-century tradition from Guinea that tells how Zo Musa went to Boyeba and delivered Chief Mahagpoulé daughter's baby. Zo Musa remained settled near the chief and founded Zota.⁶⁵ Another one of Holsoe's interviewees, Seku Saiyòn said that Zo Musa and his cleric Vani Tawe (Talawole, Traoré) left Musadu and founded Zota, and that they trekked down to Liberia-Zota. Saiyòn then said that Zo Musa's son Vani and Vani Tawe's son Musa walked west, crossed the St. Paul River, and 'carried war to Bokomu' which is near Bopolu. Musa Tawe remained, but Vani returned, presumably to Zota.⁶⁶ These are just three etymologies that indicate Zo Musa's larger-than-life importance in southeast Guinea and Liberia.

Gola Accounts

Asmana Dua Jei Kpo narrated an oral tradition which claims that Zo Musa was Gola.⁶⁷ He said that Musa founded Musadu, and that 'a powerful and wealthy Gola man' named Gwui departed from Musadu and went to Mana in the heavily forested section of today's western Liberia. Later, more Gola 'followed Gwui to Mana' after the Maniyaka started to 'rule' Musadu. In another variant of the same story, Kpo told how a Gola chief named Gwui migrated from Musadu to Mana with his Gola and Kissi wives and a cleric

⁶⁴Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3, l. 183-228. Fokwèle, or Fokole.

⁶⁵Germain 1984, App. 4.5.

⁶⁶App. 5.2, l. 41-65.

⁶⁷App. 2.1.

named Musa [166].⁶⁸ One of his wives was Mabu, the woman whom Gwui called when he left Musadu.

Dã and Mano Accounts

The Dã and Mano are Southwestern Mande speakers who were closely related centuries ago, so it is not surprising that they recall stories which have common elements. Most of the Dã live in eastern Nimba County and the adjacent area toward Danane in Côte d'Ivoire. The Mano mainly reside in the western part of Nimba County and up to Bossou in Guinea.⁶⁹

Oral traditions do not provide much reliable information about Dã origins. Some Dã state that their primordial ancestor was lowered from heaven in a brass bucket and landed in Musadu.⁷⁰ Other Dã link their first ancestor to Musadu.⁷¹ The northern Dã formed close economic links with the Maniyaka, adopted Maniyakã as a second language, and incorporated certain Maniyaka cultural features such as clan names.⁷²

The Mano are closely related to the Dã, and are said by some to be a mixture of Loma and Dã. The Mano also share traditions of origin with the Dã at Musadu, the Konor at the headwaters of the Milo river, and the Kpelle at Musadu and Mt. Sango southeast of Boola (Chapter 5).⁷³ Some Mano view Karana near the sacred mountain of Kohire as their

⁶⁸Mana was part of ancient Kongba in western Liberia from whence most Gola claim their origins (d'Azevedo 1969b:3-5). Kpo's statement that Gwui had a Kissi wife is akin to Kabine Kromah's claim that the Kissi who resided in Musadu left as the Maniyaka became more powerful (Kabine Kromah 1993, App. 7.34, l. 183). The other Kissi link in the Musadu epic is from Paul Korvah who wrote that Foningama captured a Kissi women who became Fala Wubo's mother (1960/94:60; 1971:31; 1995:12).

⁶⁹Gay et. al. 1969:42; Riddell et. al. 1971-72:161; Fisher/Himmelheber 1984:5.

⁷⁰Zetterström 1976:17.

⁷¹Zetterström 1976:14,17; see Donner 1939:176; Duprey 1962:14; Ichiro 1997:270.

⁷²Ford 1994; Konneh 1996:10-12.

⁷³Harley 1941:6; Zetterström 1976:15-16. The Mano also have long traditions of conflict with the Kpelle in some areas (Zetterström 1976:16).

mythic center of origin.⁷⁴ The northern Mano, like the northern Dã, have been strongly influenced by the Maniyaka, and were allegedly forced to retreat south when the Maniyaka subdued Konya-Mani.⁷⁵ The Dã, Mano and other peoples avoided slave raiding from mounted Maniyaka warriors by moving into the forest where horses could not survive.⁷⁶ A Mano myth states that Zo Musa descended to earth from the sky; this is similar to the way that Dã link their first ancestor to Musadu.⁷⁷ Apart from this myth, a fairly detailed oral tradition explains how the Mano migrated from Musadu to their present locations.⁷⁸ According to his information, a wealthy man named Zo Masa Kolo or ‘Zo *mansa* Kromah’ once lived in Musadu. Many Mano say that he was the first Mano man, though some Mano state that he was Maniyaka. After Zo Masa Kolo died, his sons started to fight for their father’s property. One of Kolo’s sons, Gao, left Musadu and went to the town of Wii in the Sakleipie region of today’s Nimba county in Liberia [167-169]. The story details, among other things, how Zo Masa Kolo’s sons Zo Mia and Zo Fie respectively founded Yeiyi in Guinea and Baytonwee in Sakleipie. Zetterström’s seventy-five year old informant, born at the turn of the twentieth century, said that he was born seven generations after Zo Masa Kolo.⁷⁹

Kpelle Accounts

Oral traditions claim that the Kpelle lived as far north as Konya-Mani before they

⁷⁴Holas 1952b:22, App. 4.7.

⁷⁵Zetterström 1976:16; Donner 1939:281; Zemp 1964; Schroeder/Massing 1970:9; Person 1968b:20-23.

⁷⁶Konneh 1996:10.

⁷⁷Schwab 1947:24; see Foote 1854:96; Zetterström 1976:18, fn. 3.

⁷⁸Zetterström 1976:18.

⁷⁹Zetterström 1976:19; see Himmelheber 1964:2; in Zetterström 1976:14.

started to migrate south (Chapter 4). Most of the Kpelle now live in N’Zerekore District and Liberia’s Bong County. By the early-twentieth century, Mt. Minian and the area between Boola and Fombadu marked the northern limits of the Kpelle.⁸⁰ The Kpelle might have started to become linguistically differentiated from other South-West Mande speaking peoples such as the Loma and Bandi as late as the sixteenth century, but remained decentralized until the French and Liberians started to colonize the land and effectively made them into a “tribe.”⁸¹ Liberians who trekked into the far interior during the mid-nineteenth century documented clear internal divisions between the ancestors of today’s Kpelle. One traveler wrote that although the “Bokomu Pessah” and “Barline Kpellay” spoke the same language, they resided in different areas, formed their own confederations, and fought each other along disputed border areas.⁸²

The Kpelle also forged social, political, religious, and economic ties with the Konya-Mani Maniyaka who intermarried with the Kpelle and often adopted their language, religion and social patterns (Chapter 4). Some Kpelle and Mano developed close attachments in the past; a few traditions imply similar origins for segments of both groups.⁸³ Even though some Kpelle and Mano were closely assimilated at one time, the Kpelle eventually conquered many of the Mano and pushed them into Liberia.⁸⁴

The main sources for understanding how the Kpelle migrated from Musadu come from the French administrators who worked in Guinea during the first half of the last century. The fairly substantial records that these men collected and the Mano traditions

⁸⁰Lamole 1909:522; Peyrissac 1912; Lassort/Lelong 1947:182; Person 1968b:566.

⁸¹Hair 1968a:54-56; Dwyer 1989:50; Ellis 1999:34.

⁸²Anderson 1912/1971. That is, the Pessah lived in Bokomu and the Kpellay in Barline.

⁸³Duffner 1934:528-529; Lelong 1949:182-183.

⁸⁴Lelong 1949:183; see Zetterström 1976:16.

that one researcher recorded suggest that the Kpelle, Konor, Mano and other groups who live in this southeast corner of Guinea and northcentral Liberia still retain oral traditions that could make important contributions to our understanding of what happened generations ago.

The earliest Kpelle account claims that when the Maniyaka drove Zo Musa into the forest, Zo Musa took some of the objects from Musadu that were imbued with spirits [170-171].⁸⁵ Zo Musa passed Mt. Minian which was said to mark the border between himself and his pursuers, and planted the *kapock* tree that he took from Musadu at the base of a tree. He also sprinkled the surrounding streams with the water that he took from Musadu, and named the area Zota. Zo Musa transplanted these items to remind himself of his 'lost mother's land,' and divided the land between different family heads.⁸⁶ Even though claims about a Zo Musa leaving Musadu represent a combination of current realities and composite memories of many movements in the past, some of these traditions depict things that occurred while Zo Musa and his "companions" traveled south.

A few years later, other Kpelle traditions were recorded that provided more details [172-182].⁸⁷ There was a Zo Musa Kòma and Zo Musa Kromah in this account, who we argued earlier was probably only Zo Musa.⁸⁸ According to this popular etymology, Zo Musa the Kòma led several people south through G'Banhana and Kossa-Guerzé to Klya

⁸⁵Lamole 1909:529-530, App. 4.2.

⁸⁶The Konor also claim that Zomoussakro replanted the *tagba* branch from Musadu when he settled in Lola (Holas 1952b:20-21, App. 4.7). Three Maniyaka told similar stories (Mammadi Dole 1985, App. 6.2; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Sidibé 1997:88-89). Father Bouyssou's Musadu informants said that Zogomisa Koma, Zogofakoni and Fengébou became the ancestors of the Déla, Lama and Djégbé after they left Musadu (App 4.3).

⁸⁷Germain 1984:90-91, App. 4.5. Germain worked in N'Zerekore during the mid-1940s, but only published most of his findings in 1984.

⁸⁸See footnote 37.

in the Bero range south of Boola where they finally split. Zo Musa the Kòma headed southwest to Monè and named Mt. G'Bian Ye for some pipe tongs that he lost. When this Zo Musa reached Boyeba, he cared for the pregnant wife of Boyeba's Chief Mahagpoulé. Chief Mahagpoulé rewarded him with some land for helping his wife deliver her child. Zo Musa the Kòma subsequently founded Zota and became the chief of Manbouan district where Zota is located. His reputation as a fierce sorcerer was passed on to his descendants, hindering others from forming alliances with his town. Meanwhile, Zo Musa Kromah and his 'brothers' headed southeast to G'Ban-Houn where the Konor now live. This Zo Musa stayed with G'Ban-Houn's chief, but was buried alive with the chief after he died. His son Yoakou continued south and founded Gohoba. Yoakou's son Yoakou Holomo went to Laine and became a noted warrior like his grandfather. Some people left Zo Musa Kromah at some point during the journey and went in a more southerly direction. They passed Didita (Dirita) and Kokota and founded Lola and Gokota.⁸⁹

The Konor

The two most important sources for the early history of the Konor are some oral traditions that were collected among the Konor in southeast Guinea in the mid-twentieth century, and a narrative that a Maniyaka informant told more recently. The Konor tradition focuses on Zo Musa and other Maniyaka who immigrated from Musadu; the Maniyaka account links the Konor's roots to Jufa Konè who supposedly departed from Musadu with Zo Musa but then separated from him after they entered the forest.

⁸⁹The Konor and Kpelle note that the Dole who accompanied Zo Musa from Musadu later became the chiefs of Lola and other areas where the Konor and Mano now live (Germain 1984:105; Holas 1975:85-86).

The Konor mention that Zo Musa traveled from Musadu to Laine, and provides more information about what he did after he left Laine.⁹⁰ Laine is the main town in Konodougou or ‘the land of the Kono.’ The Konor who live in Konodougou are said to be the most pure Konor.⁹¹ The Konodougou Konor have retained the strongest ties of all the Konor with the Maniyaka: they are the northernmost Konor, and they live along the Beyla-Lola road which is an ancient north-south migration route. The other key areas where the Konor reside are Lola and its surrounding towns; Mossorodougou which includes Zougouta; Saouro and its capital town of Pine; and Vepo with N’Zo and another Zougouta.⁹² The modern Konor speak Kpelle, and are now considered by some to be a Kpelle ‘sub-group.’⁹³ Holas wrote that some of their ancestors were people like Zoumassakro, Tangalan Saouloumou Gba, and some Kamara and Dole who originated from Musadu. He also wrote that some of the early Konor were Mano.

Colonialists noted the ethnic and linguistic affinity of the Konor with the Maniyaka. Lt. Lamole observed that the Konor spoke Kpelle but were of ‘a different Negro family branch,’⁹⁴ and writers said that the Konor were Maninka or half-Kpelle and half-Maninka.⁹⁵ Valentin Vydrine similarly wrote that the Konor speak “a variant of Kpelle, a rather archaic dialect,” and that the Konor “pretend to be ‘Kpelleized

⁹⁰Holas 1952b:19-21, App. 4.7. The above mentioned Kpelle stories do not trace Zo Musa’s movements beyond Laine.

⁹¹Holas 1952b:16-17, App. 4.7. Zo Musa is transcribed as Zoumassakro or Zo Musa Kromah in these accounts.

⁹²Holas 1952b:16-17; see Lamole 1909:522; Picot 1958:276; Person 1968b:566.

⁹³Lamole 1909:522; Lassort/Lelong 1947:10; Lelong 1949:183; Holas 1954:13; see Delafosse 1901:219; Person 1968b:566; Germain 1984:45; Dwyer 1989:51.

⁹⁴Lamole 1909:522.

⁹⁵Donner 1939:78; Picot 1958:276.

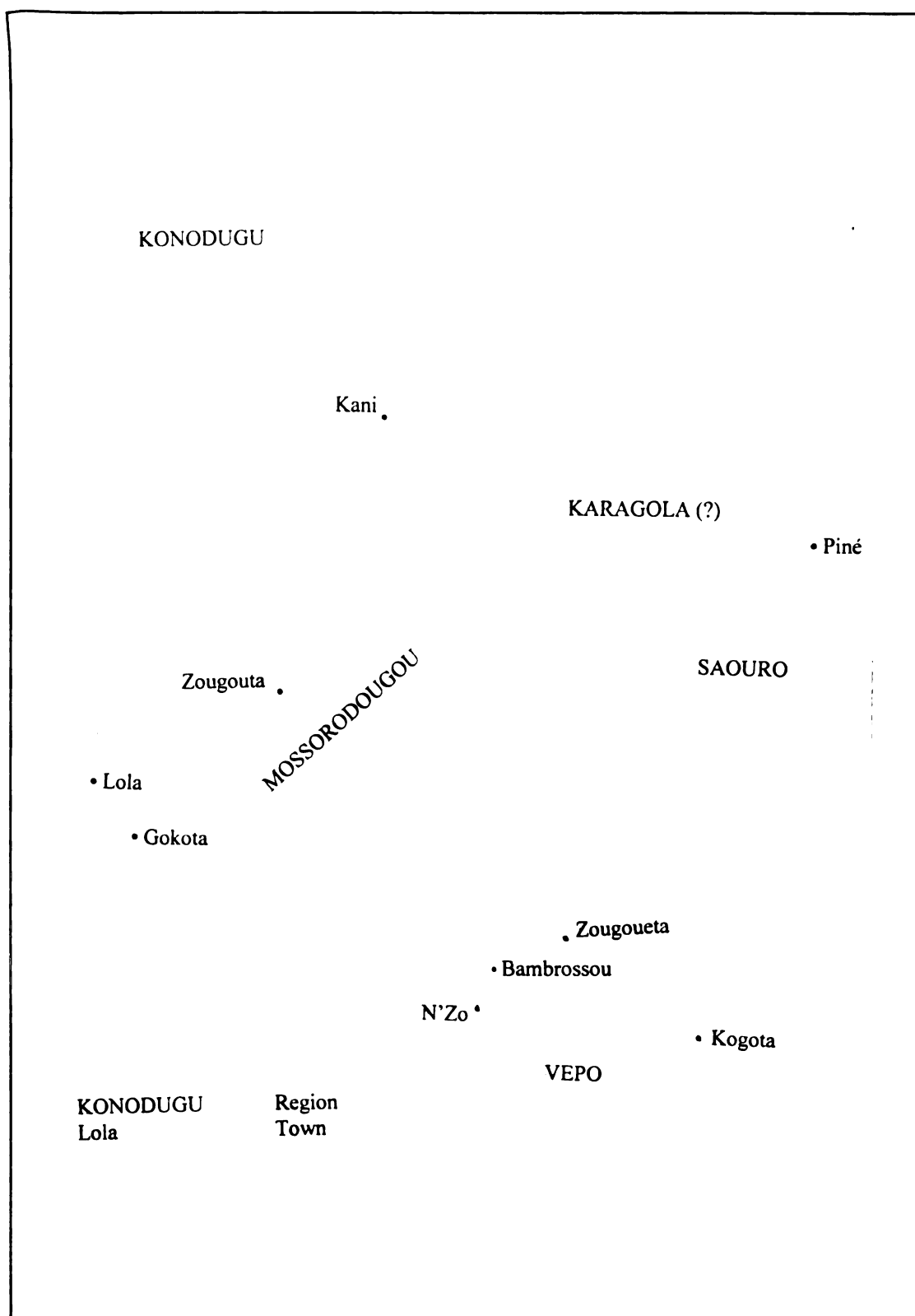


Figure 44 Modern Konor districts in southeast Guinea (Source: Holas 1952a)

Konyaka.’’⁹⁶ Even though the Konor now speak a Kpelle dialect, many Konor were once Maniyaka who immigrated from Konya-Mani and only started to speak Kpelle in the late-nineteenth century.⁹⁷ In addition, the Konor of Guinea and the Kono of Sierra Leone probably spoke the same Manding language at one time, and probably lived in the same area until they were divided during the sixteenth century Mane invasions.⁹⁸

Konor legends that explain how their parents settled in their present locations demonstrate the complex ethnic and geographic factors that contribute to their present identity. The ancestors of the Konor in the northern districts immigrated from the north. Some of the Konor in the south and east trace their history to people who came from the east and west.

Some oral traditions claim that the ancestor of the Konor who settled in Vepo was a Mano named Kossire who immigrated from Karana. Karana is situated at the base of Koire (Kohere, Kohire) Mountain where some Mano claim that their ancestors originated.⁹⁹ The Mano believe that the Konor are their ‘small brothers,’ and that Mano

⁹⁶“In Kono, opposition of intervocalic phonemes r and l is conserved, like in some Liberian dialects, while other Guinean dialects have lost it; while in the Southern Kpelle, there is alteration of initial consonant s/z (it seems to be the most archaic variant), and in the Northern Kpelle h/j, in Kono it is h/z; etc. (personal communication, 6 Dec. 1996).

⁹⁷Holas 1954:14.

⁹⁸Westermann/Bryan 1952:36; Vydrine, personal communication, 14 Jan. 1997; see Jones 1981:172; Massing 1985:35-39. Oral traditions tell how the ancestors of today’s Guinea Konor and Sierra Leone Kono once lived around the headwaters of the Milo river (including Konya-Mani), and eventually became separated as they moved south (Beavogui 1973-74; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18, l. 746-781). Yves Person mused that the matter of how the two groups became distinguished was a ‘further question,’ but did not pursue the topic (1968b:77, n. 1). Holas incorrectly wrote that there was ‘no direct perceptible relationship’ between today’s Konor and Kono (1952b:forward).

⁹⁹Holas 1952b:17,22-23. Mt. Koire is the legendary center of dispersion for some Mano. Kossire walked west from Karana to seek a women. He stopped at the rich rice growing town of Zougoutta (Zota) and got married. One of the sons whom Kossire sired in Zougoutta was Zomea. Kossire went on to Bambrossou, and Zomea traveled to N’Zo. One of Kossire’s nephews traveled south from Laine to live with Kossire in Bambrossou. Kossire’s nephew had left Laine because he was ‘weary of the wars that were raging there.’ Though Holas’ informant did not explain the nature of these ‘wars,’ Yves Person claimed that the descendants of Foningama’s son Samoydyan repulsed the Konor from Karagoua north of Saouro at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The Donzo of Nyèla supplanted the Kamara a half century later (1968b:567). This turmoil might explain why Kossire’s nephew traveled south, and indicate the

migrations from the north were probably linked with the movements of the Konor from the same direction.¹⁰⁰ Konor-Mano relations have not, however, always been cordial. The Mano supposedly pushed the Konor north after one of Zo Musa's descendants settled in Lola.¹⁰¹ The ancestors of the Konor who live in northern Saouro are said to have been Kamara who immigrated from the Bafing River and Man in the east [183-191].¹⁰² Other proto-Konor were Maniyaka who immigrated from Musadu: Zo Musa, Tangalan Saouloumou Gba and some Dole.¹⁰³ The Konor say that Zo Musa stopped in Boola after he left Musadu, and tell the first of several etymologies about what they believe happened as Zo Musa traveled south. They tell how Zo Musa went to the base of the mountain near Boola and found a big 'mushroom' or *kpogo*. He placed the mushroom on a big termite hill and named the area Boola (Kpogola). Boola means 'village of the mushroom' in Maniyakã. Zo Musa then passed through Laine and stopped at Kokota where he left some people at an outpost to ward off pursuers who might be coming from Musadu.¹⁰⁴ Zo Musa named many places after things that happened as he headed south. Yarayiri (Yarayé) mountain was named 'mountain of the belt;' this was where someone found a 'belt' or *yara* that his wife lost. Blango means 'river of the beads' where Zo Musa lost his beads.

southernmost point where the Maniyaka were able to effectively fight and occupy. In Bambrossu, Kossire's nephew married one of Kossire's daughters.

¹⁰⁰Zetterström 1976:16-19. The only hint of a Konor-Mano connection in the Musadu traditions is Moliké Sidibé's statement that the Konor, Mano and other groups traveled south after they left Musadu (1997:89).

¹⁰¹Holas 1952b:20, App. 4.7.

¹⁰²Holas 1952b:84. According to Holas, the Konor might have gotten their Kòma masks from the Bamana, Maninka or Maniyaka. The Konor make their masks like the Kamara who live in Konya-Mani, and particularly fear the Beyla Kòma. The Kòma is strongest among the northernmost Konor who live in Saouro (1952b:19,44,46). This story about the dissemination of the Kòma and its masking traditions into Konor areas is important and needs to be examined further.

¹⁰³This Dole-Zo Musa link supports Maniyaka traditions which claim that a pre-Islamic Dole lineage lived in Musadu before a later generation of Dole clerics arrived with Foningama (Ch. 4). The Dole are the traditional chiefs in Vepo, Saouro, Lola and Mossordougou (Holas 1975:85-86).

¹⁰⁴In Germain's account, Koro's grandson Yoakou Holomo settled in Laine (1984:90-01, App. 4.5).

Bagwéma or ‘rice finished’ got its name after Zo Musa’s wife gave her child her last bit of rice when they were on a hill. When Zo Musa stopped at another mountain to get rid of lice, they named the mountain Klayé or ‘small mountain of lice.’¹⁰⁵ From Klayé, Zo Musa passed Guérikopléya creek, Yokon creek and settled in Lola. When Koro reached Lola, he met the Mano and a Maniyaka who had immigrated from the east.¹⁰⁶ There, he planted the *tagba* tree that he carried from Musadu. The tree was called ‘the tree of Zo Musa Kromah’ and became sacred. His descendants transplanted branches from this tree in other places where they settled. The Mano are said to have later invaded Lola and forced Zo Musa or one of his descendants to flee north.¹⁰⁷

Kabine Kromah narrated a Maniyaka perspective of the Konor’s origins which focuses on Zo Musa’s co-host Jufa Konè [192-193]. According to Kromah, Zo Musa and Jufa Konè left Musadu together at the same time. Zo Musa was Kpelle, and Jufa Konè was Maniyaka in Kromah’s narrative. They passed Manakoro, the Bòo river, Mt. Yewula, Boola, Wenzu, Boma, Kelema and Kule, and went to the region of Maboina. Jufa Konè separated from Zo Musa when they reached Gbenikiala because he wanted to retain cordial relations with the Maniyaka and because he refused to join Zo Musa’s initiation society (*doo*). As Zo Musa headed toward Zota, Konè and his followers traveled toward Gueasso (Gbaeso, Gbiyaso) where they married Kpelle women. Some went to Lola. The narrator said that their descendants who now live in the region that extends from Lola to

¹⁰⁵I have not been able to locate any of the mountains and rivers named in this paragraph.

¹⁰⁶We note Dauvillier’s claim that a Bèrété traveled east from Kong to Musadu (App. 3). Some of the earlier Kamara, Kanè, Sherif and perhaps the Baayo also migrated to Musadu from eastern towns such as Siendo (Siano) and Ferentela. Thus, people migrated to Konya-Mani from all directions, not just from the north.

¹⁰⁷Germain 1984:91, App. 4.5. This descendant of Zo Musa, Gbarko Gbamou, is the same Barako who is said in the Kpelle accounts to have founded Lola (Germain 1984:105).

Gueasso are Lola-Kpelle or Konor, and that the Konor of Lola are Kpelle.¹⁰⁸

There is another alleged Konor connection to Musadu: Tangalan Saouloumou Gba. Tangalan Gba is said to have been the first Konor to settle in Saouro. He lived in Musadu, but migrated south with one of his half-nephews because they quarreled so much with the people in Musadu. Gba and his warrior-nephew went to Gama Konè where they defeated the Dã. Tangalan went on and founded Gbata Blemou.¹⁰⁹

Conclusion

The Maniyaka, Kpelle, Dã, Mano and Gola recall stories that tell how Zo Musa migrated from Musadu and traveled south to Zota and several other towns. Many of the accounts include popular etymologies that identify some of the spirit-filled substances that Zo Musa took from Musadu, and explain some of the miraculous feats that he performed after he left Musadu. Some points of detail do overlap; many others were told, however, from the unique perspectives that reflected the narrators who told the stories, the ethnic groups that they belonged to, and the locations where the stories were told. In spite of all of the differences, the key point is that many ethnic groups who live in southeast Guinea and parts of Liberia remember Zo Musa. Their memories attest to the powerful figure that he became in the history and culture of the region long ago. Zo Musa was almost certainly a Kromah. People believed that he used the spirit-filled objects that he took from Musadu to enhance his prestige and power as a sorcerer, and that he performed miraculous deeds and conquered many peoples when he traveled into the forest. Zo Musa reflects the image of Fakoli with his prowess as a sorcerer, strength as a

¹⁰⁸Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; 1993, App. 7.34.

¹⁰⁹Holas 1952b:23-24. Gama Konè (Kama Konè) was written GamaKoneKone.

warrior, head of the feared Kòma society, leader of several people who embarked on a pilgrimage, and a larger-than-life composite icon who many peoples claim. At some point in the oral traditions, people might have even identified Zo Musa as a descendant of Fakoli.¹¹⁰ Zo Musa was or may continue to be a praise name for Fakoli. In the next chapter, Fakoli is shown in some instances as having been a praise name for another powerful Kromah who lived in Musadu, Tumaningèmè. The traditions that were collected for this study provide an understanding of how the Maniyaka view Zo Musa. Considerable more can be probably learned by conducting research about Zo Musa in the forest areas where the Kpelle, Konor, Dã, Mano and others live. It would be especially interesting to do some fieldwork in Zota.

Finally, I argue that the Zo Musa migrations might be associated with the mid-sixteenth century Mane invasions. Foningama's move to Musadu and the defeat of Zo Musa is tentatively dated to about the late-fifteenth century. Similarly, the Mano and Kpelle have genealogies of Zo Musa's descendants that go back eight to eleven generations or about two to three hundred years.¹¹¹ These genealogies indicate an unusually large number of generations considering that the Mano and Kpelle come from largely non-centralized societies where collective memories usually do not span more than two centuries.¹¹² Jigbè Kamara and Seku Saiyòn's testimonies about Zo Musa's migration to Liberia-Zota and Zo Musa's son's movement to Bokomu likely represent several generations of people who slowly traveled through the forest. Another option is

¹¹⁰As, for instance, happened with Fakoli who was called Sora Musa in the Gambia (Conrad (1992:153,189, n. 24). Many thanks to David Conrad for helping me better understand Zo Musa's significance in the Musadu epic and in the cultural history of Upper Guinea.

¹¹¹Zetterström 1976:14,19; Germain 1984:100-106.

¹¹²Person 1972:5; see Lauer 1978-79:39.

that these accounts tell stories that are more than three hundred years old, that they occurred within two to three generations as the stories claim, and that they can be taken fairly literally. If one interprets Kamara and Saiyòn's oral traditions roughly in the manner that they were narrated, one can deduce that some Mande speaking peoples steadily moved from Musadu to Guinea-Zota, then to Liberia-Zota, and then west to Bokomu which is near the commercial entrepot of Bopolu.

This route that Zo Musa is said to have taken from Musadu to Bokomu is similar to the route that Yves Person and others have projected the Mane invaders took (Figure 46, Ch. 8).¹¹³ According to George Brooks, the "Mani invasions from Konyan west-northwest followed long-established trade paths traversing the headwaters of the St. John, St. Paul, Mano, and Mao rivers."¹¹⁴ He mentioned that the invasion routes that Walter Rodney and Yves Person showed on their maps corresponded with the ancient roads and trails that George Harley mapped in Liberia. Harley remarked, "to judge from the deeply worked trails, now like ditches in places, from the great trees bordering them, and from the marks of bare feet worn into rocks at some of the stream crossings, these routes must have changed little in hundreds of years."¹¹⁵ Brooks provided topographical evidence to support why he believed the Mane traveled up rivers like the St. John and St. Paul. The noted geographer Willi Schulze wrote, in connection with his discussion about the Mane

¹¹³Person 1971a:670; Ch. 8; see Schulze 1973:46; Andah 1988:42. Person wrote that the Kondo (Hondo) and Folgia who are described in seventeenth century accounts "must be sought in the Bopolu-Kakata-Totota triangle, the head of the Kpele country" (1971a:678).

¹¹⁴Brooks 1993:292-293; see Person 1990: Map 2. The ancient name of the St. John river is "Mani" (Lamole 1909:524; Bouet 1911:187; Peyrissac 1912:23; Strong 1930: Map II; Schwab 1947: Fig. 1; *Liberia: Official Standard Names* 1968:36; Holsoe 1979a:69-70). Three mid-nineteenth century Liberian explorers, George Seymour, Levin Ash and Benjamin Anderson, walked along a well-traveled route on the east side of the Fon-Going Mountain that paralleled the route that Zo Musa is said to have taken. When Anderson stopped in N'Zappa, he was only eight miles west of Zota (Fairhead et. al. 2003: Map 4; see Schultz 1973:4).

¹¹⁵Harley 1939:452.

invasions, that “the Kpelle reached Nyanforquelli, the Jorquelli and the Zota chiefdom areas of present-day Bong County shortly before 1600. They first settled near a large town called Wyeta from where they moved south-westward along the St Paul and St John rivers but never reached the coast.”¹¹⁶

Oral traditions like the ones that Jigbè Kamara and Seku Saiyòn narrated show one way that the Mane could have taken to reach the coast, even if their accounts are not taken literally. Guinea-Zota is about sixty-nine miles from Musadu, and Guinea-Zota is less than forty miles south from Liberia-Zota. Bokomu is roughly another forty miles west of Liberia-Zota. This one hundred and fifty mile journey would have been a relatively short distance for traders, warriors and refugees to traverse, indicating that the Mane invaders could have easily traveled along routes like this in a much shorter time than the fifteen years (1545-1560) they are said to have carried out their invasions.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶Schulze 1973:47.

¹¹⁷E.g., Person 1971:675.

CHAPTER 7

FONINGAMA AND THE RISE OF KAMARA RULE IN MUSADU

The Musadu epic progresses from accounts that tell about Zo Musa Kromah's migration into the forest, to those that explain how Foningama supplanted Tumaningèmè Kromah as the *mansa* of Musadu. None of the non-Maniyaka tell what happened in Musadu after Zo Musa traveled south, or esteem Foningama as part of their history. Conversely, the Maniyaka do not mention Zo Musa or any non-Maniyaka in the last part of the epic. The voices of the Kpelle, Loma and other non-Maniyaka are probably not heard because most of their ancestors never exerted much more significant political influence in Konya-Mani after Zo Musa left Musadu.

Some sources say that Foningama forcibly ousted Tumaningèmè from the chieftaincy of Musadu and surreptitiously replaced their leopard taboo for the elephant taboo that he inherited. The Kromah were, according to the sources, Foningama's uncles because Foningama's mother was a Kromah. Foningama is also said to have made a *wakèlèn salaka* or 'sacrifice of one thousand' to have sons and augment his power. The sacrifice is said to have symbolically comprised one hundred of everything that represented the wealth of Konya-Mani and was important to Foningama: cloth, gold, farm products, livestock, slaves, the sacrifice of his sons, and the giving of his daughter in marriage to the *morilu* to whom he gave the sacrifice. Foningama offered this sacrifice to *morilu* like the Sware who were Jakhanke, a pacifist group of scholar-traders who immigrated from the sahel. The combined sources claim that Foningama sired over forty sons and two daughters. Several oral traditions also state that Foningama constituted a

series of laws to expand his power and ensure economic prosperity.

As a warrior who went to Musadu and became *mansa*, Foningama represented the second stage of Maninka and Soninke expansion from the Manden. This stage was typified by warriors who conquered towns like Musadu which hunters, smiths, traders and artisans from the north founded in earlier times. Warriors acquired many slaves through warfare and trade, and used them to fight and transport goods. When the warriors and their *morilu* moved to these areas, they often competed for power with initiation associations. In the Musadu epic, this struggle was symbolized in the confrontation that developed between several *morilu* and Foningama the “Warrior Chief,” and Zo Musa the “Blacksmith Chief.”¹ In this regard, Sunjata and Sumaworo respectively foreshadowed Foningama and Zo Musa.

The struggle in Musadu between the *morilu*-backed warriors and the initiation societies did not end with Zo Musa’s departure. The oral traditions indicate that the Tumaningèmè-Kromah who opposed Zo Musa were also probably affiliated with power societies. Foningama reportedly also moved against the Kromah and overcame them in a protracted cultural and political struggle. Foningama, however, did not oust the Kromah from Musadu. The Kromah were not only too powerful and entrenched, but Foningama needed their support to give him spiritual power and legitimize his rise to Musadu’s chieftaincy. In return, some traditions claim that the two clans established an agreement whereby the Kromah retained many of the ritual and judicial functions that they exercised in pre-Foningama times. The other smiths and traders who did not leave with Zo Musa made enough accommodations so they could succeed in the new Maniyaka milieu.

¹See Brooks 1993:4,46-47,97-102,113-114; McIntosh 1998:262-263.

Sources claim also that the Kamara worked out a mutually agreeable relationship with a clan that seems to have represented Musadu's *morilu*, the Dole. The Dole might have lived in Musadu with the Kromah before Foningama arrived, and haltingly, like the Kromah, acceded to Foningama's rise to power. A symbiosis often developed between warriors and Islam in West Africa, and the case of Foningama is no exception. Even though warrior-*mansalu* killed and drank, they needed the advice, political leverage, spiritual help and economic benefits that Muslim *morilu* and traders offered. They often prayed, sent some of their children to Qur'anic schools, let their daughters marry Muslims, hosted Muslims at court, made Muslim sacrifices, and added Muslim amulets to their own sources of spiritual power. *Mansalu* nonetheless also had to meet the expectations of the non-Muslims whom they governed. They usually did not strictly hold to all of the festivals and religious observances like the fast, or demand that people follow reforms to the point of alienating them. *Mansalu* usually also retained links with local societies and religious leaders so they could get their advice and access their spiritual power. *Mansalu* who made these kinds of ties with Islam were often considered "half islamized," neither Muslim or non-Muslim.²

With the infusion of new settlers from the savannah and the exodus of many non-Maniyaka into the forest, the Maniyaka and Soninke eventually came to represent the majority of the population. This demographic shift, coupled with Foningama's rise to the chieftaincy, led to certain transformations. Maniyakã became Konya-Mani's lingua franca. Smiths and traders who knew the indigenous languages now started to speak more Maniyakã. Foningama and the new Maninka immigrants also helped the Manding

²Levtzion 1968:54,109-110; 1985:95; 1987a:22; Brooks 1993:103; Launay 1997b:305-309.

tripartite system become a permanent part of the social and political landscape of Konya-Mani. This system was represented by nobles and commoners, bards and other artisans (*nyamakalaw*), and slaves. Islam started to become the prevailing religion, especially after the Jakhanke *morilu* blessed Foningama's *wakèlèn salaka*. Foningama, as the new *mansa* of Musadu, seems to have formed the core of a 'chiefdom' (*kafu*) or cavalry state that was centered around the *Konya so luulu* or the 'five towns of Konya': Musadu, Diakolidu, Beyla, Dukulela and Nyèla.³ Mid-nineteenth century Liberian explorers called this area the "kingdom" of Manding or Mani.⁴ At its height, Musadu and Konya-Mani's influence seems to have become considerable as it forged economic, social, political and religious alliances with individuals and groups who migrated north to Simandu and south toward the coast; the territorial space that Konya-Mani directly controlled might not have ever extended much beyond the *Konya so luulu*. The nature of power and authority that developed in the 'five towns of Konya' seems to parallel that of the "twelve Maninka Mori villages" of Kankan-Baté that emerged once century later. According to Emily Osborn,

³Person 1971b:116-117; Kaba 1973:323, fn. 4; Donzo, App. 7.28, l. 1-23; see Roberts 1987:10; Webb 1995:134; Wright 1997:34. The state that Foningama formed (or at least laid the foundation for) contrasts with the fairly advanced but still relatively stateless polity that existed when Zo Musa was in Musadu. Zo Musa's Musadu functioned more like Horton's "large compact village" (1985:106-113) and d'Azevedo's "conservative village chiefdom" (1989:102-104) where initiation associations were important instruments of power. Senessee Kromah claimed that Foningama ruled *Konya so luulu* from Musadu, and that Foningama bequeathed these towns to the Kromah, Bèrètè, Dukule, Nyèn, and Turé who are respectively said to have founded these towns (Kromah 1961, in Massing 1985:37; see Tracy 1869:240-41; Anderson 1870/1971:93; Chatelier 1899:162; "Connaissance/Beyla" n.d.; Kaba 1971:68; Sanneh 1972:10; Beavogui 1973-74:54,64; Camara 1977:4; Sakou 1983:12; Millimono 1989:12; Sidibé 1989:30; Geysbeek/Kamara 1991:67-69; Ford 1992:52; Konneh 1992:79). According to Moliké Sidibé, Tumaningèmè ruled several villages in the twelve *jamana* or *kafu* of Konya-Mani; Foningama became the *mansa* of this chiefdom when he succeeded Tumaningèmè (1997:84). Other traditions suggest that these towns were founded after Foningama came to power. The Maniyaka usually called Foningama a *masa* (*mansa*) (Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1, l. 216-223; Tènu Kamä Kamara 1992, App. 7.19, l. 2780-2786; Fata Moussa Kièlè 1992, App. 7.21, l. 256-290; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29, l. 206-221, 2888-2895, App. 7.34, l. 74-92).

⁴Sims 1859-1860/2003; Anderson 1870/1971:5,92-93.

The state of Baté must be viewed as a web of human relationships that grew out of the chief's courtyard, not as a territorial or spatial unit. Precolonial states in the Soudan expanded by incorporating additional human networks into ties of obligation, dependence, and alliance. These states shrunk or disappeared when these networks disintegrated or were shattered... Kankan-Baté can be appreciated as a state whose influence, not its formal territorial domain, extended far beyond the twelve Maninka Mori villages adjacent to the Milo river.⁵

The argument is made in Chapter 8 that this region of Mani with Musadu at its capital was probably the same region of Mandi or Malem that European writers described in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They wrote that Mandi had considerable influence over several chiefs who ruled as far south as the coastline of Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Fonɔŋgama Succeeds Tumaningèmè as the *mansa* of Musadu

Kromah-Kamara Relations

The Kromah were the most powerful clan in Musadu until Fonɔŋgama arrived. Two of Musadu's founders, Musa and Zo Jala Musa the *ngana* ('master'), were likely Kromah, as was the later Zo Musa and his rival Tumaningèmè. Oral traditionists also say that Fonɔŋgama's mother was a Kromah, and that her name was Dama (Dèma) [194].⁶

Most of the sources indicate that a Kamara married Dama Kromah and sired Fonɔŋgama very early in the Manden. In doing so, they compress the thirteenth century period that is normally associated with Fakoli and Sunjata of the Manden with the late-fifteenth century to early-sixteenth century Fonɔŋgama of Musadu. The Maniyaka live in a

⁵Osborn 2001:26; see Kaba 1973; Fairhead et. al. 2003.

⁶One source said that Fonɔŋgama's mother was a Kromah (Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16, l. 604-618). Others stated that her first name was Dama or Dèma (Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3, l. 10-25; Vase Kamara 1985, App. 7.6; n.d., App. 7.38, l. 98-104; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Sidibé 1997:84, l. 228-234). Vase Kamara and Wata Mammadi Kamara, whose testimonies often exhibit feedback, claimed that Dama was a Kromah from Musadu who went to Diemou and married the man who became Fonɔŋgama's father, Sumaka .

society that does not deal with rigid notions of linear time, especially where ancestors are concerned, so everyone is thought to have lived together during roughly the same time in the distant past. Narrators therefore have no problem making Fakoli and Foningama contemporaries as they seem to do in several of the traditions that are described in this section.⁷

Mammadi Kènè said that Fakoli's full-sister Dama became Foningama's mother, and Layi Kèwulèn Kamara stated that Foningama's parents were married in the Manden.⁸ According to Tènu Kamã Kamara who narrated the most detailed story, Fakoli had two daughters in the Manden named Maligbè Dama and Kawa Dama who both gave birth to Foningama. Maligbè Dama and Kawa Dama personify the essence of female power in the Musadu epic;⁹ Kamara said that they produced the most important occult objects in early times, but ceded their role as the leading makers of sorcery to men after men defeated them in an epic sorcery contest.¹⁰ Maligbè Dama and Kawa Dama supposedly had two large clay pots that they used to make sorcery potions. One day, after God put a chain around the necks of the pots, Fakoli challenged the women to a tug-of-war contest. Both sexes tied ropes around the pots and pulled in opposite directions. The men won the contest and the pots. The women became the 'source' (*sabu*) of Fakoli's *dawali* or 'occult power' because he received the pots from them.¹¹ Maligbè Dama and Kawa Dama were

⁷D. Conrad, personal communication, 23 March 2002.

⁸App. 7.18; App. 7.16, l. 604-618.

⁹App. 7.19, l. 1-49, 741-748, 790-904. Kamara also told how Foningama's mother Foni Yama delivered Foningama near a *fonio* field (Ch. 3). Maligbè Dama and Kawa Dama probably rank with Sogolon Konde and Nyana Jukudulaye as having been some of the era's most powerful *sumuso* or 'sorceresses' (see Conrad 1999b).

¹⁰Kamara's story about the Dama sisters is akin to tales in other traditions which claim that women were the original founders of esoteric associations like the Poro and Komo (Sayers 1927:24; d'Azevedo 1980:15-16; 1994:358; Spindel 1988:304; Brett-Smith 1996:29, fn. 12).

¹¹See Conrad 1999b:190-192.

also *kiba* who could supposedly change into men. A *kiba* or *musofadi* was the “female counterpart to *kefadi* (a formidable male),” “a woman with a powerful or masculine physique.”¹²

Tènu Kamã Kamara said that Jomãgulu Kamara married the two Dama sisters. Prior to their marriage, the sisters had only given birth to two Kòma related *kòlòti* (*korote*); a ‘piece of clay’ to Maligbè Dama and a *saafè* or ‘sheep horn’ to Kawa Dama. *Kòlòti* are poisons that sorcerers or sorceresses usually make from herbs that they supposedly shoot through the air to injure or kill their enemies.¹³ After Jomãgulu married Fakoli’s daughters, they gave birth to Foningama.¹⁴ Foningama’s mothers discerned that Foningama’s ‘name would fill the earth and sky... until the earth was torn apart like a piece of cloth.’ When Foningama’s parents died, Fakoli raised him. Foningama obtained his occult power from his mothers - from the sorcery pot and the two *kòlòti* that they produced, and from Fakoli who gave him is ‘medicine shirt’ and hat that was shaped like a hawk. Foningama put the clay and *saafè* on his shirt that reportedly protected him from getting killed by guns or knives.

Stories that the informants tell about the Dama sisters coincide with other oral narratives about who the *dama* represented in the Middle Niger. Traditions say that the Kamara, Traoré, Kromah, Baayo and other clans were *blaw* (*bla*) or some of the earliest people who migrated to the Manden after the Soninke successor states started to fall apart

¹²Brett-Smith 1994:17; Conrad 1999a:194-195,201.

¹³Imperato 1977:36; Cashion 1982:100; Brett-Smith 1996, fn. 139; Conrad 1999b:195,201, ln. 2149.

¹⁴This is similar to stories which claim that Fakoli’s uncle Sumaworo had three mothers who were sisters. After two of the sisters became pregnant with Sumaworo, the third sister delivered him. The unborn Sumaworo “magically migrated from one womb to another before finally being born” (Conrad 1999a:174,199, ln. 1196).

in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The *blaw* possessed the secret knowledge and links with the spirit world that were required to produce weapons, farming tools, domestic products and ritual implements. They were also ‘warriors’ whose main instruments of destruction, bows and arrows, were mediums of occult power. The traditions credit Fakoli with having been the Manden’s leading sorcerer and master smith, and leader of all the *blaw* except for the Kamara and Traoré. The Kamara are said to have ruled powerful blacksmith towns such as Niani and Tabon before Sunjata was born.¹⁵ Dama seems to be equivalent to Damba or Dabo, a name that is only ascribed to *bla* woman. Damba usually only applies to Kamara *funé*, but can include women of any other *bla* clan such as the Kromah in Tènu Kamã Kamara’s story. In Manden traditions, later-arriving and politically dominant nobles like the Keita often offered women to the descendants of earlier-settling *blaw* like the Kamara.¹⁶ Likewise, in the Musadu accounts, a Kromah offered his Dama daughter(s) to a Kamara in the Manden. One account also states that Foningama married a Kromah after he settled in Musadu.¹⁷

The Kamara succeed the Kromah as mansa

Several narratives indicate that Foningama replaced Tumaningèmè Kromah as the *mansa* of Musadu after Zo Musa left Musadu [195].¹⁸ Even though some oral traditions claim that the Kromah voluntarily transferred the chieftaincy to Foningama, they probably

¹⁵Moraes Farias 1989:159-160; Conrad 1992:174-180; Brett-Smith 1996:5.

¹⁶Conrad 1995:104-106.

¹⁷There is a difference between the Manden and Musadu accounts. Whereas the noble (e.g., a Keita) married a *dama* (e.g., a Kamara *funé*) in the former, a noble-*bla* (Kromah) gave his *dama* daughter(s) to a Kamara in the latter. In the Musadu traditions, Dama is a Kromah, not a Kamara *funé* woman who married a noble.

¹⁸Seku Salifu said that a Traoré was the *mansa* when Foningama first went to Musadu (App. 5.1) [196]. He seems to have misidentified Kromah for Traoré given all of the other claims which state that a Kromah was Musadu’s leader (Ch. 5).

only ceded the chieftaincy to him under duress as several accounts state. Dauvillier's informants said that Tumaningèmè was the *mansa* of Musadu when Foningama defeated Zo Musa, and that Foningama succeeded a Kromah as the *mansa*.¹⁹ Later sources stated that Foningama displaced the Kromah after he became a more outstanding landlord in Musadu than Fakoli or Femo Dole, established total authority in Musadu after Zo Musa went south, and became *mansa* after Zo Musa left Musadu while Tumaningèmè was still there.²⁰ Others said that Tumaningèmè appointed Foningama *mansa* a few years after he moved to Musadu, or that Tumaningèmè transferred the chieftaincy to him after Foningama helped him fend off an attack by Kònsaba.²¹

The most severe criticism of Foningama's behavior came from Alhaji Kabine Kromah of Diakolidu.²² Although Kromah's testimony might be biased because Foningama ousted his ancestor from the chieftaincy of Musadu, his story generally agrees with other accounts which hold that Foningama challenged the Kromah for the chieftaincy. Kromah said that Tumaningèmè only transferred the chieftaincy of Musadu to Foningama after Foningama agreed to let Tumaningèmè judge the most important cases and allow the Kromah to break an unspecified law. He also claimed that Tumaningèmè gave one of his clanswomen to Foningama after he became *mansa*. Later, however, Kromah claimed that Foningama killed nine of her children to accumulate more power when he made his 'sacrifice of one thousand.' While *mansalu* could act with a certain sense of abandon, his

¹⁹In the first version of Musadu's history in which he did not mention Tumaningèmè, Dauvillier wrote that 'Fere Kama was elected head of Moussadou' after he made the land prosperous and helped the *morilu* defeat Zo Musa. In his second version, Dauvillier wrote that even though Zo Musa founded Musadu, Tumaningèmè became Musadu's *mansa* because he owned Zo Musa.

²⁰Kromah 1961, in Massing 1985:38; Beavogui 1973-74:48,61-62; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Geysbeek/Kamara 1994:60,73, l. 16-19,443.

²¹"Monographie/Beyla" n.d., App. 4.8; Moriké Sidibé 1989, App. 4.15; 1997:86, l. 293-300.

²²Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; 1993, App. 7.34.

action was so threatening that Foningama and his descendants were forever cursed.

Mammadi Kènè said that after Fakoli's adopted son Foningama fought for the land and became 'very unruly,' Fakoli granted the chieftaincy of Musadu to him along with his quiver and arrows - his symbols of political and spiritual power.²³ Fakoli did not turn Musadu's chieftaincy over to Foningama from a position of entire weakness; he set several conditions wherein his clan would remain dominant over the Kamara and thus provide a check-and-balance to help restrain the Kamara from abusing their power. The Kromah and Kamara agreed that the Kamara should feed the Kromah, do the Kromah's bidding, let the Kromah take their share of the spoils of war, and permit the Kromah to judge cases.²⁴ The Kamara should not abuse their power or steal. These claims boded well with the Kromah's role as landowners; landowners often retain leadership roles in the spiritual, judicial and ritual workings of a community after more powerful groups have abrogated their political supremacy.

Foningama's totemic shift in Musadu: from 'elephant' to 'leopard'

Some informants told how Foningama became the *mansa* of Musadu by explaining how Foningama replaced his elephant 'taboo' or 'totem' (*tana, tènè*) for the Kromah's leopard totem [197]. Totems are usually plants, animals or animal parts that the Manding and other Africans link to the human world. Totems unite clans and other groups, define

²³ App. 7.18; see Conrad 1992:176; McIntosh 1998:137,238.

²⁴ Linard similarly reported that the Kamara and Kromah formed an alliance in Konya-Mani after the Kamara conquered the land. The clans divided the land and responsibilities for governing the land. The Kamara were allowed to receive fines levied on those who were convicted of assassination. The Kromah were given the 'best parts' of all the sacrifices and became the recipients of fines levied on those who injured or killed others (1948, App. 4.6).

positions in the social hierarchy, and identify legitimate marriage partners.²⁵ Although Foningama acquired his father's totem when he was born, he got his mother's totem after he became separated from his family.²⁶

Legends explain how totems become linked with people, and define the laws that govern totem-human relations. Origin stories usually explain that after an animal or plant saved a person's life, the person who was rescued stipulates some prohibitions - one being that their descendants should serve that animal or plant who became their totem and not take its life.²⁷ The totem, in turn, protects the members of the group and ensures their success by supplying them with their own *nyama* or 'life force.' People must therefore please their totem to avoid its wrath, retain its protection, and procure its blessings.²⁸ The leopard, as an example, protects the Kamara or Koivogui, so members of this clan should not kill leopards.²⁹

Should a person break one of his or her clan's totemic laws, the totem's *nyama*

²⁵Hopkins 1971:115, n. 5; Zahan 1974:9.

²⁶Individuals sometimes inherit their father or mother's totems at the same time. Sunjata, for instance, had his father's 'lion' and mother's 'buffalo' totem (Weisswange 1976; Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:14; Bulman 1990:193-195; Misiugin/Vydrine 1994:104-108). Besides being able to acquire totems individually as Foningama did in this instance (see Brun 1910:847-850; Schwab 1947:345), people can garner additional totems and/or discard the ones that they have by sharing migration experiences with other peoples (Erim 1987:154), forming alliances with political groups (Erim 1987:154), and having new totems revealed to them through dreams and visions (Camara 1954:75). Some Manding believe that their totems change after they die (Bulman 1989:176; 1990:193). The Manding can have two or more totems. Although some Kromah and Kamara respectively have the 'viper' and 'red deer' taboo, their primary taboo is the leopard (Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1992, App. 7.17; Tènu Kamã Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; see Erim 1987:154-155).

²⁷The Kamara, for instance, also make oaths or swear over the leopard (Moussa Kièlè 1992, App. 7.12). Persons with leopard taboos in some areas can also insult others, but can not be insulted (Ture 1972-73:77).

²⁸Sayers 1927:27; Schwab 1947:352; Niane 1980:91, n. 40; Rosen 1971:3; Hopkins 1971:115, n. 5; Zahan 1974:9-10; Johnson 1986:204; Conrad 1990:46, ln. 42.

²⁹According to one Loma story, the Koivogui got their name and totem after a man hid in a cave while he was fleeing from his enemies. A 'leopard' (*koi*, *kòli*, *kwèi* in Loma) that was in the cave protected the man from his pursuers. The man's descendants adopted the leopard as their totem, and he and his descendants were thereafter named after the leopard - Koi-vogui (Koivogui n.d.; see Soko Kone 1992, App. 7.15; Cutler, with Dwyer 1981:181). The Maniyaka equivalent of Koivogui is Kamara (Adam 1951:95; Suret-Canale 1963:34-35).

which is believed to empower and protect the individual is released and the person or group with that totem may be punished. According to some variants of the Sunjata epic, the hero only defeated Sumaworo because the Sumaworo told Sunjata's sister that his totem was a cock's spur. Having broken the law of his taboo by revealing it, the spur's occult power vanished from Sumaworo and did not protect him when Sunjata shot him with an arrow.³⁰ Conversely, the Manding's greatest heroes violate taboos, harness the spiritual force that is released when the taboo is violated, and add that power to their own repertoire.³¹ This happened after Nyankuman Duga played Sumaworo's sacred balafon, and after Sunjata sat down in Sumaworo's 'sacrifice hammock.'³² A classic example of taboo breaking in the Musadu epic occurred when Foningama supposedly bathed in Fakoli's sorcery pot in a story that is told below.

The sources claim that Foningama's totem was an 'elephant' (*sama*) when he left Mau and Gbè, but that he adopted the Kromah's 'leopard' totem (*sòli, wala*) after he traveled west and settled in Musadu.³³ This explains why the leopard is now the totem of the Kamara who live in Konya-Mani and the regions north and west where the Konya-

³⁰Innes 1974:125, n. 772; Camara 1980:204.

³¹Johnson 1986:43, 212, ln. 1910ff.

³²E.g., Belcher 1999a:101; Kouyaté 1987, in Conrad 1999a:180,186; Kouyaté 1988, in Conrad 1999a:59; Conde c. 1981a, in Conrad /1999a:119. Other examples of people who acquired more power after they broke a taboo are Fajigi after he committed incest with his mother (e.g., Brett-Smith 1996:16), and Sunjata after he stole as a youth (e.g., Bulman 1996:90-91), sat on Tando Tanan Mansa Konkon's prayer skin, and drank from the sacred well of Tabon (e.g., Conde c. 1981a/1999a:123).

³³Le Chatelier 1899:96; Beavogui 1973-74:48,61-62; Weisswange 1976:4,8; Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1992, App. 7.17f; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20; Bakari Kromah 1992, App. 7.25. Binger (1892, 2:376), Humblot (1918:534) and Germain (1984:196) link the Kromah and Kamara with the 'leopard.' The southeast Guinean Maniyakā words for 'leopard' (*Panthera pardus*) are *sòli* (*sole, sule*) and *wala* (*wara, wada*) (see Cutler, with Dwyer 1981:128; Vydrine 1999:300,310). Although some informants insist that *sòli* is Konyakā and *wala* is Maniyakā (Bakari Kromah 1992, App. 7.25; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29), most generally interchange the words. Djjobba Kamara wrote that *wara* is Maninkakā from Kankan, and that the Maniyakā speaking people of Koadu-Gboni in northwest Liberia say *sorli* (*sòli*) (personal communication, 7 July 1999). French writers often translate *sòli* or *wala* as 'panther' or 'tiger' instead of 'leopard.' The Proto-Bantu word for 'leopard' was *gòyi* (Vansina 1990:276-277).

Mani Kamara later dispersed in Sumandu, Buse, Konokòlò, Koadu, Gboni and neighboring areas.³⁴ The descendants of Kònsaba Kamara who lived in Gbè, Mau and eastern Côte d'Ivoire still have the elephant taboo.³⁵

Descendants of Foningama and Tumaningèmè explained that Foningama acquired the leopard taboo because he was related to the Kromah. Tènu Kamã Kamara claimed that the Kromah raised Foningama after his parents died.³⁶ Later, when Foningama's clansman Kònsaba and Bala Kamara sacrificed a cow, Fakoli instructed Foningama to go and receive his Kamara portion of the sacrifice (the chest). After Foningama arrived, Kònsaba and Bala told him to return home and get the Kromah share (the thigh). When Foningama went back and relayed the message to Fakoli, Fakoli lamented but gave his portion of the sacrifice to Foningama. Kònsaba then dreamed that Foningama's new taboo would be the leopard, and declared that Foningama had rejected his family's taboo. Kamara explained that the source of Foningama's power was the leopard, and that Foningama 'would get all kinds of power when he dreamed about the leopard.'

³⁴Linard 1948, App. 4.6; Korvah 1960/94:61; Weisswange 1976:4,8; Turé 1972-73:77; Beavogui 1973-74:48,61-62; Lanse Kamara 1990, App. 7.11; Soko Konè 1992, App. 7.15; Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5; Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Tènu Kamã Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20; Moussa Kièlè 1992, App. 7.12; Umar Komara 1992, App. 7.24; Jèkè Kamara 1992, App. 7.26; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; 1993, App. 7.35; Alafã Konè 1992, App. 7.31; Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28; Blama Kamara 1993, App. 7.33c; Djobba Kamara (personal communication, 7 July 1999).

³⁵Weisswange 1976:4; Soko Kone 1992, App. 7.15; Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5; Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Tènu Kamã Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Umar Komara 1992, App. 7.24; Bakari Kromah 1992, App. 7.25; The smaller elephants of the forest are the *Loxodonta cyclotis*. The larger elephants which reside in the savannah are the *Loxodonta africana africana* (Arnoldi/Ezra 1992:100). Did the Kamara acquire the elephant taboo after they left Manden, or are the identities of the Kamara taboos in the Manden a detail that I have missed in the literature? Elephants lived along the Niger bend from the tenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries, so the Africans who lived along the bend certainly knew about elephants (Nicholson 1979:47-48; Arnoldi/Ezra 1992:99-101). Fakoli's 'guardian spirit' is said to have been the 'eagle,' and Tabon Wana Fran Camara's totem was reportedly the 'black serpent' in one account (Camara 1980:202-203; Conrad 1992:191, n. 55).

³⁶Stories which say that the Kromah adopted Foningama are analogous to traditions which claim that the Konè took Fakoli as a foster child after his mother abandon him to her co-wife (e.g., Conrad 1999b:205).

Fata Bakari Kromah showed how Fakoli, with all of his association with Sunjata, became an important intermediary for the change of the Kamara totems. He said that a leopard always accompanied Fakoli when he sat by himself, and that he sometimes shape-shifted into a leopard. The “moral bond” between totems and clans can become so inseparable that human beings are believed to be able to take on the physical manifestation of their totem.³⁷ Kromah claimed that Fakoli bathed in an occult-laden clay pot. The liquid could have been protective medicine that hunters, warriors and others used to cover their bodies.³⁸ Kromah said that when Fakoli was away, Foningama would bathe in his sorcery pot. One day, Fakoli caught Foningama bathing in his pot when he returned home. Resigned, Fakoli said that Foningama could not reverse what he had done, so he gave the leopard to the Kamara.³⁹ Although Foningama violated the Kromah’s taboo when he lay in Fakoli’s pot, he was so strong that he was able to control the *nyama* that was released every time he violated the taboo, and added the leopard *nyama* to his own store of powers. He thus meddled with Tumaningèmè’s chieftaincy just as Nyankuman Duga did when he played Sumaworo’s balafon, and as Sunjata did when he sat in Sumaworo’s hammock.

The account by Francis V. Jala Kamara is a good example of how an oral tradition has been structured so much that it has become a folktale.⁴⁰ He told how a man threw his baby named Namulu into a garbage heap because the baby was ugly. A leopard that went to the waste pile rescued the baby and raised him. Namulu went into the town and became

³⁷Jackson 1990:65; see Camara 1954:74-75; Roberts 1983:93; Ross 1992a:65.

³⁸Conrad 1999b:205. Conversely, some state that Fakoli killed Niani Mansa Kara Kamara while the Kamara *mansa* was taking a bath - when he was not suited in his protective armor (Bulman 1990:351). Oral traditions similarly say that Fakoli washed in the “secret water” of a *boli*. In Muslim contexts, such washings could refer to ablutions (Conrad 1992:190, n. 39, 194, n. 89).

³⁹Sumaworo similarly returned home one day and caught Nyankuman Duga who entered his private room and played his sacred balafon (*supra*).

⁴⁰App. 7.27; see Belcher 1999a:7,100-101.

popular after he grew up, but he became more belligerent as his strength increased. He started to fight and steal, and became the *mansa* after he subdued the town. Because several oral traditions identify names, places and sequences of events that explain how Foningama acquired a leopard taboo, one can interpret this folktale. The baby was Foningama. The man who threw him into the garbage pit was a Kamara like Kònsaba with an elephant taboo. When a Kromah took Foningama from the garbage pile and raised him, Foningama effectively acquired his totem. After Foningama became an adult, he went to Musadu where some people initially liked him. Foningama then became powerful, took advantage of people, fought Zo Musa, contended with Tumaningèmè, and eventually became Musadu's *mansa*. Foningama's power source derived from the leopard that rescued and raised him, and from the garbage or *nyama* where Foningama was originally thrown. *Nyama* means 'energy or life force,' but can also be translated as 'garbage.'⁴¹

Foningama's acquisition of the Kromah's taboo suggests that Foningama added his uncle's *nyama* to his own power, and signifies a break from the eastern Kònsabasi Kamara who rejected him. In order for Foningama to establish his own base of power, he needed to disassociate himself from his Kamara relatives. Indeed, Foningama's acquisition of a new totem became just as important as his clan name.⁴² The new totem symbolized the transformation of the Kamara as they gained power in Musadu and later migrated to other places.

Uncles are supposed to be especially tolerant of their nephews in Manding culture,

⁴¹McNaughton 1988:18.

⁴²The taboo link between two people, especially when based on a common migration experience, can be an important aid to help historians reconstruct the past (Weisswange 1976:2; see Sayers 1927:31; Sibley/Westermann 1928:117-118; Korvah 1960/1994:61; Schaffer/Cooper 1980:50; Erim 1987; Vansina 1990:82).

even if their nephews are unruly.⁴³ Foningama, it seems, manipulated his nephew status so much that he became Tumaningèmè's political superior. The judicial, political, and ritual rights that the Kromah retained speak not only of things that they kept as 'land owners,' but of things that they negotiated with or wrestled from the Kamara. Traditions that tell how Foningama's totem changed from elephant to leopard also expose tension; Fakoli only gave his taboo and instruments of power to Foningama after Foningama essentially forced him to do so by fighting, stealing and violating his totem.

The Symbolism of Elephants and Leopards

Foningama's switch from the elephant to leopard taboo symbolized the kind of *mansa* that he became. The Manding, like many Africans, equate elephants and leopards with power, wealth and wisdom.⁴⁴ The Bamana believe that elephants represent the 'enormity' and 'universality of all knowledge.'⁴⁵ The elephant has the largest body, trunk, tusks, ears and appetite of Africa's land animals.⁴⁶ Given their size, power and authority, many believe that elephant are the 'king of forest animals.'⁴⁷ Tènu Kamã Kamara equated elephants with the Kamara, saying that they were respectively the biggest animal and clan.⁴⁸ Hence, the Maniyaka alternative call the elephant *soba* or 'big animal.'⁴⁹

⁴³Conrad 1999a:126, n. 1608. An alliance was reportedly formed between the Kamara, Kromah, and Konde in the 'Upper Niger valley' after Fakoli Kromah and Fanoni Konde married Kamara women (Humblot 1951:513). This placed the Kamara and Kromah in a uncle-nephew relationship, which is reverse from the situation in Konya-Mani.

⁴⁴E.g., Donner 1939:174; Lamp 1983:227; Malan 1985:11-12; McNaughton 1988:135; Vansina 1990:73-74; Ravenhill 1992:116.

⁴⁵Zahan 1960:228, in Arnoldi/Ezra 1992:99.

⁴⁶Besolow 1891:51; Arnoldi/Ezra 1992:99;111; Ravenhill 1992:116,126; Ross 1992a:65-67; 1992b:12.

⁴⁷Holas 1952a:52; Schulze 1973:41; Consentino 1992:83; see Wilks 1993:7.

⁴⁸App. 7.19.

⁴⁹Vydrine 1999:300. One of the names given for Dama Kromah is Makula Dama Soba. 'Big animal' or 'elephant' might be a good translation for the Soba in Dama's name because she was a great sorceress. *Soba* can also be translated 'big horse' or 'big village,' two other images that symbolize power

Although leopards are not as large as elephants, Africans who live in the rainforest also associate leopards with political power and royalty.⁵⁰ One aspect of power is the potential to destroy, a trait that generally characterizes leopards more than elephants. In the Musadu epic, leopards become ‘too wild,’ are associated with warriors, and are believed to be the animals that chase people and eat them.⁵¹ One etymology of “Kamala” or Kamara is even given as *ka a mala* - ‘to control (*mala*) him (*a*).’⁵² Leopards also have a greater tendency than elephants to destroy farms, kill domestic stock and attack human beings; they are often “public enemy number one.” Communities make protective medicine against leopards, and hunters who kill leopards are praised.⁵³ Whereas elephants are said to base their supremacy on a “broad constituency,” leopards gain their position through force. The leopard uses his “unbridled power to administer justice, to seize what is rightfully his and to protect through aggression toward their natural allies.”⁵⁴

Fonɔŋgama Accumulates Power

The Jakhanke and the Spread of Islam in Konya-Mani

After Fonɔŋgama became the *mansa* of Musadu, the oral traditions say that he consolidated and expanded his power by offering a *wakèlèn salaka* or ‘sacrifice of one thousand.’ Fonɔŋgama’s *wakèlèn salaka*, which was the greatest sacrifice that only the most powerful people could make, was affected by several *morilu*. The most important

and might.

⁵⁰Vansina 1990:74,104.

⁵¹Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5; Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16; Umar Komara 1992, App. 7.24; Blama Kamara 1993, App. 7.33c.

⁵²Blama Kamara 1993, App. 7.33c.

⁵³Schwab 1947:90; Johnson 1954:68; Ruel 1969:50; Holas 1975:194; Ellis 1999:73.

⁵⁴Lamp 1983:227.

was a Sware. The other *morilu* who participated in making the sacrifice were, according to a combined reading of all the sources, Dole, Cissé, Sanoe, Kanè, Dukule, Sherif, Kuyateh and Fofana.⁵⁵ Most of these clans are associated with a specialized group of *morilu* called the Jakhanke. The Jakhanke elevated the status of Islam in Konya-Mani and challenged initiation societies. After the *morilu* performed the *wakèlèn salaka*, Foningama persuaded them to settle in Konya-Mani and marry one of his daughters. He allegedly also tricked some of them into settling in a nearby town.

The Jakhanke were founded by Al-Hajj Salim Sware (Suware).⁵⁶ Al-Hajj Sware made such an important impact in West Africa that many groups claim him as their ancestor. The Soninke symbolically link all Soninke *morilu* to him, and most Muslim scholars from today's Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana trace their line of training through Al-Hajj Sware to the Prophet Muhammad.⁵⁷

The best sources for the life of Al-Hajj Sware are Arabic manuscripts which Jakhanke historians wrote that date from the early-twentieth century.⁵⁸ Although the sixteenth and seventeenth century Timbuktu *Tarikhs* do not mention Al-Hajj Salim Sware, historians do not question his authenticity.⁵⁹ Some of the Arabic manuscripts claim that

⁵⁵Three or more informants linked Dukule, Dole, and Sherif with Sware. Dukule and Sware were mentioned the most number of times.

⁵⁶Lansine Kaba suggested that the Sware mentioned in the Musadu epic might be associated with the Al-Hajj Salim Sware (personal communication, 1995). Kaba's comment encouraged me to examine the connection between the Jakhanke and other *morilu* who appear in the Musadu epic.

⁵⁷Wilks 1968:176-177; 2000:109. Some Soninke say that Al-Hajj Sware (Diakhaba Founé or Fade al-Hajj Suware) was a son of the mythical ancestor of the Soninke, Dinga (Adam 1903-04/1992:196; Monteil 1953/1992:233; see Wilks 1968:179; Levtzion 1973:16; Sanneh 1989:17, fn. 5).

⁵⁸Wilks 1968:169,170,176-177; Quimby 1975:612-617; Hunter 1976:436-446; Sanneh 1989:247-283.

⁵⁹Thanks to Andreas Massing for informing me that the *Tarikhs* do not mention Sware (personal communication, 20 Feb. 2001). Lamin Sanneh writes: "That al-Hajj Sālim was an historical figure is indubitable, and beyond that his influence is felt in all Jakhanke communities to such an extent that he must have been an exceptional leader in his time" (1989:16). According to Thomas Hunter, Sware "is a remote figure from whom most lines of Manding learning derive" (1976:437, fn. 8). Marie Perinbam believed that he was "a semi-legendary person" (1997:106).

Al-Hajj Sware founded Ja-Bambuk, and that he died in 1147 A.D.⁶⁰ Lamin Sanneh believes that 1147 A.D. may be a little early, but tentatively supports a thirteenth century time frame.⁶¹ Most other historians date Al-Hajj Sware later, sometime between the fifteenth and early-sixteenth centuries.⁶² I tentatively follow the later date because the Mohammadou Barhayorho who is said to have traveled to Mecca with Al-Hajj Sware was a verifiable sixteenth century figure.⁶³

Al-Hajj Sware spent the first part of his life in the town of Ja in Macina. After he returned from a pilgrimage to Mecca, he went to Jafunu for several years. Sware eventually settled in or founded the town of Ja that is situated in the Bambuk region of the Senegambia, and created a community of scholar-merchants who dispersed throughout much of West Africa and preached a peaceful brand of Islam.⁶⁴ Sware established a center of learning for Muslim students in Ja-Bambuk. His community came to be known as the Jakhanke, 'the people of Jakha' or 'the people of Ja.' Although the identity of the Jakhanke is based on their place of origin, most of Al-Hajj Sware's followers were

⁶⁰Hunter 1977:438.

⁶¹Sanneh 1989:20,27-31.

⁶²Wilks 1968:177-178; 1989:98; 2000:97; Galloway 1974:153; Quimby 1975:607; Hunter 1976:438; Launay 1992:79; Hunwick 1999:xxxvi, fn. 19.

⁶³Hunter argues that Mohammadou Barhayorho's father Mahmūd (d. 1543) traveled to Mecca with Sware, not Mohammadou (d. 1594) (1977:188).

⁶⁴Levtzion 1987a; Sanneh 1989; Launay 1992:21,78-82,232, n. 11. Ja-Bambuk is one of the towns that the Soninke migrated to after the Wagadu empire started to fall apart in the eleventh century (Levtzion 1973:16; Wilks 2000). Philip Curtin casts the Jakhanke as "merchant-cleric" who were primarily traders (1975:67), whereas Lamin Sanneh portrays the Jakhanke as "clerics" (1989:7-9). In discussing the Curtin-Sanneh debate, Martin Klein notes that there is really "no contradiction" between the two views: "Islam was basic to the image that the Jakhanke had of themselves, but... what is important is that they were hard men with a good eye for opportunity both in agriculture and trade" (1988:206, fn. 3). Nehemiah Levtzion echoes Klein: "surely, not all the Jakhanke were clerics,... the majority pursued other vocations, mainly farming and trading. Still, they all identified with the heritage of *al-hājj* Sālim Sware, the model scholar-cleric" (1987b:27). Thus, Al-Hajj Salim Sware is theoretically the model whom the Jakhanke follow, although many engaged in farming and trade to support the overall clerical image that they portrayed as a group.

Soninke.⁶⁵ Al-Hajj Sware “developed the fundamental triad of clerical life: diligence in learning, farming, and travel or mobility, the last of which would undoubtedly include some trading.” This triad respectively included divination, the use of slaves to give scholars time to pursue their literary activities, and evangelism and education. Sware created new schools, set education standards, produced learning material, wrote legal opinions, and presided over the Friday prayers.⁶⁶ His style and teachings have generally come to be known as the “Suwarian tradition.”⁶⁷

Sware taught Muslims how to maintain their true identity while living in *dar al-harb* or the lands where rulers did not enforce Islamic law. Because, Sware explained, unbelief is a product of ignorance rather than wickedness, God destines some to remain unbelievers and others to convert. As God is the only one who can lead someone to convert, mankind should not actively evangelize or force unbelievers to become Muslims. Muslims can live under the authority of an unbelieving ruler so long as the ruler permits them to practice their religion. Muslims should study and follow the law of God so they can be good examples to unbelievers, and so God will accept them on Judgement Day. Ivor Wilks cautions that “al-Hajj Sālim is to be seen not as originating a tradition of learning in the Western Sudan, but as reinvigorating and restructuring an already existing one.” Sware referred back to a minor strain of traditions in Maliki jurisprudence that permitted Muslims to live in the lands of unbelievers so long as the leaders allowed the

⁶⁵Sanneh 1989:4,18; Hunwick 1990:151. Except for the Manding Kamara and Jawara, Al-Hajj Salim Sware’s early followers were Soninke: Cissé, Sware, Sako, Karara, Maigha, Fadiga, Kaba, Fofana-Girasi, Darame, Silla, Gassame, Turé and Kayasi (Sanneh 1976:61; 1989:8-22).

⁶⁶He organized his clerical community into four quarters: Sware *morilu* who governed religious life and dealt with outsiders; his heirs the Darame; the Fofana-Girasi who regulated the commercial affairs of the community; and the Fadiga governed student life and farm labor (Sanneh 1989:8-22).

⁶⁷E.g., Wilks 1989:25,112; 2000:97; Launay 1992:21; Moraes Farias 1997:259.

Muslims to follow their own laws.⁶⁸ After Al-Hajj Salim Sware died, Ja-Bambuk became unsettled and his community dispersed along many of the major trade routes of West Africa.⁶⁹

Some of Al-Hajj Sware's students or his student's descendants spread his teachings to Upper Guinea. Muhammad Dukule went to Koro in modern southwest Côte d'Ivoire. Dukule's most notable students were Fofana who became important teachers.⁷⁰ Muhammad al-Buni migrated to the now ruined town of Mafarru that was probably situated in the mountains southeast of Kankan. One of al-Buni's pupils taught Umar Fofana of Kankan. Umar Fofana taught Al-Hajj Uthman Sanoe. The Sanoe had a considerable impact in present-day Côte d'Ivoire and western Burkina Faso. Four generations of Sanoe sparked "a great renewal of Suwarian learning" from the mid-eighteenth to the early-nineteenth centuries in the regions of Kani, Koro and Boron that are not far east of Konya-Mani.⁷¹ The Sanoe also developed secondary centers of influence in Sierra Leone, western Liberia, the Sankaran, Baté, and Konya-Mani as this part of the Musadu epic indicates.⁷²

Fonigama's wakèlèn salaka

In 1965, Seku Salifu of Monrovia narrated the first of a dozen stories that explain

⁶⁸Wilks 1968:180; 2000:95-98.

⁶⁹Sanneh holds that the Jakhanke left Ja-Bambuk in the fifteenth century, two centuries after Al-Hajj Sware died (1989:28). Most scholars apparently assume that the Jakhanke started to disperse within the generation or so after Al-Hajj Sware died in the fifteenth or early sixteenth century (e.g., Hunter 1976:453; Wilks 2000:97).

⁷⁰Wilks 1968:180.

⁷¹Wilks 2000:101-103. For more information about the Sanoe, see Appendix H.6.

⁷²Skinner 1978:48; Anderson 1870/1971:22-23; Humblot 1918:523, 528, 539; Howard 1997:58, n. 58. The Baayo and Kanè are important Jakhanke clans who migrated to Mau and later went to Musadu (Chapters 3,5).

how a *mori*, a Sware in his rendition, blessed a famous sacrifice to make Foningama more powerful [198-212].⁷³ Most sources agree that the key *mori* who blessed this offering was a Sware; others said that the *mori* in question was a Kènè (Kanè) or a Sumaworo.⁷⁴ The sources variously state that Foningama offered this *wakèlèn salaka* or ‘sacrifice of one thousand’ to acquire more children or sons, more land, or more prosperity for his children.⁷⁵ Foningama’s concern, with regard to his children, was that he only had daughters and that he wanted to have sons. Two speakers said that the blessing was passed on to all of Foningama’s descendants.⁷⁶

The Maniyaka described Foningama’s *wakèlèn salaka* in various ways. Several said that Foningama gave either one hundred, two hundred or one thousand of everything

⁷³Most of the speakers used the term *wakèlèn salaka* to identify the sacrifice that Foningama made, though Seku Salifu did not. Kèwulèn Kamara (1985, App. 7.5, l. 25-164) and Mammadi Kènè (App. 7.18) called this *Foningama’s wakèlèn salaka* or ‘Foningama’s sacrifice of one thousand.’ Others said *wulukèn* or a variation - *wiikèlèn*, *wulukili*, *wukili*, *wulukèlèn* (Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5, l. 25-164; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7a; Bakari Kromah 1990, App. 7.10; 1992, App. 7.25; Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1990, App. 8.2; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; 1993, App. 7.34; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37). Mammadi Kènè (App. 7.18) and Tènu Kamā Kamara (App. 7.19) claimed that *wulukèlèn* is an older word than *wakèlèn*. Their statements reflect the influence of Maninkakā on Maniyakā, as *wa* and *wulu* are Maniyakā and Maninkakā words respectively for ‘one thousand’ (Ellenberger n.d.: W6; Cutler, with Dwyer 1981:107; Vydrine 1999:310).

⁷⁴For Sware, see Jigbè Kamara (1970, App. 5.3), Fisher (1971:ix-x), Vase Kamala (1985, App. 7.6), Kèwulèn Kamara (1985, App. 7.5, l. 25-164), Tènu Kamā Kamara (1992, App. 7.19) and Fofin Sumawolo (1986, App. 7.7a, l. 66-81). Mammadi Kènè (App. 7.18) said that this *mori* was one of his Kènè ancestors. Others just said that a *mori* or some *morilu* were involved (Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Bakari Kromah 1990, App. 7.10; 1992, App. 7.25). According to Fofin Sumawolo, ‘our ancestor,’ presumably a Sumawolo, told Foningama to make the sacrifice (App. 7.7a, l. 66-81).

⁷⁵Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5, l. 25-164; Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37, l. 661-671; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; 1993, App. 7.34; Sumawolo 1984, App. 6.1; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a.

⁷⁶Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37. The interviewees said that Foningama offered three ‘sacrifices of one thousand’ other than the one that is mentioned here. Maniyaka informants in Liberia claim that Foningama offered a ‘sacrifice of one thousand’ to atone for improperly circumcising boys and girls together. A Sherif helped him in the first instance, and a Sware, Dukule, Silla, Jalamo and Sherif in the second account (Fisher 1971:ix-x; Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3). Two of Foningama’s other *wakèlèn salakalu* are mentioned in Chapter 8. Some also claim that one of Foningama’s sons replicated the *wakèlèn salaka* (Ch. 8).

that he could find.⁷⁷ Symbolically, one can add items in groups of one hundred to reach one thousand. The objects that Foningama reportedly offered included every resource that a powerful person at the time could possess: land - half of Foningama's property; people - his daughters in marriage, his sons in death and slaves; animals - cows, sheep, horses, and goats; farm products - kola nuts, rice, oil and farm goods; minerals - gold; and textiles - clothes.⁷⁸ Mammadi Kènè said that Foningama gave one hundred of everything in a market to the *morilu*.⁷⁹

Gifts said to have been given in sets of one hundred usually represent a "symbol of plenty."⁸⁰ "Special importance" and the "greatest prestige" is ascribed to the person who can give 'one hundred of everything that God created.'⁸¹ One thousand, likewise, represents "power" and "excessiveness of amount or fantastic size" that only the most powerful can obtain.⁸² One speaker likened Foningama's sacrifice to the exploits of Liberia's Charles Taylor, saying that only a person like Taylor who had considerable resources could acquire so much land.⁸³

The notion that Foningama offered one or more sacrifices in sets of one hundred can, at least on the surface, be attributed to the Muslim sphere of reckoning because

⁷⁷Fisher 1971:ix-x; Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3; Sumawolo 1984, App. 6.1; Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5, l. 25-164; Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1990, App. 8.2; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37.

⁷⁸Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5, l. 25-164; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29, l. 2888-2895; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Bakari Kromah 1990, App. 7.10; 1992, App. 7.25; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Fisher 1971:ix-x;

⁷⁹App. 7.18.

⁸⁰Diawara 1995:129-133. Some individuals stated that Foningama did not actually give the *morilu* a set number of items, that one hundred or one thousand are symbolic (Bakari Kromah 1990, App. 7.10; 1992, App. 7.25; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Moussa Kièlè 1992, App. 7.21, l. 596-611).

⁸¹Curtin 1975:287.

⁸²Schimmel 1993:227; see Diawara 1995:132.

⁸³Fata Bakari Kromah 1992, App. 7.25, l. 215-219; see Ellis 1999:280. When Kromah made this statement during the early phase of Liberia's civil war, Charles Taylor and his National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) had advanced through most of Liberia. One could listen to the nearby NPFL controlled radio station in Voinjama requisition men to work on farms that the NPFL had sequestered.

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Foningama gave his sacrifice to *morilu*.⁸⁴ In Islam, one hundred might refer to one of the “secret” names of God.⁸⁵ Humans know ninety-nine of God’s names; only God knows the one hundredth.⁸⁶ Some Muslims pray in sets of one hundred and repeat stock phrases in cycles of one hundred.⁸⁷ Some Jakhanke mix animal manure and water washed from one hundred Qur’anic verses to stop epidemics.⁸⁸

Finally, Kabine Kromah did not give numbers of one hundred or one thousand, but claimed that Foningama sacrificed nine of his sons ‘for the chieftaincy so that his clan could rule over us’ - the Kromah.⁸⁹ Kromah said that these were the sons of the Kromah woman who Tumaningèmè gave to Foningama after the latter settled in Musadu. The sons were reportedly buried in a grave near the mosque, and a rock was placed over the grave. He warned that ‘any Jomani who steps on the rock will not live the rest of the day to tell the story.’ A rock that the people of Musadu associate with the burial spot of Foningama’s sons is still situated near the mosque.⁹⁰ This sacrifice is similar to *so dadòn* sacrifices that often involve burying human beings in strategic places. These sacrifices are usually made by a ruling family to ensure the prosperity and protection of the town. Although this burial

⁸⁴While references to “a hundred of everything” often derive from Islam as in this case (Conrad 1990:74-76, In. 782), the pre-Islamic Manding also gave domestic animals and gold coins away in units of one hundred (Conrad 1995:103). The Maninka *kèmè* or ‘one hundred’ meant ‘sixty’ or ‘eighty’ as late as the nineteenth century (Johnson 1970:38-41; Moraes Farias 1993:19), so it is sometimes difficult to determine whether the Manding mean sixty, eighty, or one hundred when they say *kèmè* in current oral traditions.

⁸⁵Hunter 1977:366.

⁸⁶Diawara 1995:132.

⁸⁷Brenner 1984:193. The Tijanni do this.

⁸⁸Sanneh 1989:206. For sophisticated forms of Sufi numerology that involve the number one hundred, see Brenner (1984:81-95).

⁸⁹Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29, l. 2888-2896; 1993, App. 7.34, l. 377-398. In his first version, Kromah said that Foningama killed nine sons. In his second, he said that Foningama’s son Fanyala, who he might have mistook for Foningama, made the sacrifice. Another similarly stated that Foningama killed his last or only son Flansan (Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3, l. 52-61). Future research might clarify some of these issues.

⁹⁰For a note about this rock, see Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8, In. 41.

place is not often the symbol of ready attention, it reminds people about the *mansa* who is associated with the grave and the power that it required to make the sacrifice.⁹¹

Most of the accounts of Foningama's *wakèlèn salaka* are based on a genre of oral traditions that were already structured by the mid-twentieth century. According to Seku Salifu, whose story includes many episodes that other informants later narrated, Foningama told a *jèli* named Jabateh that he wanted to have son.⁹² Jabateh asked Foningama for a gift, and Foningama gave the gift to him. Jabateh then presumably informed a Sanoe *mori* about Foningama's request, and might have given a portion of the gift to Sanoe.⁹³ Sanoe, in turn, advised Foningama to give one of his daughters and half of his property to Al-Haji Sware. Al-Haji Sware, Salifu claimed, had made the pilgrimage to Mecca, was three hundred years old, and had three hundred students and his own *jèli*.⁹⁴ Other sources said that Al-Hajj Sware came from Jala, Mau and Bong, Liberia.⁹⁵ Salifu and others said that Al-Hajj Sware had so much power that he could curse trees and make them die, and bless dead trees and make them come to life.⁹⁶ Salifu concluded by saying that Foningama followed Sanoe's advice and went to Sware's home. Foningama gave half

⁹¹Arntson 1994:5.

⁹²Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1.

⁹³One function of diviners and *jèlilu* is to mediate between two or more parties.

⁹⁴Wata Mammadi Kamara spoke of a *jèli* who had such powers, but did not name him (App. 7.37).

⁹⁵Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Fisher 1971:ix-x. Jala is a reference to the ancient Soninke state of Jaara. According to oral traditions, Jara (Diara, Zara) was the northern successor of Wagadu, with Nioro as its capital. A Soninke merchant-warrior from the Jakite (Niakhate, Kaba) clan founded the state of Jara, and the Jawara followed them as Jara's rulers (Levtzion 1973:48-49; Belcher 1999a:82-84; Diawara 1999:112-121; Hunwick 1999:231, fn. 81). Kamara's claim that Al-Hajj Sware immigrated from Jara is not accurate, although he correctly placed Sware in the sahel. Fisher's informants who came from Bong clearly just placed their hometown into their version of the story. As the Sware, Sanoe and other Jakhanke were important in Mau and nearby regions in today's eastern Côte d'Ivoire, this was probably one of the directions from which the Jakhanke moved to Konya-Mani.

⁹⁶Others said that Sware or a renown *mori* could do the same thing (Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5, l. 25-164; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19). Sumaworo and Al-Hajj Sware's student Mamudu Baayo who respectively dealt in the occult sphere and Islam is said also to have been able to make dead wood come to life (Conrad 1992:103, 125, fn. 87; Conteh et. al. 1987: ii-iii).

of his property and one of his daughters to Sware. Sware and Dukule blessed Foningama and returned to Konya-Mani with him.

Two Kamara informants added episodes about how some of Sware's companions miraculously joined him. Kèwulèn Kamara began his story by saying that after Foningama became the *mansa* of Musadu, he told a *jèli* that he wanted to have more children. The *jèli* told Foningama to give something to him and Vali Swèlè ('Father Alhaji Sware').⁹⁷ When the *jèli* took Foningama's sacrifice to Sware, Sware said that he would not go to Musadu without Binyè Dukule, Dòle and another *mori* who were on the other side of a river. So, Sware wrote a message to them on a *lisimu*, and tied the *lisimu* to the wing of a 'small bird' (*kònòni*). When the bird landed on the riverbank, a 'crawfish' (*gbaya*) ate the bird. A 'crocodile' (*bama*) then ate the crawfish and traveled to a place where Dukule could catch him. After Dukule killed the crocodile and read the letter, he and Dòle sat on a prayer skin and floated across the river. Sware, Dukule, Dòle and the other *mori* then went to Musadu and blessed the sacrifice.⁹⁸

Wata Mammadi Kamara stated that diviners told Foningama that he needed to make a *wakèlèn* sacrifice.⁹⁹ Kòma Jabateh, a bard, then told Foningama to give the sacrifice to a *mori* who could curse living trees and bless dead trees. The principle *morilu* in Kamara's version were the 'four men of Jan': Valayi Kièlè (Kuyateh), Solomani Siyan Fofana, Binya Dukule and a Cissé. After Foningama gave the *wakèlèn* sacrifice to Jabateh,

⁹⁷Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5; Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16. Vali is a contraction of Va-layi or 'Father Alhaji' as in Valayi Kièlè below. Although the Kièlè or Kuyateh are most often associated with being bards, some could have been outstanding *morilu* or gone to Mecca.

⁹⁸Aspects of Kamara's story are similar to the "floating stone motif" that is recorded in some versions of the Sunjata epic (Conrad 1992:158). Listings of men here and below reflect "the structuring of an Islamic tradition in terms of the number four" (Hunter 1977:254, fn. 4; see Schimmel 1993:96; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, ln. 1104).

⁹⁹App. 7.37.

Jabateh took the sacrifice to Jan.¹⁰⁰ Valayi Kièlè sacrificed a white horse with a bell around its neck during a ceremony that Binya Dukule attended, and permitted Jabateh to take Foningama's sacrifice back to Musadu. Fofana said that he could not go to Musadu and bless Foningama without his Cissé *mori*, so he tied a *lisimu* under the arm of a crawfish and placed it in the river. After the crawfish traveled as far as Bakòngò, a 'ricebird' (*kònòlu*) grabbed the crawfish when it put its arm on the riverbank. A 'fish' (*sale*) took the bird, and a crocodile swallowed the fish. Meanwhile, Cissé dreamed that a crocodile was bringing a message to him, so he sent some people to the river. The people killed the crocodile and took the *lisimu* to Cissé. After Cissé read the message, he sat on his skin and hovered across the river to the Fofana.

Mammadi Kènè's version of the 'sacrifice of one thousand' is similar to the others, but with two exceptions. He claimed that a Kènè (Kanè), not a Sware, was the lead *mori*, and said that Foningama rewarded Kanè with his daughter Nyamoi (Mayāmoi) after he blessed him. Nyamoi initially refused to marry Kanè because she did not know him, but her brother Fanyala persuaded her to marry him after he promised to care for their needs. After Nyamoi agreed, Fanyala went to Famoela and built her a shelter, a bathing area, and an okra and bitter ball farm [212].¹⁰¹

The oral traditions give the impression that Foningama cajoled Al-Hajj Sware and some of the other *morilu* to settle near Musadu so they could continue to help him after he

¹⁰⁰Jan might be a reference to Ja, perhaps Ja-Bambuk from where Al-Hajj Sware started his community.

¹⁰¹Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18. Given that most of the other sources claim that Foningama gave his *wakèlèn salaka* to a Sware, one suspects that the speaker made a Kanè the primary *mori* in this story to elevate the spiritual role of his ancestor. The Kanè did, nonetheless, play important clerical roles in Musadu's past; they traveled to Mau with the Baayo (Ch. 4) and helped Foningama defeat Zo Musa (Ch. 5). Nyamoi is an abbreviation of Mayāmoi or Magnambouy (Ch. 5).

offered the *wakèlèn salaka* [213-215].¹⁰² According to a genre of stories first recorded by Seku Salifu, Foningama persuaded the *morilu* to stay long enough so he could give them some banana seeds.¹⁰³ All but two of the sources connected these traditions with the founding of Nionsamoridu, which is situated about ten miles west of Musadu.¹⁰⁴ Most said that the *morilu* who settled in Nionsamoridu were Sware; some of the other Jakhanke associated with the *wakèlèn salaka* are also mentioned.

Most of the traditions say that when the Sware and the other *morilu* went to Konya-Mani to bless Foningama's sacrifice, Foningama gave them some 'bananas' or *namasalu* that had seeds. *Namasa* is a Maniyakã word that refers to three types of bananas: the sweet *Musa sapientum* which is most common, the sweet dwarf banana or *Musa nana* that does not bear seeds, and the *Musa schweinfurthii* or "wild" seed-bearing banana.¹⁰⁵ The *mori(lu)* planned to return home after they blessed Foningama's sacrifice, but liked the bananas so much that they asked Foningama to give them some seeds so they could take them home and grow their own plants. Foningama asked them to wait for the seeds, so the *morilu* waited. At this juncture in the story, the story tellers usually say that the *morilu* are still waiting for the seeds. Vase Kamala added that after Foningama told the *morilu* to wait for the seeds, Kaamòò Sware gathered some *nyanzan* or 'small branches' for firewood and to build a small shelter. The place where Sware built his hamlet became

¹⁰²Wata Mammadi Kamara said that the other *morilu* were Valayi Kièlè, Solomani Siyan Fofana, Cissé, and Biyan Dukule from Jan (App. 7.37). Seku Salifu and Jigbè Kamara also mentioned Dukule (App. 5.1, App. 5.3); Jigbè Kamara added Filimon Sila, Jalamo, and Talata Sherif (App. 5.3).

¹⁰³Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1. See also Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3; Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5; Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7a, l. 66-81; Tènu Kamã Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37.

¹⁰⁴Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16; Wata Mammadi Kamara (App. 7.37) did not name Nionsamoridu.

¹⁰⁵Dalziel 1937:467-470; Burkill 1997:224-233; see Johnston 1906/1969:546, 658, 910, 992, 996. For a note about what these banana episodes might say about agricultural history, see Tènu Kamã Kamara's interview (App. 7.19, ln. 382).

known as 'the town of small branches' or Nyanzandu (Nionsamoridu).¹⁰⁶

Foningama's Children

The Sware's blessing of Foningama's *wakèlèn salaka* was efficacious, at least according to the oral traditions. Maniyaka and Loma traditions claim that Foningama had a total of forty-one sons and two daughters. The Maniyaka state that Foningama had thirty children. His wives according to Maniyaka sources were a Kanè a Fulbe, a Traoré who he married in Diemou, and one of Tumaningèmè's daughters whom he married after he went to Musadu.¹⁰⁷ The sources variously claimed that Foningama had four, twelve, thirteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen and nineteen children, though most did not list each child.¹⁰⁸ At least two of these children were daughters, Mayāmoi (Magnambouy, Nyamoi) and Ngowe.¹⁰⁹ The narratives claim that Foningama had twenty-seven sons: Fanyala, See

¹⁰⁶Other traditions claim that Donzo hunters founded Nionsamoridu (Geysbeek/Kamara 1991:68). The Sware have lived in Nionsamoridu for a long time as these stories claim. The 'famous cleric of Nionsamoridu' Morifin Sware helped Samori Turé come to power during the mid-nineteenth century (Person 1968b:243,251; 1979:265; Geysbeek et. al. 1998:82-84). *Morilu* sometimes used the seeds from dwarf-bananas for prayer beads and medicines (Dalzel 1937:468; Burkill 1997:225).

¹⁰⁷Lanse Kamara 1990, App. 7.11, l. 83-106; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1049; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37, l. 104-115; Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16, l. 605-624. Wata Mammadi Kamara also said that Foningama had four wives (App. 7.37).

¹⁰⁸Dauvillier c.1905, App. 3; Liurette 1908, App. 4.1; Monographique/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20; Camara 1979, App. 4.9; Person 1968b:55,160; Beavogui 1973-74; Weisswange 1976:8; Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8, l. 37; Soko Konè 1992, App. 7.15; Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5, l. 437-438; Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28, l. 166-169; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a, l. 49; Fofin Sumaworo 1986, App. 7.7a, l. 94; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19, l. 1030; Geysbeek/Kamara 1994:75; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18, l. 327-342; Ibrahim Beete 1993, App. 7.35, l. 213-217. Although twelve is most cited, Person, Beavogui and Donzo probably followed Djèkè Kamara (n.d.) whose information likely appears in Camara's genealogy (App. 7.1). Vase Kamala said that Foningama sired Fanyala in Diemou and sixteen more sons in Musadu, explaining how one could derive at sixteen or seventeen.

¹⁰⁹Bouyssou 1913, App. 4.3, in Lelong 1949:25; Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18, l. 137-168; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3. Each of these daughters are said to have married Talata Sherif and to have had three sons (Fisher 1971:ix-x; Seku Salifu 1965, App. 5.1; Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3; Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Ch. 5, fn. 32). Some otherwise claim that Mayāmoi married two other renown *morilu* - Mori Konaté and Fila Layi Kanè (Bouyssou 1913, App. 4.3; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19).

Blama, Fasujan, Sèmini, Seman Fila, Famoy, Wusu, Monson, Fin Blama, Kounou Missa, Samoyen, Moro, Sétouman, Fanumawulèn, Fangoloni, Fasona Bala, Donou Fon Moe, Farmia-oy, Gnan Touman, Fila Fabou, Kòma, Séku, Faciné, Sosso, Sanoe-Yaté, the ‘sons of Fula,’ Kònsala and Fengèbou (Appendix O). The sources do not agree about the order of the sons. The Kamara argue about which of Foningama’s descendants founded particular towns, and manipulate genealogies to make their ancestors and lineages as influential as possible.

Some of the Wubomai Loma who live in and around present-day Voinjama claim that their primordial ancestor was Foningama’s son Fala Wuba (Fala Wubo is the Maniyaka variant). Fala Wuba’s mother was reportedly a Kissi slave whom Foningama captured during a western raid. Fala Wuba left Musadu and migrated west deep in the forest where they founded “Wubormai” or ‘the land of Wubo’ in Liberia’s upper northwest corner.¹¹⁰ The Loma collectively list fifteen persons who were Foningama’s sons: Selma Vra, Vra Missah, F. Wa-Massa, Sisima, Seimavile, Saah, Tamba, Fayeah, N’Yumah, Joma-Kapkolo, Saji, Gibala, Fayala (Fanyala) and Sei Bilema.¹¹¹ While most names like Fala Wuba are Loma, Fanyala, Sei Bilema and Saji are Maniyaka.

The Laws of Musadu

Numerous sources identified a combined total of thirty-two laws that were established in Musadu [216] (Appendix P). Yves Person referred to them as a ‘corpus of customs that the traditions attribute to Feren-Kaman, the semi-legendary ancestor of the

¹¹⁰E.g., Korvah 1995:11-23; Geysbeek 1994; 1995.

¹¹¹Geysbeek 1994:28-29; Korvah 1995:11-27.

Kamara.¹¹² Eight of the laws were mentioned by two or more sources. Vase Kamala and Tènu Kamā Kamara compiled the most laws, twelve and fifteen each, for a sum of twenty laws. They, along with Yaya Dole and Wata Mammadi Kamara, stated that there were twelve laws.¹¹³ Twelve is not to be taken literally in oral traditions, as twelve is a “sacred number” in West Africa that is often used symbolically.¹¹⁴ The traditions indicate that the laws that were established after Foningama offered his ‘sacrifice of one thousand,’ and state that some of Foningama’s sons broke one or more of the laws. The stories about Foningama’s sons are treated in the next chapter.

Many laws like these that appear in oral traditions must be interpreted symbolically because they are clichés that refer to something more complex than what appears to be true.¹¹⁵ One cannot therefore conclusively accept that Foningama or anyone else established any of these laws. At the same time, the many claims that some laws were established during Foningama’s time suggest that one should not summarily dismiss the claims. The listing of laws is more standard in the Musadu epic than in the Sunjata epic.¹¹⁶ One must retain a healthy skepticism about the laws that are only mentioned once. Multiple references about the law which protected markets that was first hinted at a century ago have more credibility, as does the Kamara-Dole oath that did affect how the two clans treated each other in the nineteenth century.¹¹⁷

¹¹²Person 1975:844. Person also called these decrees “‘the law of the Konyan’” (1975:844), ‘the custom of Musadu’ (1968b:432), and ‘the tradition’ or the ‘customs’ ‘of Feren-Kaman’ (1968b:184,432; 1975:1059).

¹¹³Yaya Dole did not name any laws, and Wata Mammadi Kamara only specified four (App. 1986, App. 7.8; App. 7.17; App. 7.37).

¹¹⁴For a discussion about the symbolism of the number twelve, see Kaamòò Dòle (App. 7.13, ln. 98).

¹¹⁵Vansina 1985:139.

¹¹⁶Although some versions of the Sunjata epic do list series of laws that were established during Sunjata’s time (e.g., Kuyaté 1988, in Conrad 1999a:65-66), this is not a regular feature of the epic.

¹¹⁷E.g., Person 1968b:184.

The laws are discussed below on one level as literal and as if they did exist, yet their significance partly relates to the need that societies have to establish laws to ensure religious, economic and political order. The specific laws are also less important than the association of law-making that oral traditionists associate with Foningama. Although there seems to be some substance to the Kamara-Dole oath, the oath seems to broadly explain how warriors and *morilu* came to peacefully co-exist in Konya-Mani. The command not to disrupt the market helped ensure the normal flow of trade in Konya-Mani would have helped strengthen the political fortunes of the Kamara. Laws that enjoined younger brothers not to fight their older brothers, and sons not to attack or embarrass their fathers, could have been formalized to uphold the patriarchal society that the Kamara governed; elders needed to control their younger rivals to stay in power. Decrees that safeguarded the rights of women, the poor and other common people were important because leaders needed to have a minimum level of popular support to sustain their power over a long period of time. Leaders and societies have to shape laws that fit their environments in order to succeed, and establish systems of rewards and penalties to help enforce the laws. Codes also have to be flexible enough so they can be modified as society changes. Societies that fail to enact adequate laws or that allow important laws to be broken without impunity often perished.¹¹⁸

The oath that the Kamara and Dole made can probably be interpreted the most literally of all the laws. The Kamara-Dole oath seems to consist of at least four components which dictated how the clans should support each other. As *morilu* of the Kamara, the Dole should support the Kamara, 'admit the political predominance of the

¹¹⁸Davidson 1992:80-83.

mansa of the Kamara,’ ‘guard the sacred village of Musadu,’ and permit the Kamara to remain non-Muslim.¹¹⁹ The Kamara, in turn, should protect the Dole.¹²⁰ The oath seems to be modeled after relational covenants that stronger and weaker parties form with each other, respectively between the Kamara and Dole in this case. The consenting parties make a loyalty oath that they usually formalize with a sacrifice. The oath involves prohibitions, requirements and acts of service that each group swears to uphold for each other. When one of the parties break the oath, the offending party is cursed.¹²¹ None of the traditions explain why the Kamara-Dole pact was established, although they do give some clues. Some claim that there was a Dole presence in Musadu before Foningama arrived (Chapter 4). Some of these Dole, along with the Dole *morilu* who immigrated with Foningama, helped Foningama become the *mansa* of Musadu. The Dole claim that Foningama needed their support to defeat Zo Musa, become Musadu’s *mansa* and expanded his power. Foningama and the *morilu* had to come to some understanding in order to work together. Because the Dole closely allied with the Kamara, they formalized their relationship into an oath and swore to protect each other.

Although many of the other laws are vague and do not outline a constitutional arrangement for society, some of them treat certain aspects of material culture and contain civil and criminal codes.¹²² Musadu’s economy was based on agriculture and trade.

¹¹⁹Person 1986b:160,181,184,284,288; 1975:2126; Kaamoo Dòle 1992, App. 7.13.

¹²⁰Person 1968b:431. The informants said that the Kamara should protect the Dole (Kaamoo Dòle 1992, App. 7.13) or Musadu (Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35). The statements about Musadu include the Dole who were the leading *morilu* of Musadu and were frequently Musadu’s *mansalu*.

¹²¹This explanation of the Kamara-Dole oath is modeled after the “vassal-treaty” that kings formed with subordinates in the Ancient Near East (John Duff, personal communication, Fall 2001; Fensham 1996:234-236; see Archer 1984:276-277).

¹²²Jay Spaulding, personal communication, 4 Dec. 1989. Most of Musadu’s laws coincide with A. S. Diamond’s “Central Codes” (1971: ch. 6). Diamond argues that laws become more numerous and complex as economies develop. He traces the legal history of many peoples in the past, and compares legal

Injunctions that prohibited people from beating women on farms where they could not be protected or forbid people's domestic animals from destroying farms helped ensure that agriculture would succeed.¹²³ The critical economic law stated that people should not disrupt markets. Dauvillier probably penned the first reference to this decree in 1905 when he wrote that four of Foningama's sons were executed for stealing.¹²⁴ His story coincides with later sources which state that several of Foningama's sons were killed because they broke a law that prohibited people from rioting in, fighting in, or attacking markets.¹²⁵ The market law is said to have been made so that poor people could make a living, *morilu* could sell their cattle, and warriors could sell goods that they looted during war.¹²⁶ The *mansa* who did not discipline those who broke this law would be punished, and his descendants would become worthless.¹²⁷

Most of the other decrees were civil laws that concerned private wrongs conducted by one party against another: homicide, personal injury, theft and wrongful sex.¹²⁸ One law prohibited murder.¹²⁹ Several others stated that one should not wound another person: they disallowed threatening people with knives, guns, mouths, hands and iron implements, and ban persons from beating women on farms, beating women in closed rooms, attacking

codes with measurable aspects of material and political culture (1971:4-6). Central Codes were typical of his "Early Civilization" that roughly compares to Manding "chiefdoms" (e.g., Levzion 1973:102). Thanks to Spaulding for encouraging me to compare Diamond's work with Musadu's laws.

¹²³Vase Kamala 1986, App. 7.6; Tènu Kamã Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1990, App. 8.

¹²⁴App. 3. In 1948, Linard wrote that five of his sons died at an early age (App. 4.6).

¹²⁵"Monographique/Beyla" n.d., App. 4.8; Vase Kamala 1986, App. 7.6; Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1990, App.8.2; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14; Ch. 8.

¹²⁶Vase Kamala 1986, App. 7.6; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37.

¹²⁷Vase Kamala 1986, App. 7.6; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37.

¹²⁸See Diamond 1971:61.

¹²⁹Vase Kamala 1986, App. 7.6; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35; see Diamond (1971:57,64-65,74,84).

defenseless people who were in trees and on roof tops, and not making babies sick.¹³⁰

These laws might have been treated more as civil infractions than serious criminal matters that threatened society. Although most of the sources did not discuss penalties, one does recall the tradition mentioned earlier which stated that the Manding at this time levied fines and sacrifices against people who injured others and committed murder.¹³¹ Societies that minimally deem intentional homicide as a criminal act are more likely to make this a capital offense.¹³² Looting the market was the most serious form of theft, ranking as bad as persistent stealing.¹³³ The Musadu laws identified several forms of illegal sex: adultery, having sex with pregnant women, and having sex with women who were breast-feeding.¹³⁴ The laws against homicide, personal injury, theft and illegal sex might have been criminal as well as civil. Certainly, this could have been the case as *morilu* influenced politicians to implement certain aspects of Islamic law.¹³⁵

The Musadu epic listed several civil infractions that were less important. The code that outlawed slavery might have been directed against enslaving free persons.¹³⁶ Other civil infractions prohibited lying, deceiving, aborting babies, making people angry, discussing how siblings were born, telling individuals that their buttock would be cut, not

¹³⁰Vase Kamala 1986, App. 7.6; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1990, App. 8.2; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; 1993, App. 7.34; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35.

¹³¹Linard 1948, App. 4.6.

¹³²Diamond 1971:74,84,94.

¹³³Vase Kamala 1986, App. 7.6; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35; Dauvillier c. 1905, App. 3 - implied. See Diamond (1971:66,77,98).

¹³⁴Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1990, App. 8.2; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; 1993, App. 7.34; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35. Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19. A mother who was breast feeding should not have sex. People believed that women who had intercourse when they were breast-feeding would cause their baby to become sick (see Diamond 1971:66,74,101).

¹³⁵Diamond 1971: ch. 25.

¹³⁶See Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35.

beating people in public, and calling siblings offensive names like ‘bastards.’¹³⁷

There were some criminal laws that were punishable by death: breaking the market law; violating the Kamara-Dole oath, not obeying the ‘secret’ law, crossing a path when it was being cleared, and talking about how a sibling was born.¹³⁸ In one source, a man was supposed to be beat fifty times with a lash for looking at another man’s wife.¹³⁹ Some of the more patriarchal laws that seem to have been designed to entrench the elders and the rulers in their positions of power might have been criminal; such laws prevented persons from fighting older brothers, attacking fathers, and making fathers do disrespectful things.¹⁴⁰

Some of the criminal laws were religious in nature. Politics largely influenced by initiation associations or Muslims could have adopted most of these laws.¹⁴¹ A couple of the laws, though, do seem to take sides. The regulation that prohibited the breaking of the law of the *doo* or ‘secret’ would have protected initiation associations.¹⁴² The decree which declared that people could not make medicine that caught human beings and chickens seems to be directed against initiation associations.¹⁴³ Although the anti-abortion ban was, at least on the surface, non-Islamic because Islam permits abortion, one cannot say if this was a political maneuver that was instituted to trap people or if it could have originated

¹³⁷Vase Kamala 1986, App. 7.6; Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1990, App.8.2; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; see Diamond 1971:67).

¹³⁸Dauvillier c.1905, App. 3; Liurette 1908, App. 4.6; Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Kalamòò Dòle 1990, App. 7.13, l. 160-197; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19.

¹³⁹Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29.

¹⁴⁰Vase Kamala 1986, App. 7.6; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19.

¹⁴¹E.g., see Jones 1983b:41.

¹⁴²Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18.

¹⁴³Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28. It seems that this was a prohibition against the way that Zo Musa used his *saafè*.

from an initiation society.¹⁴⁴

Conclusion

In conclusion, the oral traditions depict Foningama as having been a warrior who migrated to Musadu with some *morilu* and bards after the Mali empire started to decline in the late-fourteenth century. Foningama's older brother Kònsaba thwarted his efforts to become the *mansa* of the Kamara, so he went to Musadu where his mother's family, the Kromah, lived. When Foningama arrived in Musadu, his uncle Tumaningèmè was in the midst of a power struggle with another Kromah, Zo Musa. Zo Musa's ancestors represented one of the earliest groups of Maninka who trekked south to the forest edge and founded a town that later became a key commercial hub in the region. Zo Musa and his predecessors were smiths who the accounts connect with the Kòma and other initiation associations. They intermarried with local non-Maniyaka peoples like the ancestors of the Kpelle, Loma, Mano, Dan and Gola, and might have lost many of the linguistic and cultural characteristics that made them Maniyaka.

When Foningama arrived in Musadu, he and some *morilu* allegedly forced Zo Musa and many of the people associated with him to leave. Foningama then overthrew his uncle Tumaningèmè as the *mansa*. The oral traditions do not explain if Foningama opposed Tumaningèmè because he had become too tyrannical, or if Foningama set out to become Musadu's *mansa* no matter who was ruling them. If Foningama or at least his descendants participated in the Mane invasions that occurred during the mid-sixteenth century, then the *masaya* of Musadu would have had to shifted from Tumaningèmè to

¹⁴⁴J. Spaulding, personal communication, Fall 1989.

Foningama by the early-sixteenth century.

The oral traditions explain how Foningama became the chief of Musadu, both in direct terms, and by telling how he replaced the Kromah leopard taboo for his original elephant taboo. The leopard was, like the elephant, the king of the forest. Both animals could accrue great wealth and had the potential to govern wisely. The leopard, however, had more of a tendency than the elephant to use his brash power to force his will on his subjects. Foningama seems to have struck a balance between force and public opinion during most of his reign, although it seems as though he tested his peoples' patience. For instance, some versions of the *wakèlèn* sacrifice indicate that he posed a considerable hardship on the people.

In the last years of his reign, as final episodes of the epic reveal in the next chapter, Foningama seems to have started to fulfill the tyrannical behavior that a leopard could enact. His sons followed this trend, acting so badly that the people expelled them from Musadu. Their departure marked the spread of the Kamara north into Sumandu and west into the forest where the Loma and others lived. Some of these Kamara might have played leading roles in the Mane invasions that swept the Atlantic coast in the mid-sixteenth century.

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**HISTORY FROM THE MUSADU EPIC:
THE FORMATION OF MANDING POWER ON THE
SOUTHERN FRONTIER OF THE MALI EMPIRE**

VOLUME III

By

Timothy William Geysbeek

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of History

2002

CHAPTER 8

THE DECLINE OF THE KAMARA IN MUSADU: VIOLATION OF LAWS, SUCCESSION DISPUTES AND THE MANE INVASIONS

The oral traditions shift from telling how the Kamara became powerful under the chieftaincy of Foningama, to recording their demise and eventual banishment from Musadu. The strength of the Kamara is said to have started to deteriorate as some of Foningama's sons began to challenge him and each other for ascendancy. Their problems became more serious when some of Foningama's sons are said to have been executed for breaking Musadu's laws. Foningama also reportedly violated an important custom in one instance. While some of the statements about the breaking of the laws are vague and not very helpful, others seem to indicate that Foningama's sons plundered, disrupted trade and disregarded their oath to defend Islam. Some of the strife also seems to have been connected to the clash that emerged between Foningama's sons Fanyala and Fasujan. The breaking of the laws and succession conflicts marked a trend that concluded with the eventual exile of the Kamara from Musadu. Konya-Mani became the frontal point from which the Kamara and other Maniyaka migrated west into the forest and came to dominate much of the trade and politics of today's southeast Guinea and western Liberia.

In addition, some Vai who live near the Liberian coast trace their descent to the sons of a chief who had to flee from Musadu because they broke some laws. Their stories seem to correspond to Maniyaka accounts about Foningama's sons who fled from Musadu because they breached some laws. The Maniyaka and Vai narratives also seem to correspond to the Mane conquests that European traders recorded along the Liberian and Sierra Leonian coast in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Even though the Kamara never ruled Musadu after they were forced to leave, the people still acknowledge that Foningama made their town great and believe that Musadu remains “the sacred town of the Kamara.”¹ Musadu was partly regarded as a sacred town because powerful spirits are said to have inhabited its water and certain trees and stones; Zo Musa attested to this notion when he allegedly took parts of Musadu’s landscape and thus some of its spirituality with him. Even though Musadu became sacred to the Kamara because Foningama became a hero there, expanded his power by making the *wakèlèn salaka*, established some laws, and made Musadu the base-point from which some of his sons went and conquered other lands, Musadu became more sacred to the Kamara after they broke its laws, were driven away and not permitted to return. Musadu effectively became a taboo of the Kamara, a place that they had to protect but could not occupy because they broke the laws that helped them become influential there in the first place. The laws that the Kamara violated protected the patrimony and integrity of Foningama’s rule, helped maintain a balance between coercion and public acceptance, and preserved the role of the clerics who helped them attain their power.

Foningama’s Sons Executed for Breaking laws

The oral traditions indicate that the Kamara ultimately had to leave Musadu because Foningama’s sons became ruthless and abused their power [217-218]. Traditionalists condense most of Musadu’s problems into a motif that describes how Foningama’s sons were executed for breaking Musadu’s codes. The number of his sons who allegedly breached these regulations range from one, four, five and twelve to

¹Person 1970:284.

nineteen.² Two sources added that a bard or ‘other young men’ broke the laws with Foningama’s sons, indicating that they had accomplices.³ Several claimed that Foningama’s sons or their heads were buried in a hole, and that a black stone was placed over the hole. This is probably the same rock near Musadu’s main mosque where one source asserted that nine of Foningama’s sons were allegedly buried after Foningama killed them as part of his *wakèlèn salaka*, and the same spot by ‘the present mosque of Misadougou’ where Foningama’s daughter Mayāmoi is said to have been buried (Chapter 7).⁴

It is difficult to interpret the accounts: some of the laws and violations are vague, reasons given for the violations often differ, and the incidents seem to cover actions that several people might have made over several years. The best that one can do is extrapolate, from the apparent meanings of the laws, a broad understanding of what some of the clichés might indicate. Some of the sources seem to imply, in short, that Foningama executed his sons and perhaps considered them as sacrifices to preserve the rule of law and his standing as chief.⁵ New information and fresh approaches have the potential to further our insight into what the laws and violations were, and how they can be interpreted.

²One son (Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18), four sons (Dauvillier c.1905, App. 3; Linard 1948, App. 4.6; Kaamoo Dòle 1990, App. 7.13; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35), five sons (Liurette 1908, App. 4.1; Monographie/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6), twelve sons (Kaamoo Dòle 1990, App. 7.13) and nineteen sons (Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18) are said to have broken the laws.

³Monographie/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6.

⁴Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; 1993, App. 7.34; Bouyssou 1913, in Lelong 1949, App. 4.3. My assistant Amara Dole was told that a cleric once made a sacrifice on the rock that is located in front of Musadu’s mosque. He said that the cleric put gold in the mouth of a horse, cut off the horse’s head, and buried its head in a hole. Dole’s story could correspond to the *wakèlèn salaka*, relate to these accounts, or be entirely fictional like some of these other stories.

⁵See Ellis 1999:231.

A few of the laws are not clearly defined, and some of explanations for how the laws were violated are not transparent. For instance, Mammadi Kènè said that one of Foningama's sons was killed for breaking 'the law.' When asked what the law was, Kènè hinted that such a question should not even be asked; 'there is not a law like that on the earth... the Loma made that as the law of the *doo*.'⁶ *Doo* means 'secret,' which implies that the speaker believed that Foningama's sons broke an important law of a Loma initiation society. Kènè was not about to reveal what he believed was the law or the nature of the offense lest he himself break the law. Mustafa Kromah's claim that one of Foningama's sons was killed because 'he broke the law when the path was being cleared' is only slightly more informative but does not say what the law was or what his son did.⁷

It is more easy to interpret several other laws that are said to have been broken, at least on the surface. One is the Kamara-Dole oath. According to Kaamòò Dòle, four of Foningama's sons failed to uphold their promise to protect the Dole.⁸ When Foningama learned what happened, he executed his sons who broke the law and made the rest of his sons leave town. The Kamara's actions might mean, at least in part, that the Kamara violated the conditions that they agreed upon in order to peacefully coexist with the Konya-Mani's Muslims. Foningama only came to power because they helped him defeat Zo Musa and blessed his sacrifice of one thousand. Without the support of the clerics, the Kamara lacked this extra spiritual, economic and physical backing to successfully rule.

One of the oldest sources related that four of Foningama's sons were executed because they were caught stealing.⁹ The French claimed also that five of Foningama's

⁶App. 7.18, l. 327-361.

⁷App. 7.20.

⁸App. 7.13, l. 160-205.

⁹Dauvillier c. 1905, App. 3.

sons died early because they broke a law, or that Foningama decapitated four of his sons who plundered Wanino in Mau after they lost an important battle. Their heads were returned to Musadu and buried under the black stone that is near the mosque.¹⁰ A late colonial report noted that five of Foningama's sons and one of their *jèli* were killed because they 'committed a crime in Musadu against the traders.'¹¹ This crime, according to more recent informants, was that four of Foningama's sons raided a market.¹² Local people could get harmed and lose part of their livelihood when markets were raided, and traders would stop going to markets if chiefs could not protect them or their goods.

According to Vase Kamala, Wata Mammadi Kamara and Tènu Kamā Kamara, a fifth son broke a law after his four brothers were executed for doing the same thing [219]. When he was caught, Foningama ordered his execution. Some Fofana or Donzo, however, pleaded for the man's life as he was being led to the execution grounds.¹³ The speakers said that the Fofana-Donzo provided a cow, and that the cow's head was cut off instead of Foningama's son's head [220]. Two of the speakers also said that the clan's willingness to intervene for the Kamara resulted in the formation of a 'joking

¹⁰Liurette 1908, App. 4.1. Linard added that people still revere the stone and make important oaths over it (App. 4.6). One informant recently said that four of Foningama's sons were killed because they were caught stealing cattle. Their heads were cut off and buried in a hole that was covered with a rock (Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35, l. 192-213).

¹¹Monographie/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8.

¹²Vase Kamala 1985, App. 1577-1582; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37, l. 818-831; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19, l. 1149. Moliké Sidibé stated that four of Foningama's sons broke a law and they were 'killed at the rock near Musadu's mosque' (1997:87, l. 344-358).

¹³Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1597-1610; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19, l. 1040-1068; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37, l. 837-864. This may be a reference to the large mound behind mosque where farmers now grow tobacco and other crops. The Musaduka call this the "execution ground" or 'people killing ground' (*mòòfagbèlè*).

Fofana and Donzo are equivalent clan names in Konya-Mani. We treat this as such here even though we do not know if this was the case several generations ago.

A Jiba Sware similarly told Amara Dole in 1988 that after nine of Foningama's sons broke a law, Foningama gave instructions for them to be killed. Fèmu Dole asked for their clemency, and eight of them went south to Muana (Mana, Mahana). This might represent an instance when a Dole fulfilled his clan oath to support the Kamara.

relationship' (*sananguya*) or 'binding relationship' (*lasiliya*) between the Fofana-Donzo and the Kamara. In other words, these informants were claiming that a weaker clan, the Fofana-Donzo, rescued the politically more powerful Kamara. This action made the Kamara indebted to them to a certain extent, and made them the patrons of the Kamara.¹⁴

Vase Kamala, Wata Mammadi and Tènu Kamã Kamara's accounts may represent decompressed versions of how people might have told earlier accounts. As oral traditions naturally contract multiple things that happen over time into one event, one person or one group of people, it is not surprising that most of the sources claim that Foningama's sons broke all of the laws at one time. Here, they said that there was a gap between the time that Foningama's first four sons broke the laws and when his fifth son broke another law. Tènu Kamã Kamara even stated that Foningama's first four sons sequentially broke the laws and were killed at different times. Some of the stories which claim that Foningama's sons disrupted markets, plundered Wanino, violated the Kamara-Dole oath, stole, and broke the law of the *doo* or the path may refer to some of the same incidents though from different perspectives. To the extent that they can be taken literally, many of these happenings apparently refer to things that the Kamara did over a period of several years.

The market stories seem to be the most easy to interpret. It seems that Foningama's sons did not get into trouble just because they stole, but because they stole too much. Petty theft, which was an altercation between individuals, might have been punishable by something of greater value than what was taken. Foningama's sons' thefts were apparently so persistent and abhorrent that they affected the economic and political

¹⁴Collier 1988: ch. 2. Donzo hunters are believed to have been some of the first Maninka who migrated to Konya-Mani (Ch. 4). The Fofana were important Jakhanke clerics who supposedly helped Foningama complete his sacrifice of one thousand (Ch. 7).

well-being of the whole community. Sanctions needed to match the threats that their actions posed to society - execution, banishment, mutilation, a major sacrifice or other such punishments.¹⁵ It was better for Foningama to exact the right penalty on his sons rather than make the whole community suffer because he let them continue in their errant ways.¹⁶ One oral tradition likewise claims that Foningama himself blatantly disregarded the people's trust when he circumcised four hundred boys and four hundred girls together. The people of Musadu were so "deeply offended at this breach of custom" that they made him "pay damages, 200 each of various items - kola nuts, cloths, and so on." Foningama is said to have voluntarily sent a double portion of this fine to Al-Hajj Sware who was in Liberia. Sware, pleased with Foningama's action, sent four hundred Muslims to pray for him [221].¹⁷

Stories about the breaking of laws thus seem to represent tales of Kamara warriors who abused their power and harassed their subjects. Laws that protected the defenseless, children, women and persons of low status might have been established after Foningama and/or his sons harmed these kinds of people. Fakoli's directive to Foningama after he became chief not to take things that people owned implies that the Kamara stole and plundered.¹⁸ The law not to enslave free people might have been created because the Kamara enslaved some of Musadu's people or taken some of their slaves.¹⁹ Other victims of the Kamara were the Kromah whose chieftaincy they took, and Muslims like the Dole

¹⁵See Diamond 1971:66-67.

¹⁶See Brett-Smith 1994:71.

¹⁷Fisher 1971:ix-x. This is a Liberian version of Foningama's *wakèlèn salaka*. The people were offended because "circumcision ceremonies" are "traditionally the preserve of secret societies," and because Foningama circumcised boys and girls together.

¹⁸Liurette 1908, App. 4.1.

¹⁹For instance, a military leader who went to Konya-Mani in the 1860s to protect Musadu is said to have ended up enslaving some of Musadu's own people and taking many of their slaves (Doreh 1870/1974).

who the Kamara did not protect and might have mistreated.

If, as the oral traditions suggest, Foningama actually executed or sacrificed of some of his own sons, this could have prompted a negative reaction from the citizenry. The establishment of the laws and his attempt to enforce them suggest, however, that Foningama tried to maintain stability and peace. By contrast, the traditions indicate that Foningama's sons who later ruled Musadu were less successful than their father. The sources imply that conflict, infighting and oppression characterized their reigns. While chiefs could harass their subjects to some extent as Foningama seems to have done, they could not act with total impunity. Town elders and commoners could take power away from chiefs as the people of Musadu ultimately did with Foningama's sons. Foningama represented the "perfect leader" in-between order and disorder; his sons became too disorderly and broke the fragile balance that Foningama crafted.²⁰

Kamara Succession Disputes

Contiguous with the stories which claim that Foningama executed some of his sons for breaking laws are accounts which indicate that Foningama's sons contested the chieftaincy of Musadu. Some of the stories say that this occurred while Foningama was chief; others state that it happened later. Both are possible, as this sort of agitation could have started during Foningama's lifetime and continued after he left the chieftaincy. If the execution stories can be taken literally to any extent, many opposed Foningama including his sons who he allegedly killed and their supporters. Foningama, it seems, also endorsed some of his sons, prompting his less-favored sons to challenge him and their brothers.

²⁰See Roberts 1983:96,103; Feierman 1996.

Some of the data for these power struggles comes from the law accounts. Claims that Foningama sacrificed or killed some of his sons who broke a law could represent some of the methods that Foningama used to expand his power and control his family. The injunction not to attack one's father suggests that one of Foningama's sons could have attacked him. A chief in precolonial times was permitted to legitimately kill his sons if they rebelled against him and acted in a treasonous manner.²¹ The law that prohibited a person from fighting his older brother indicates that a younger brother could have fought one of his older brothers. Instructions for persons not to curse their siblings or discuss how they were born could mean that there was sibling rivalry.

Several stories explain that two of Foningama's, Fasujan and Fanyala, contended for Musadu's chieftaincy. Informants probably characterize one or the other as having succeeded Foningama or having been the hero who was wrongfully not granted the chieftaincy because of their lineage affiliation and present-day political or social struggles. Perhaps the most credible evidence in the oral traditions indicates that Fanyala challenged Foningama. In the end, Fanyala, Fasujan or one of Foningama's other sons could have become chiefs at different times.

The oldest account, by Captain Dauvillier's sources, said that Foningama distributed his inheritance between his sons before he died.²² Foningama gave the best portion of his inheritance and the chieftaincy to his 'favorite son' Diara (Fanyala), and then traveled north to the land of his birth with his ring before he died. Fanyala, Dauvillier wrote, secretly followed his father to protect him. When Foningama saw Fanyala, he gave his ring or symbol of authority to him. Foningama then 'descended into

²¹Brett-Smith 1994:27.

²²App. 3. Diala is the same as Jala or "yala" in Fan-yala.

a bed of steam' called the Salamani from which 'he never returned.'²³ Fanyala faced a 'large burden of governing' after he returned to Musadu. One of his sources of trouble could have been his older brother (Fasujan?) whom Foningama bypassed for the chieftaincy [222].²⁴

Tènu Kamã Kamara differed from Dauvillier. He said that Fanyala secretly followed Foningama and stole the gold that his father was carrying.²⁵ Did this just represent the actions of a particularly notorious theft of a son against his father, or was the gold one of Foningama's symbols of authority that helped give Fanyala the legitimacy that he needed to rule when he returned to Musadu? While Kamara claimed that Fanyala succeeded Foningama, and that he (the speaker) was Foningama's present-day successor, he also acknowledged that Fanyala acquired his position by stealing.

Alhaji Kabine Kromah claimed that Fanyala and Fasujan lived in Musadu after their father ceased to be important, and that Fanyala and Fasujan brushed different sides of Musadu;²⁶ this is probably a metaphor that reflects the political divide that emerged between the two men. Later, the land was divided between these two men and Foningama's other children [223].

Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara said that Fasujan, not Fanyala, succeeded Foningama, but portrayed Fanyala as the hero.²⁷ They said that Fanyala was Foningama's first son who was born in Diemou or Solona, and that Fasujan was

²³Layi Kèwulèn Kamara similarly said that Foningama appointed Fanyala to succeed him when he got old, and that Foningama went into the Falamani and disappeared (App. 7.16, l. 546-552).

²⁴Earlier in the epic, strife is said to have occurred within the Kamara family after Sumaka supposedly gave his hat to Foningama rather than Kònsaba (Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Ch. 3).

²⁵App. 7.19., l. 485-520.

²⁶App. 7.29, l. 239-262; App. 7.34, l. 360-376.

²⁷App. 7.6, App. 7.37.

Foningama's firstborn in Musadu. When Fanyala went to Musadu, his brothers declared that Fanyala was not one of his sons [224]. Before Fanyala departed from Musadu, he sacrificed one hundred or one thousand cowry shells to complete or replicate the *wakèlèn* sacrifice that his father had made. Kamala stated that Fanyala was Foningama's only son who made that sacrifice, effectively bestowing Foningama's authority and power on Fanyala and his descendants [225].

Perhaps the most authentic account is the short song that Yaya Dole sang. Dole implied that Foningama's son Jala (Fanyala) was killed and buried under a rock because he did not respect his father.²⁸ While Dole was narrating this story, he suddenly started to sing this song:

When Foningama used to play with his son he would sing:
 1125 "Stop, stop, listen,
 Jala can't hear 'Stop.'
 Stop, stop, listen,
 Jala can't hear 'Stop.'"
 The rock is in the ground here...
 1130 He sang, "Jala can't hear 'Stop.'"
 He would not listen when you said "Stop."
 That is the rock that is here in the ground.

This is the only time that any of the informants recorded any portion of the Musadu epic in song. Songs are often short and usually recall important episodes. They are also memorized or fixed, and are frequently older than that narrative portion of the story that is being told.²⁹ Dole's song which states that Fanyala was killed - perhaps by his father, may thus represent one of the oldest and most credible parts of the epic that has survived into modern times. His song is also consistent with Tènu Kamā Kamara's claim

²⁸App. 7.8.

²⁹Wilks 1999:27-33.

that Fanyala (to whom he was related) had an adversarial relationship with his father.

The other statements seem more suspect because they might have been told by Kamara who had ulterior motives to champion Fanyala.³⁰ Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara could have made Fanyala the hero because they belonged to his lineage or had another reason to make him appear as Foningama's son even though they acknowledged that Fasujan succeeded Foningama. Their allegation that Fanyala came from the outside to claim the chieftaincy of Musadu, and claim that Fanyala replicated his father's *wakèlèn* sacrifice might be legitimating stories that have been constructed to fabricate the idea that Fanyala was Foningama's rightful heir. In the same way, Dauvillier's informants could have been offspring of Fanyala who said that Fanyala secretly followed Foningama north to protect him, not to steal from him. Even Dauvillier's sources, like Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara, said that someone other than Fanyala was initially selected as the chief of Musadu.

In the final analysis, the historian can make three observations about the Fanyala and Fasujan stories: Foningama did not control all of his sons, some of his sons strongly contended with each other for the *mansaya* of Musadu, and Foningama does not seem to have favored Fanyala. Two oral traditions suggest that inter-Kamara rivalries led to conflict, though it is not clear if these accounts are connected with the succession disputes that are linked to Fanyala and Fasujan. In 1936, some Loma said that Foningama's sons alleged Fawubar (Fala Wuba) and Vra Missa "fought for Faringamah's property" in Musadu after their half-Maniyaka brother Wai Massa reproached them for eating some

³⁰Only Tènu Kamā Kamara identified how he was related to Foningama, through Fanyala. Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara did not say how they were connected to Foningama.

Poro food.³¹ The Maniyaka claim that Foningama fought after one of his sons was killed for breaking a law when a path was being cleared [226].³²

The Kamara Expelled from Musadu

Many sources claimed that the Kamara were ousted from Musadu [227].³³ They said that the Kamara are not allowed to build a house or live in Musadu, or that they must live beyond the rivers that encircle Musadu.³⁴ Ibrahim Béété stated that Foningama instructed his descendants to protect Musadu because they grew up there, and that they should not let Musadu be destroyed. Béété denied reports that the Kamara were prohibited from living in Musadu because they were not Muslims, or because the people of Musadu would do something bad to them if they settled there. Béété was effectively saying that others believed that the Kamara were prevented from living in Musadu because they were not Muslims and because they had harmed the people.³⁵

Other sources implied that Foningama, and especially his sons, antagonized the Muslim leadership more than what was acceptable for them to do as chiefs. The Kamara, for instance, were warriors who largely dealt in the sphere of the occult. They accommodated Islam when they needed to and enjoined as much support from clerics as they felt that their non-Muslim constituents would allow. The Kamara, however, did not

³¹App. 1.

³²Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20, l. 7.16.

³³Kaamoo Dòle 1990, App. 7.13; Person 1968b:160. Some indicate that the Kamara have only been able to sleep in Musadu in recent times, or that the Kamara can now live in Musadu but cannot build houses there (Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28; Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30).

³⁴Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8; Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a; Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28. Yaya Dole and Alhaji Béété said that this ban only applied to men, and that Musadu's residents can marry Kamara women (App. 7.8; App. 7.35).

³⁵Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35. Mammadi Donzo said that Foningama instructed his descendants to protect rather than build in Musadu. He noted that Saji Kamara broke this law when he sieged Musadu in 1873 (App. 7.36a; Anderson 1912/1971:29-30; Person 1968b:287).

uphold their promise to support the Dole, and Foningama violated Islamic customary precedents when he circumcised boys and girls together.³⁶ These examples coincide with historical assessments that Foningama and most of his immediate descendants did not convert to Islam, that they probably formed alliances with the smiths who were members of the initiation societies like the Poro who did not leave with Zo Musa, and that they exploited Musadu for personal gain.

After the Kamara left, the Dole, Bèrètè and Kromah Muslims became Musadu's chiefs and responsible for ensuring that the town was governed well [228].³⁷ This transfer of power from warriors to clerics and traders foreshadowed a trend that occurred in several parts of West Africa during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as "increasingly helpless and desperate people... turned to reformist marabouts for leadership in efforts directed against discredited traditional rulers who preyed on their own subjects."³⁸ *Morilu* such as the Dole and Bèrètè who became responsible for helping to govern Musadu after the Kamara left were not reformist *morilu* like Uthman dan Fodio and Umar Tal who declared jihad and tried to establish Islamic states based on their interpretation of Islamic law. Rather, this seems more of a situation where people urged the *morilu* to pressure the Kamara to leave Musadu and become more actively involved in the governance of their town to make sure that they were treated more justly.

³⁶Kaamòò Dòle 1990, App. 7.13; Alhaji Donzo 1992, App. 7.28; Fisher 1971:ix-x. Baba Dole stated that Zo Musa declared that no Kamara could live in Musadu after Foningama forced him to leave (App. 7.30). Given that none of the other speakers traced the Kamara's expulsion from Musadu to Zo Musa's curse, Dole apparently telescoped this portion of his curse from an earlier part of the story (Ch. 6).

³⁷Fisher 1971:ix-x; Person 1987:259; see 1968a:108; 1979:265; Massing 1985:41; Brooks 1993:290,304; Ibrahim Béétè 1993, App. 7.35, l. 286.

³⁸Brooks 1993:102-103.

Movements Beyond Musadu

The Maniyaka often use the verb *talili* (*tala*) or ‘to divide’ to describe how Foningama’s sons left Musadu [229].³⁹ Some speakers stated that the division refers to a situation where Foningama gathered his sons together and divided the land among them.⁴⁰ One compared what happened in Musadu to the division that some say occurred in Manden when Sunjata assembled all of his leading generals and divided the land among them after Sumaworo was defeated.⁴¹ Others used ‘division’ to explain that the Kamara left Musadu because they abused their power - not because Foningama called an orderly meeting to declare where his sons should settle.⁴² The latter statement is probably more accurate given that most of the oral evidence indicates that some of Foningama’s sons contended with each other for the chieftaincy of Musadu.

The sources cite dozens of towns where Foningama’s descendants migrated to after they left Musadu [230]. A century ago, informants said that Foningama’s ‘oldest son’ (Fasujan?) went west to Buse, and that one of Fanyala’s sons traveled north to Kerouane.⁴³ Shortly thereafter, it was reported that Foningama’s ‘numerous’ offspring

³⁹The Maniyaka of southeast Guinea also use ‘division’ when they talk about the separation of Musadu into different clan quarters (e.g., Korvah 1960/94:61), the exodus of the Kpelle, Loma, and other peoples from Musadu after Zo Musa was defeated (Ch. 6), the separation of land that the Kamara and Kromah agreed upon after Foningama became the chief of Musadu (Linard 1948, App. 4.6), the migration of peoples from Musadu to Beyla, Diakolidu, Nyèla, Dukulela and Nionsamoridu (Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35), and a division that occurred in Konokòlò (Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20).

⁴⁰Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5, l. 208-259; Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16, l. 77-279; Soko Konè 1992, App. 7.15, l. 650-660; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19, l. 1012-1029; Sidibé 1997:89, l. 411-412.

⁴¹Bakari Kromah 1992, App. 7.25, l. 179-200; see Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:73-78.

⁴²Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20, l. 163-191; Kaamòò Dòle 1990, App. 7.13, l. 160-205.

⁴³Dauvillier c. 1905, App. 3; see Humblot 1918, App. 4.4a. Dauvillier explained how Fanyala’s third son, a hunter, crossed the Milo river and founded the town of Kerouane where an elephant had given birth. Three years later, Liurette published another version of the same story; he wrote that Foningama told his sons Sèmini and Monson started to walk toward the sea. When they reached the Kouya river and saw a female elephant with a baby, they stopped and planted a baobab branch. The place became known as Malikoun (App. 4.1; see Kante 1971-72:19).



Figure 45 Protective amulets, by Mohammed Chéjan Kromah, Macenta, 1992

moved to Koradougou, Sumandu, Famoela and Mahana.⁴⁴ Another source stated that the Kromah and Kamara divided the land after Foningama became chief; the Kromah received the southern part of Konya-Mani, and the Kamara acquired the rest of Konya-Mani with Sumandu, Kerouane, Koninko, Guirila, Goye, Karagoua and the northwest portion of Macenta province.⁴⁵ In the 1950s or so, Djèkè Kamara wrote a manuscript

⁴⁴Beavogui 1973-74.

⁴⁵Linard 1948, App. 4.6.

which apparently included the genealogy that Daouda Camara printed in 1979.⁴⁶ This genealogy listed dozens of places throughout southeast Guinea, western Côte d'Ivoire and western Liberia were Foningama's twelve sons and several of their descendants supposedly settled. He principally traced Fanyala's offspring who migrated north and established Gbêfê (Goiffe), Damaro and several towns in Sumandu. Several other historians like Yves Person relied on Djèkè Kamara's work when they studied the Kamara migrations.⁴⁷ Many informants who were interviewed for this project also identified scores of places where Foningama's sons went.⁴⁸

Musadu, the Kamara and the Mane invasions

A few versions of the Musadu epic claim that some Kamara traveled to the Atlantic ocean within a generation or two after Foningama became the chief of Musadu [231]. Some of these traditions seem to relate to the Mane invasions that European traders started to record along the Liberian and Sierra Leonian coasts in the late-sixteenth century.⁴⁹ I maintain that the term Mani, which was an alternative name for Konya in the nineteenth century, is probably the same Mandi or Melli that some sixteenth and early-seventeenth century Africans indicated was the place where the Mane invasions

⁴⁶Camara 1979, App. 4.9.

⁴⁷Person 1975:2160; Geysbeek/Kamara 1991:61; Beavogui 1973-74; Millimono 1989.

⁴⁸For example, see Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5, l. 209-259; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1545-1643; Fofin Sumawolo 1986, App. 7.7a, l. 88-108; Lanse Kamara 1990, App. 7.11, l. 60-76; Kaamoo Dòle 1990, App. 7.13, l. 160-205; Bangali Koesia 1985, App. 7.4a, l. 96-105; Soko Konè 1992, App. 7.15, l. 295-345, 650-660; Moussa Kièlè 1992, App. 7.21, l. 68-115, 181-182, 268-277; Jèkè Kamara 1992, App. 7.26, l. 121-129. Layi Kèwulèn Kamara and Moliké Sidibé said that the land was divided into twelve regions, and that Foningama gave each one of the regions to his twelve sons (App. 7.16, l. 198-425; 1997:89, l. 411-412).

⁴⁹I have argued the stories that discuss Fala Wubo's alleged exile from Musadu and Wònò or Kònò wars that are said to have followed might represent some interior accounts of the Mane invasions (Geysbeek 1994; 1995). Although this still is an option that needs to be considered, some of the Fala Wubo and Kònò war stories may describe more recent Maniyaka-Loma debates over land claims. More field research should help sort out how to interpret some of these stories.

originated. Several aspects of the Maniyaka traditions and some Vai accounts correspond to information in the documentary records, and support historians who hypothesize that the invasions originated or gained considerable impetus in Konya-Mani.

Dauvillier claimed that Foningama headed toward the ‘sea which is far to the south’ thirty years after he executed some of his sons for stealing. After Foningama’s entourage got lost in the forest, a hunter named Saramoro guided them to the coast.⁵⁰ Other sources said that Muslim clerics helped Filimamu Dole, Foningama’s successor, fight his way toward the sea, or that the Kanè helped Foningama’s descendants spread out from Musadu to the ocean and other places.⁵¹ According to Layi Kèwulèn Kamara, after Foningama defeated Zo Musa and fought the Kpelle and Loma, Talata Sherif blessed Foningama’s *wakèlèn* sacrifice so that he could conquer more land. When Foningama reached Dukòlò (Monrovia) and met white people there, he traded the slaves that he brought from the interior for firearms.⁵² While Layi Kamara’s inclusion of Monrovia in this story leads one to suspect that his account relates more to the early-nineteenth century when freed blacks from the United States started to colonize Liberia, his story does concur with Seku Salifu’s account. Salifu claimed that Foningama gave one of his daughters to Talata Salifu after Salifu helped him make what others called the *wakèlèn salaka*, and that one of her sons was Jala. Jala became a warrior and conquered all of the land from Musadu to the Atlantic coast where the Vai now live. He added that all of this

⁵⁰App. 3. This would have more likely been one of Foningama’s descendants rather than Foningama himself.

⁵¹Fisher 1971:ix-x. Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19, l. 715-746. Fisher’s sources also said that Filimamu Dole’s “son” Momolu raised Sao Boso. While Sao Boso was a late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century figure (Holsoe 1976-77:2), there is not enough information to determine if Filimamu Dole became the chief of Musadu a few years, decades, or generations after Foningama.

⁵²App. 7.16, l. 73-169.

land was 'one at that time,' and that his family ruled the land. Salifu exaggerated his clan's role throughout his interview, especially in regard to the idea that the Sherif owned all of the land.⁵³

One should suspect that these stories relay information about people who traveled to the coast over a long period of time, and that they do not describe the movement of people who migrated from Konya-Mani to the coast so long ago in one lifetime. Some of these accounts probably should not, in fact, be taken so literally. Yet, could groups of Kamara and their allies not have slowly but progressively traveled along commonly used trade routes and moved to the coast as these stories imply? This question is viable if it is linked with the role that the Kamara might have played in the Mane invasions.

Portuguese and Dutch traders wrote that people called the Mane came from the interior and invaded the Liberian and Sierra Leonian coast from about 1545-1560.⁵⁴ The Portuguese mainly wrote about the Mane or Sumba invasions that passed through central Sierra Leone and ended near the Scarcies River north of today's Freetown. They traced the origins of the Mane invasions to Mandimansa, the 'Mandi king' or the 'king of the Mandi.' The region was also called Mandim or Malem, words that are synonymous with Mandi, Mande and Mani.⁵⁵ As a matter of clarification and review, I use Mandi in this discussion to signify the name of the interior state that the Europeans described. I argue that Mandi and Mani or Konya-Mani are the same, that the Mane invaders originated

⁵³ App. 5.1, l. 515-739.

⁵⁴ Rodney (1970:52-58), Hair (1968:48-50), Person (1971a:675) and Brooks (1993:286-307) argue that the invasions of Sierra Leone and Liberia were part of the same movement. Massing contends that the two invasions were initially separate, and that the Mane invasions of Sierra Leone occurred before the Folgia-Kquoja conquest of Cape Mount and coastal Liberia (1985:26-27,30).

⁵⁵ Mandimansa is translated 'the *mansa* (Mandingo, 'king') of the Mande.' Malem (in Donelha) or Mandim (in Álvares) is another form of Mali or Mande, and is "usually considered to be the name of a state rather than name of a town" (Hair, in Donelha c.1625/1977:259, fn. 154). Mandimansa is also said to refer to the region or people (Massing 1985:22, fn. 1).

from Mandi/Konya-Mani, and that many of their leaders were Kamara. Mandi could not have been the Mali empire because the ancient empire's power had greatly deteriorated by the late-fifteenth century.

In 1594, André Álvares de Almada wrote that one of the leading 'captains' of Mandimansa was Macarico (Mansa Rico), and that she fought all the way 'through the interior' to Sierra Leone.⁵⁶ Early the next century, Manuel Alvares learned that 'The whole stock of Manes originated from Mandimansa' or the 'King of Mandim.' A 'certain Mane woman,' he wrote, whose name was Mabété, 'came from Mandimansa.' Alvares commented that Mabete was a 'descendant of the Mabété family... *Ma* means "lady," *bete* "the white Guinea garden-egg plant."⁵⁷ Mabété was thus Ma Bete, probably a Béété or Bèrètè.⁵⁸ Recent oral traditions link the founding of Beyla (Béétéla) with a Mammadi Béété who grew a 'yam' (*bee*) farm where the town was formed.⁵⁹ André Donelha wrote that Macarico left 'the city of Malem with an army of her relatives, vassals and friends' because she 'was offended by the great emperor and monarch of Ethiopia, Mandimansa.' After she reached the ocean, she sent part of her army 'thirty leagues' (90-120 miles) back up into the interior. He added that Macarico reached Sierra Leone in 1545, and that she had left Mandimansa forty years earlier.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Almada c. 1594/1984:16/1-16/7,17/2; Massing 1985:22, fn. 2. Charles Bird states that she might have been a Masale (in Brooks 1993:289).

⁵⁷ Alvares c.1615/1990: II, 10/1,12/3,13/1.

⁵⁸ D. Conrad, personal communication.

⁵⁹ Sumaka Kromah 1985, App. 7.4c, l. 146-153. Assistants said that 'yam' is *bee* or *gbè* in Kpelle and *kuu* in Maniyakā. The connection between the Béété and the Kpelle name indicates that the Kpelle might have been involved in the founding of the town; perhaps they lived in the area that became Beyla where Mammadi Béété grew his yam farm.

⁶⁰ Donelha 1625/1977:107-108,259, fn.154; see Massing 1985:27. Another translation is that she 'offended the emperor and had to leave the city' (Rodney 1970:45). McCall argues that this might have been a myth that was created to legitimize Macarico's leadership, not an explanation that Macarico fled because she broke some law (1972b:4). Leagues were a unit of measurement that differed from place and time. Scholars thus calculate that one league was three or four miles long, with 30 leagues being 100 miles (Jones 1981:163) or 120 miles (Hair, in Almada c.1594/1984: II, 17/2). This estimate was very

A few Dutch traders, but mainly Olfert Dapper, wrote about the Kquoja-Karou invasions that traversed through the interior to much of Liberia's coastline and today's Cape Mount. Dapper wrote in one instance that all of the "Grain Coast," which included most of today's Liberian coast and some of the Sierra Leonian coast, was part of 'one Kingdom,' the "Mellegette" or "Melli." He thus believed that Melli extended all the way from the interior to the coast.⁶¹ Melli is a variant of Mandi. Melli might also be Manou or Manoe, the powerful and most interior kingdom that Dapper more commonly mentioned. Donelha and Dapper respectively implied that Mandi and Manou were the important kingdoms in the interior to which several polities closer to the coast were subjected. If Manou is only a reference to the Mano people as some historians speculate, then Mani's leader could have "imposed himself upon the Ma[no] and organized them for war... Though the European observers on the coast may have noted that the eruption came from the Mano country,... they still referred to the invader as 'Mani.'"⁶² According to Dapper, Manou ruled the Folgias who had subjugated the Karou. The Karou in turn conquered Kquoja and two neighboring territories. Kquoja, or Coya in the Portuguese sources, included Cape Mount and its hinterland. Karou and Kquoja were predominately Manding speakers who later became Vai. Kquoja's warriors traveled up the coast and invaded

approximate, being transmitted from local descriptions of how far these places were to European observers on the coast. It was even difficult for westerners to estimate how far they traveled. For instance, Benjamin Anderson (who was a mathematician) estimated that Musadu was "192 miles in a straight line from Monrovia" after he traveled there himself in 1868 (1912/1971:41). The actual distance is about 230 miles.

⁶¹Dapper 1668/1670:377,413; see McCall 1972d:13.

⁶²McCall 1972d:6. Rodney maintained that Manou was a reference to the Mano people, as did Hair. He also equated Manou with Mandi, writing that the "Manimassa" was "the emperor of Manou" (1970:48-49; Hair 1967b:256; 1968:54). McCall slightly favored the interpretation that Manou was Mano, but argued that Manou could be Mani; he equated with Konia or Konya-Mani (1972d:4-6). Massing wrote that the names of some Manou kings like Mendymo (Mendino) and Mimynique "more likely point to a Mandinka origin... Every remark in the Kquoja account relating to them gives the impression that Manoe was the pivot of power for the entire region, and its location may well have been the area around Musadugu" (1985:50; see Dapper 1668/1670:409; 1686/1689:183).

Sierra Leone. Flambore was the 'King of Kquoja' when the source for Dapper's information was alive in the early-seventeenth century.⁶³

Paul Hair and Adam Jones maintain that it is "doubtful" that the Mane began their journey as far back in the interior as 'thirty leagues' as some of the written sources claim. Hair wrote that "there is no documentary evidence showing the invasion of Sierra Leone to have had a starting-point further East than the Cape Mount region, the coastal area between the Junk River and the Gallinas River." Jones estimates that Manou was about sixty miles inland from the Junk river where the Folgias lived. Both historians also contend that some of the contemporary information is contradictory or does not make sense given what is known today.⁶⁴

Other historians have theorized that Mane's leaders originated more than two hundred miles back into the interior. Yves Person used oral traditions that he collected in Guinea to argue that the Mane's leaders were probably Kamara from the Mahana region of southern part of Greater Konya-Mani who have "traditions relating to the sea." He maintained that Macarico probably immigrated from Mahana, and noted that Mahana was the area where the descendants of Foningama's son Va-Sudyan (Fasujan) created a powerful state in the eighteenth century. Mahana is fifteen to twenty miles south of Musadu and about two hundred miles northeast of Cape Mount. Person also noted that the Kamara-Mane were at least partly motivated to go to the coast so they could trade

⁶³Dapper 1668/1670:379-413; 1686/1689:160-186; Hair 1968a:47-54; Jones 1983b.

⁶⁴Hair 1967:49-50; 1984:17/2 (in de Almada c. 1594/1984); Jones 1981:163-164; 1983b:37; see Massing 1985:35-39,46,50; Brooks 1993:281-306. The debate is about whether part of Macarico's army was stationed 'thirty leagues' away from the coast as Donelha wrote, and whether or not Kquoja or Coya extended 'thirty leagues' into the interior as another Portuguese source claimed.

with the Europeans and capitalize on the pre-existing trade in kola nuts and salt.⁶⁵ Mande speakers imported gold, malaguetta pepper, cattle, animal skins, slaves and cotton products from the interior for ocean salt, kola nuts and European cloth, metal products, beads and spirits that could be found on or near the coast. Political unrest in the north and the initial prospect of new trade opportunities with the Europeans probably attracted some Africans to the coast from the late-fifteenth to the early-sixteenth centuries.⁶⁶

Daniel McCall essentially adopted Person's position when he equated the sixteenth century Mane with the present day "Manya" or Maniyaka. He observed that today's Maniyaka are the "Konianke" or Konyaka, and that the Maniyaka are a "regional grouping of the Mandingo/Malinke people" who live in a small portion of Liberia and Guinea. He noted that the Mende call them Maninga or "the mani-people," and that the Kpelle and Gola respectively call them "Male" or "Malej." Male and Malej derive from Mali or Mani. He concluded that

All of the above interpretations, if acceptable, result in the identification of the Mani disturbers of the sixteenth-century peace with the Manya. Their location is geographically consistent with Alvares' description of the 'overlord' in the interior to whom the 'king' at Cape Mount paid tribute."

Working from this hypothesis, McCall argued that the "Mandimansa lived in Konian," and that "the ultimate impulse for the conquest of the coast came from Konian."⁶⁷

McCall's argument that the sixteenth century Mane probably refer to the Maniya

⁶⁵Person 1971a:676,679; 1984. Here we note Jiba Sware's story that eight of Fonigama's sons fled to Muana after they broke some laws (Ch. 8, fn. 13). Muana is probably the same as Mana, which is equivalent to Mahana (Blondiaux 1897:368; Jacobi 1898; *Etude Démographique par Sondage Guinée* 1956 [Subdivision Map]). Other historians have accepted Person's hypothesis that the Mane might have originated with the Kamara from Greater Konya (e.g., Rodney 1970:51; Massing 1985:35-39,46,50; Brooks 1993:281-306; see Thompson 1856:98-99).

⁶⁶McCall 1972c:2-3; Holsoe 1974:8-10;1979b; Jones 1983b:26-30; Massing 1985:39-41; Brooks 1993:288-289; Burrowes 1993:233.

⁶⁷McCall 1972d:4-6,11,13; 1972b:2; see Alvares c. 1615/1990: II, 1:2; Rodney 1967:227.

is compelling given that the name Manya or Maniyaka imply that they are from Mani. He correctly associated the Maniyaka with Mani or Konya-Mani, though he did not mention

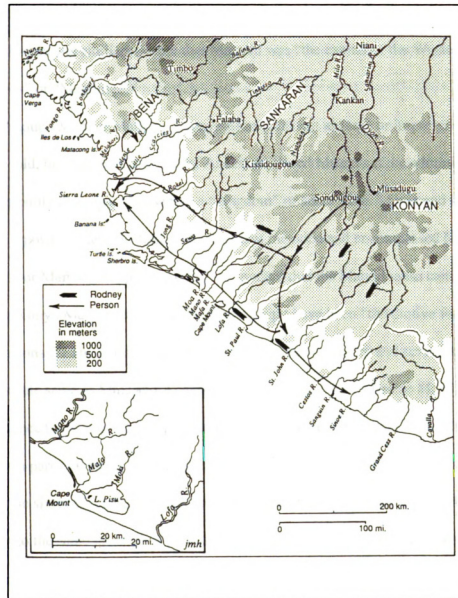


Figure 46 “Mani and Mani-Sumba migrations” (Source: Brooks 1993:

287, adapted from Rodney 1967:221 and Person 1971a:670; permission to use granted by George E. Brooks)

Musadu. McCall’s thesis is strengthened by the mid-nineteenth century Americo-Liberian

adventurer James Sims who learned, when he walked nearly 150 miles into the interior **toward Musadu**, that “Musa-du” was a large “city” that was “the capital of the **Mohammedan kingdom of Manni**” or **Mani**.⁶⁸ A decade later, Benjamin Anderson **reached Musadu** and similarly wrote that Musadu was “the capital of the Western **Mandingoes**” or “**Manding**.”⁶⁹

Although **Mani** or **Manding (Konya-Mani)** was not as large or impressive as what **Sims** was told, his statement and that of Anderson placed Musadu at the administrative **center** of a polity that once represented a “kingdom” or small state.⁷⁰ **Sims** and **Anderson’s** positive identification of the land that included and encompassed Musadu as **being Mani** or **Manding** supports McCall’s argument that the Mandimansa came from **Maniya** or **Konya-Mani**, and that the Maniyaka might have been “the motive force of the **Mani** invasions.”⁷¹ The strong likelihood that the sixteenth century and seventeenth **Mandi** was the same as **Sims** and **Anderson’s** nineteenth century **Mani** or **Manding** also **gives** credence to Person’s more speculative argument that the Kamara from Mahana in **the southern part of Greater Konya-Mani** participated in the Mane invasions.

If the sixteenth century **Mandi** and the nineteenth century **Mani** or **Manding** are **references** to the same place, then portions of the Musadu epic might refer to some of the **things** that Europeans wrote about four centuries ago. It is perhaps no coincidence that

⁶⁸Sims 1859-1860/2003; see Creswick 1868:354; Dauvillier c.1905, App. 3; Turner 1928:22; Massing 1985:36. Manding is the same as Mani, Mandi, Mande, Manden and other related names.

⁶⁹Anderson 1870/1971:5.

⁷⁰See Kaba 1971:4. Ten years later Benjamin Anderson wrote that “though it has lost its former importance, Musardu is still considered as the capital of the Western Mandingoes... I often heard the old people of the town regret its past power and wealth. They told me that what I then saw of Musardu was only the ruins of a former prosperity” (1870/1971:92). Mandi or Konya-Mani could have been an empire or large confederation that roughly compared to Greater Konya if it held quasi-control over Manou, Folgias, Kquoja and other lands that stretched northwest past Cape Mount into Sierra Leone as the sixteenth and seventeenth century sources indicate.

⁷¹McCall 1972d:5.

several Mande speaking peoples in southeast Guinea claim that Musadu was an important town, and that the Maniyaka claim Foningama became an influential chief of Musadu and helped his clan become powerful. Kamara genealogies minimally indicate that Foningama can be dated to the mid-sixteenth century at the latest.⁷² The Europeans similarly wrote that the Mane left Mandi in the first half of the sixteenth century and conquered part of today's Sierra Leone and Liberia by mid-century.

In comparing twentieth century traditions about Musadu with the oral traditions that the Europeans collected at the turn of the seventeenth century, one can make several observations that build on the work of Person, McCall and others. First, Sims' "kingdom of Manni," which had been well established by the time that he learned about it in 1858, could date back to Foningama or some of his predecessors who formed a powerful Maniyaka presence in Musadu. If the Mali empire never established suzerainty over Konya-Mani, the Maniyaka who went there at least seem to have linked their prestige and identity with the empire. "The reputation of Mali's greatness was established on the coast, but whether the Mali king received any enrichment from the coast is uncertain for the tribute may have stopped at Konia."⁷³ Second, the Mandi of Mandimansa renown is the same Mani or Manding that included Musadu and perhaps Mahana. Mandi is the central state in the Portuguese accounts; Musadu was the key town of Konya-Mani the nineteenth century travel accounts and in the oral traditions from Guinea and Liberia that have been collected more recently. Third, the *mansa* of Mandi could well have been a Kamara as Person argued, given that the Kamara ruled Konya-Mani. If Macarico did not leave Mandi until the early-1500s as Donelha's sources stated, and Mandi was already powerful

⁷²Person 1972; Ch. 4.

⁷³McCall 1972d:13; see Alvares c.1615/1990: II, 10/2.

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at that time, then the person who made Mandi great could have been Foningama or one of his descendants. Fourth, Maniyaka stories that tell about the sons of a king who fled from Musadu because they broke some laws are reminiscent of the much earlier oral traditions which claim that Mabete or Macarico left Mandi because she did something to offend the *mansa*. These stories about Mabété and Foningama's errant sons may be connected, but the matter of what might have happened is not clear if this was the case. If she was a Béété, this means that some Soninke went south with the Kamara. If the *bee* in her name is connected to the Kpelle, given that *bee* is Kpelle for 'yam,' then Mabete might indicate a Kpelle presence. Although most historians accept that Mabete was a woman warrior, one historian argues that she was probably a non-Manding leader of a woman's association like the Sande because the Manding are patrilineal.⁷⁴ While this argument is weak because the Manding have not always been firmly patrilineal, the Sande connection is plausible if more evidence is found to suggest that she was Kpelle or non-Manding.⁷⁵

Lastly, the Musadu epic records that two great disturbances forced many people to leave Musadu. This compares favorably with some Portuguese claims that Mabete left Mandi because there was a problem within the ruling family, and offers another reason why the Mane moved to the coast in the century in the late-fifteenth and early-sixteenth century. The first disruption in Musadu occurred when the Maniyaka, ostensibly led by Foningama and some *morilu*, went to Musadu and defeated Zo Musa. The Maniyaka,

⁷⁴E.g., Rodney 1970:44; Person 1971:679; McCall 1971:74; 1972b; Conrad 1999b:211. See Brooks (1993:289-290) for the position that she was not probably Manding.

⁷⁵McCall 1972b:7; see Conrad 1999b:215. More research should be conducted about the stories of Macarico or Mabete. One would be most likely to find information along the coast where she supposedly did most of her fighting. People have more of a tendency to remember memory-searing events like battles and wars than slower moving events like migrations. Although a women could have led an army in the manner that the Portuguese described, later people could have credited her exploits to her husband or another man (see Conrad 1999b:221-223).

Kpelle, Mano, Dã, Konor and Gola all note that some of their ancestors left Musadu when **Zo** Musa was expelled. This began a period of unrest and change in Musadu that marked **the** forced dispersal of people into the forest. Stories about Zo Musa and some of his **descendants** or allies who moved to Guinea-Zota and Liberia-Zota might have initiated a **more** southern phase of the Mane invasions (Chapter 6).

The problems that Foningama's sons supposedly generated in Musadu, legends **about** their expulsion, and stories about some Kamara who went to the sea indicate that **the** Kamara and their clients were a second important group that left Musadu under some **distress**. They do not seem to have been as numerous as the peoples who are associated **with** Zo Musa, but could have been militarily stronger. The Kamara and their non-**Maniyaka** allies might have represented several groups who traded, established **settlements**, and gradually colonized the people with whom they assimilated. A few of the **oral** traditions indicate that Foningama's sons broke some laws and were exiled from **Musadu** over a period of several years rather than at one time. Donelha and other **Portuguese** sources likewise state that it took the Mane about fifteen years to complete **their** invasion. Although many of their actions were military, the length of time suggests **that** the overall process involved "a gradual infiltration and colonization" rather than a **"military sweep."**⁷⁶ The oral traditions which explain that the Maniyaka battled their way **to** the coast or were led there by hunters do not provide many hints about how this **process** worked. One can be certain, however, that part of their advance probably involved conflict with some of the Loma and Gola who preceded them. These were some of the people who started to leave Musadu after Foningama defeated Zo Musa, and might

⁷⁶Massing 1985:27,41.

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have represented some of the non-Maniyaka who joined the Mane-Kamara.⁷⁷

Maniyaka stories about the Kamara who broke some laws and had to leave Musadu also seem to be related to some Vai traditions which trace their origins to the northeast or to Musadu. The Vai and Maniyaka, however, have developed a different body of migration traditions relative to where they now live. The Vai now only have a “hazy memory of where they ‘came from,’” so they can only tell little about Musadu, its chief, the laws, and the chief’s sons who fled.⁷⁸ The Maniyaka in the north, likewise, seemingly offer more details that explain why their ancestors left Musadu; they can name the chief who the Vai have forgotten (Foningama) and list some of the laws that the Vai ancestors broke, but only have “hazy” memories about what happened to Foningama’s sons who are said to have gone to the coast. In this instance, it seems possible that the traditions that the Vai tell in the periphery have more potential to speak about the historicity of the stories about the breaking of the laws in Musadu than the stories that the Maniyaka tell; “the outlying areas would, presumably, preserve older forms of the story until the newer forms reached them.”⁷⁹

A portion of the eastern Vai claim that their ancestors Fahnbulleh and Kiatamba, sometimes just identified as the sons of a “king,” broke some laws in Musadu or Mani and had to flee for their lives. Some say that their father, the king, joined them.⁸⁰ Koelle

⁷⁷E.g., Rodney 1970:51; Dwyer 1974; Brooks 1993:292.

⁷⁸Jones 1981:168.

⁷⁹Belcher 1985:265; see Misiugin/Vydrine 1994:100. Although Belcher was writing about a different situation, the principle that he stated seems to apply here.

⁸⁰Creswick 1867:354-357,360; Smith 1893:28; Buji 1911; Ellis 1914:27-28; Massaquoi 1911:460,462; “Krus and Veys” 1917; Massing 1985:35-38; Ch. 1: 175-185. Svend Holsoe was told about “the expulsion, instead of death, of the son of the king from his father’s lands because of a wrong doing” (1967:62; see 1974). Hair (1968:53) and others noted Koelle’s tradition which claimed that the Vai came from Mani, but they were apparently not aware of the accounts (or did not think it was important) that linked the Vai’s Mani to Musadu.

published the first account of the Fahnbulleh-Kiatamba migrations in 1849. He wrote that “Kia Tamba and Fabula, children from one womb, came with an army from the Mandingo country, and took in succession Kroo, Basa, Maba, Durukoro (the present Liberia), Moro, (the country round Little Cape Mount), Wakoro (grand Cape Mount), and settled round the latter place, in what is now called Vei country... some centuries ago.”⁸¹

A half century later, Ernest Lyon, the U. S. Minister to Liberia, summarized the most detailed version of these accounts after he interviewed “a number of aged chiefs and scholars” near Monrovia. He wrote that they told him:

The term “Vey”... derived from a root in the Mandingo language signifying “a split from.” It was applied originally... to the rebellious crown who deserted the main body from the east at Musahdu about the year 1660 and again at Bopora, the place of final separation... They descended from the same ethnic stock as that of the Mandingoes, and were one and the same people when the disintegration occurred. They can trace their lineage by an unbroken line from Fanbooreh, Caretamba and Malingah, the reputed leaders of the Migration from Medina more than three hundred years ago, according to popular tradition.⁸²

This etymology implied that Fahnbulleh, Kiatamba and a Malingah were members of the ruling family of Musadu who rebelled and went to the coast through Bopolu. Medina was north of Musadu, and was considered synonymous with or part of Greater Konya-Mani in the nineteenth century.⁸³ Although the date that Lyon wrote seems recent, it is old enough in relative terms to apply to the Mane invasions that transpired one century earlier than what Lyon speculated. A few years later, the Vai scholar and diplomat Momolu

⁸¹Koelle 1849:28. Kroo, Basa and Maba might respectively be a reference to the Kru, the Bassa and the Maban-Bassa. Kroo could also be a variant of the seventeenth century Karou that Dapper recorded (e.g., 1668/1670:381; 1686/1989:165). Another name that Koelle used for “Mandingo country” was “Mani” (Koelle 1854a:iii). Koelle’s “Mandingo country” or “Mani” was probably the same Mani where Musadu was located, given that some of the later Fahnbulleh-Kiatamba traditions link Mani with Musadu.

⁸²Lyon 1906:13.

⁸³Rouire 1894:494; see Fairhead et. al. 2003.

Massaquoi published another Vai oral tradition which claimed that a “distinguished prince named Kamara, son of Kamara the great of the Soudan,” was one of the men who led the “grand march” from “Mani country” or “the great plain from Tuba to Musardu and beyond” to the coast. These people are said to have ridden through the forest with horses, joined up with the Kono who lived along what is known today as the Liberia-Sierra Leone border, and then went to the coast.⁸⁴ Aside from the fact that the tradition which Massaquoi published is partially unique in that it connected the movements of the Kamara from Musadu with the Kono whose leaders are also said to have been Kamara, the traditions claim that the Kamara led some the ancestors of the Vai from Musadu to the coast and that this movement included some military activity.

Years later, Svend Holsoe collected traditions which noted that the Fahnbulleh and Kiatamba came from an eastwardly direction. They forced their way through Bandi and Gola held areas, and arrived later than most of the Vai who originated from the north and were part of the Kono. He wrote that “the direction of the Fahnbulleh clan seems suspiciously similar to that of the Karou-Folgia invasion described by Dapper, especially where there is such a strong resemblance between the name of the King of Quoia, Famboere, and the clan name Fahnbulleh.”⁸⁵ The route from Musadu to Bopolu and the coast was a major byway that many of these eastern Vai (who were then Manding) and the Mane invaders probably traveled.⁸⁶ After quoting Koelle’s tradition about Fabula’s

⁸⁴Massaquoi 1911:460-462.

⁸⁵Some Vai claim that Fahnbulleh is a corruption of the “family name Fa-Ambullahi,” or that the ancestor of the Fahnbulleh was “Fa Ambulai” or Father Ambulai (Freeman 1952:54; Johnson 1954:18). (Fa Ambulai is also close to the Arabic Abdullahi or Abd Allah, ‘servant of God’). It has also been suggested that Dapper’s Flambure combines the title *flan* (*fama*) or ‘ruler’ with the regional name Bure (McCall 1972d:16, fn. 64), or that the title *Flan-bure* later became the clan name Fahnbulleh (Massing 1985:32, fn. 23). Some Loma state that Foningama was a Tahamba, or that one of his son’s names was Tamba (Korvah/Atkinson, in Pinney n.d./1973:16-26; Fahnbulleh 1969:48).

⁸⁶Person 1971a:670,678-679; Massing 1985:35-38.

migration that appears above, Holsoe added that “the resemblance is almost identical between this account and that represented in Dapper for the wars which the Folgia and Karou fought,” and asked if the Folgia-Karou traditions were “equated with the Dapper account.”⁸⁷ The Fahnbulleh-Kiatamba narratives correspond in many ways with stories from Upper Guinea which claim that some of Foningama’s sons migrated to the coast.

Foningama’s Death

The oral traditions do not clearly say how Foningama died, so it would be premature to be too speculative about this matter [230]. Two informants did say that he died in Musadu.⁸⁸ This is plausible, but the answers that the informants gave do not seem to have been informed. The speakers only made this claim after they were directly asked, and either did not or could not comment further. They seemed more interested in giving an answer to move the interview along rather than providing information that they knew. Another person’s claim that ‘white people’ captured Foningama sounds more like stories that explain how the French captured Samori Turé at the end of the nineteenth century.⁸⁹

The most informed oral traditions claim that Foningama disappeared into a lake or river. Dauvillier and two Kamara nearly ninety years later claimed that Foningama traveled north toward Kankan and vanished in the Falamani or Salamani lake.⁹⁰ They collectively stated that it became taboo for the Kamara or Manding to eat fish from this

⁸⁷Holsoe 1967:93-94. Oral traditions which claim that some Vai immigrated “a little northeast” from “Abyssinia” and fought their way through Gola country three centuries ago might refer to the migrations from Musadu (Besolow 1891:22-24; Turner 1928:22-27; Hau 1973:15; see Rodney 1970:43-44).

⁸⁸Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18, l. 600-603; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a, l. 67.

⁸⁹Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20, l. 464-468; Vase Kamala, in Geysbeek et. al. 1998:118-119.

⁹⁰App. 3; App. 7.16, l. 539-552; App. 7.19, l. 485-520; see Mammadi Konè 1992, App. 7.23, l. 354. Ibrahim Béété simply said that Foningama left Musadu after his sons were executed for breaking the law (App. 7.35).

water, and that those who did so would die. Stories about heros dying in water which are told in oral traditions are cliches that should be interpreted symbolically. They can reference the place of departed spirits that is located across the water, cloak the graves of royalty, or represent an “idealized form of death” for a “hero” who goes into the water and accepts the fact that he will die. Whereas, for example, Sunjata is often said to have drown, most claim that his arch-rival Sumaworo disappeared into a mountain. Sunjata accepted the inevitability of his death; Sumaworo resisted change to the end and died a dry death.⁹¹ If some people know where Foningama’s grave is located - if one does exist, it is a sacred place that is kept secret.

According to the oral traditions, Foningama forced his Kromah in-laws from the chieftaincy of Musadu, disregarded important laws when he felt that it was in his best interest, favored some of his sons, and crushed those who opposed him. In the end, however, Foningama seems to have ultimately balanced the force and wisdom that befitted his new leopard taboo to form a powerful chiefdom whose authority eventually might have stretched all the way to the coast by the sixteenth century. Even though the chiefdom and town had “lost its former importance” by the middle of the nineteenth century, its once grand reputation lingered with claims that Musadu was the “capital of the Mohammedan kingdom of Manni” or the “capital of the Western Mandingoes.” Samori Turé destroyed much of Musadu in the 1880s, and the French did not select Musadu as their key administrative center when they colonized that part of Guinea in the

⁹¹Bulman 1990:432-436; Conrad 1994:376; see Andah 1984:145-146. Tira Makhan and Niani Mansa Kara Kamara also allegedly faced watery deaths (Bulman 1990:434; Diabate, in Jansen 1995:190). A local southeast Guinean hero named Namawulèn Konè supposedly traveled north to “Dalayan” (Dakajalan?) at the end of his life and drown himself (in Geysbeek 1995:15). See Alvares’ described how the Africans buried their “Great kings” in water (c.1615/1990: II, 8/6).

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late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century.⁹² Yet, Musadu remained an important center of Islam, and is still visited by important people who wish to receive the blessings of Musadu's clerics.

Conclusion

The previous chapter showed how Foningama became the chief of Musadu after some *morilu* helped him drive Zo Musa from town. Foningama is said to have made the *wakèlèn salaka* to gain more power, and established some laws to ensure order and prosperity. The final episodes are anti-climactic; they recount the struggles that Kamara had after Foningama rose to power, and end with Foningama's death and the exile of the Kamara from Musadu. The traditions state that several of Foningama's sons broke the laws that had been established in Musadu, and that Foningama executed some of them to maintain order and power. I argue that the stories about the breaking of the laws might be interpreted as the actions of several Kamara who abused their power and authority over a period of several years. Some of the earliest incidents of law breaking could possibly reflect the effort of some of Foningama's sons like Fanyala to challenge him for the chieftaincy of Musadu. Later incidents possibly indicate some of the excesses that the Kamara chiefs engaged in after Foningama died or left Musadu. In time, the people of Musadu apparently forced the Kamara to leave, and gave the responsibility for the governance of the town to the Kromah ancestors who founded the town and to *morilu* such as the Bèrètè and Dole.

The oral traditions thus far collected do not indicate how long the Kamara ruled in

⁹²Fairhead et. al. 2003.

Musadu before they were forced to leave. They might have only ruled for a couple decades, but could have remained in power for two centuries. Future research that directly seeks to learn about the history of the Kamara in Musadu might yield more information. A good way to get a better sense of Musadu and Konya-Mani's chronological history, and the Kamara's role therein, will be to collect and analyze lists of chiefs and imams in Musadu and other towns in Konya-Mani. One only knows for certain that the Dole were the chiefs of Musadu when the first explorer from Liberia went to Musadu in 1868, and that no Kamara has been the chief of Musadu since that time.⁹³

Although stories about the breaking of the laws seem to explain in part how the Kamara misruled Musadu and why they left Musadu, I maintain that they might also provide some insight into the earliest stages of the sixteenth century Mane invasions. Some of the fragmentary Maniyaka stories that explain how some Kamara broke some laws and went to the coast seem to coincide with Vai oral traditions that explain how some of their ancestors migrated from Musadu. The Maniyaka and Vai both say that Mani is the name of the region where Musadu is located, and tell how the sons of a chief of Musadu broke some laws and fled to the coast several generations ago. The Maniyaka and Vai traditions also seem to correspond to oral histories that European traders started to collect in the late-sixteenth century which told how the Mane left the "kingdom" of Mandi somewhere in the distant interior and conquered much of the current coastal region and immediate hinterland of Liberia and Sierra Leone. It is possible that the three sets of stories are talking about the same events; the Maniyaka and Vai oral traditions provide information about the interior aspects of the Mane invasions that the Europeans

⁹³Anderson 1870/1971. See Ibrahim Béété (App. 7.35, l. 285-299) for one list of Musadu's chiefs.

described, and the oral histories that the Europeans recorded explain many things that the Maniyaka and Vai have long forgotten.

Oral traditions thus provide ample evidence to support the theory that the Mane **i**nvasions originated in the deep interior as far away as Musadu and perhaps even beyond. **T**he Maniyaka, Kpelle, Loma, Dă, Mano, Gola and others tell stories about Musadu that **s**peak of the dispersal of people from Konya-Mani that partly relate, in this schema, to the **o**rigins of the Mane invasions. The narratives in question concern the destruction that **Zo Musa** caused in Musadu with his sheep horn, the conflict that Zo Musa had with **Foningama** in Musadu, Zo Musa's journey to Zota and other towns in the forest, the **p**roblems that Foningama's sons had after they became the chiefs of Musadu, and the **w**estern exile of some of Foningama's sons from Musadu because they broke some laws. **H**ere again, the collection of more oral traditions among the Vai in Liberia and among the **M**ande speaking peoples in southeast Guinea and central Liberia should contribute to our **k**nowledge about what they believe occurred in the past and help us more fully **u**nderstand some of the underlying processes that occurred several generations ago.

CONCLUSION

THE MUSADU EPIC IN HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

Many ethnic groups in West Africa tell oral traditions that explain who their ancestors were, where they came from, and how they arrived in the places where they presently live. In the portion of Upper Guinea that includes today's westcentral Liberia, southeast Guinea and westcentral Côte d'Ivoire, several of today's ethnic groups tell stories of origin that relate to events that allegedly occurred in the town of Musadu many generations ago. The traditions particularly explain how the Maninka traveled south from the Manden to the forest-edge region of Konya or Mani where Musadu is located and defeated the ancestors of the Kpelle, Loma, Mano, Dã, Gola and others who allegedly numbered among the region's earlier inhabitants. The Maninka and their close Maniyaka relatives then established what seems to have been a powerful state in Konya-Mani by the mid-sixteenth century. European traders learned about a "kingdom" in the distant interior when they established trading posts along the coast of today's Liberia and Sierra Leone in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and Americo-Liberian travelers learned about a "kingdom" in "Manni" or "Manding" that was centered in Musadu in the nineteenth century.

The main episodes of the epic were first recorded in 1905, and the stories have essentially remained the same since that time. Given the fact that it usually takes about four to five generations for personal reminiscences to become oral traditions which are more patterned, formulaic, predictable and often told in the form of cliches, one can reasonably estimate that people have been telling the Musadu epic in much the same form

that it is being told today since the last half of the eighteenth century or earlier.¹ Parts of the epic seem to be older and may date back one or two centuries earlier.

Long ago according to several stories, some ancestors of today's Kpelle, Loma, Mano, Dã, Konor, Gola and Vai lived in Konya-Mani. A man named Musa Kromah went fishing at the Dion River and built a shelter so that he would not have to return home every evening. Other people like the Konè came to live with him, and they established what became known as 'Musa's town' or Musadu. Musa was a Maninka whose ancestors lived north in the Manden; the Manden formed the core of the Mali empire that Sunjata Keita founded in the mid-to-early thirteenth century after he defeated his arch-rival Sumaworo. Other Maninka and some Soninke like the Dole, Traoré, Donzo and Sanoe are also said to have settled in Musadu during this early part of the town's history. The early immigrants were hunters and smiths who moved south to find game and exploit the rich deposits of iron ore, and traders who wanted direct access to the kola trade that emanated from the nearby forest. Musadu emerged as a commercial center whose traders facilitated the transport of kola nuts up toward the Niger River market towns in exchange for rock salt, horses and other commodities.

In time, new groups of Maninka and Soninke migrated from the Manden to the forest edge. These movements are tentatively dated to the mid-to-late fifteenth century as the Mali empire fragmented and some people started to leave the Manden. The narratives imply that the Kamara led some migrants to Musadu and other towns south, and that the name of one of these Kamara was Foningama. Foningama is said to have been a warrior who was a descendant of one of the men who helped Sunjata establish the Mali empire.

¹Miller 1980.

The oral sources claim that some Maninka and Soninke bards and *morilu* journeyed to Musadu at about the same time as Foningama; the most important were the Kuyateh, Bèrètè, Kanè, Dole, Sherif, Sware and Dukule.

Many traditions say that Foningama encountered two Kromah who seem to have been rivals when he went to Musadu; Tumaningèmè and Zo Musa. Foningama's mother is said to have come from Tumaningèmè's family, so this was the branch of the Kromah that Foningama sided with when he went to Musadu. Zo Musa is portrayed as having been a descendant of the Musa who founded the town. Zo Musa was a powerful sorcerer who holds much the same role in the Musadu epic as his supposed ancestor Fakoli did in the Sunjata epic. Fakoli is reported to have been the leader of all the smiths and sorcerers in the Manden, and led the feared initiation society called the Komo. Zo Musa himself allegedly led several initiation societies, the most probable one being the Kòma which was a southern variant of the Komo. Zo Musa was so strong that Foningama and Tumaningèmè were not able to defeat him, so Foningama and/or others had to summon a powerful *mori* from the north to challenge him. Zo Musa reportedly had a sheep horn that ate human beings, livestock and practically everything else that it wanted to consume. When the *mori* who was summoned by Foningama went to Musadu, he made a talisman that destroyed Zo Musa's sheep horn.

Zo Musa reportedly lost his power after his sheep was destroyed, so he and many of his followers migrated south into the forest. The Maniyaka lace many stories with popular etymologies that allegedly explain what happened as Zo Musa trekked through the forest. The Kpelle, Mano, Konor, Dă and Gola recall Zo Musa and many of the journeys that he made. Some even claim him as their own, demonstrating how significant

he was in the political and cultural history of Upper Guinea.

According to the oral traditions, Foningama became the *mansa* of Musadu after Zo Musa left town and after he ousted his maternal uncle Tumaningèmè from power. Foningama is said to have established a series of laws to ensure order and prosperity in Konya-Mani, and sacrificed one thousand of many items so he and his clan could become more powerful. In time, some of his sons challenged him for the chieftaincy of Musadu, and continued their internal struggle for power after Foningama mysteriously died. The oral traditions indicate that Foningama's sons abused their power so much that they were forced to leave Musadu. A few narratives claim that Foningama or some of his sons walked through the forest and went all the way to the coast.

Musadu's Historical Importance

The Musadu epic provides important information about the culture and history of Musadu and Konya-Mani. Most of what is known about Konya-Mani's pre-nineteenth century history is based on information that derives from oral traditions. Some of the data is transmitted through cliches which are difficult to interpret. The cliches are numerous and deal with assassination plots, human sacrifices, a sheep horn eating people, the formation of an elaborate system of laws, the breaking of those laws, migration movements, and the naming of towns. Cliches are formulaic and cannot be taken literally, so attempts are made throughout the work to interpret what they mean. Although some of the cliches seem to be easier to interpret than others, the interpretations that have been given in each instance need to be reevaluated.

Apart from the cliches, the oral traditions and linguistic analysis relate several

pieces of information that one can regard as probable; proof is not possible in most instances because there are no contemporary documents to verify what the oral traditions claim. First, the ancestors of the Kpelle, Loma, Mano, Dã, Konor, Vai and probably even some Gola lived in Konya-Mani long ago. Second, the Kromah and Konè probably represented some of the first Maninka clans who migrated as far south as Konya-Mani. One must be skeptical about any of the details that explain how Musa is said to have founded Musadu. Third, it is likely that a later and more powerful sorcerer like Zo Musa lived given that so many of today's ethnic groups remember Zo Musa or claim that he belonged to them. Most of the stories now told about him are not reliable and probably include fragments of accounts from the lives of other individuals and groups who lived before and after him. Fourth, it is equally likely that the Kamara migrated to Musadu after the Kromah, and that a powerful Kamara such as Foningama became the chief of Musadu. Foningama, like Zo Musa, is probably a composite to the extent that some of the stories that people now tell about him are based on things that some of his ancestors and offspring did. There must also be some truth to the claims that the Kamara were forced to leave Musadu; even though the Maniyaka still feel that Musadu is an important town to the Kamara, there is documentation starting with the first explorer who went there in 1868 that a Kamara has not been the chief of Musadu in the last 150 years. There are probably other events, people and sets of relationships which have a historical grounding in the epic that can be added to this list, but these are the most obvious and important.

The epic is not only important for helping to determine what might have happened in Musadu, but for explaining how its past fits in and impacted the broader history of West Africa. The Manding who reside in the Musadu, Sumandu to the north,Gbè and

Mau to the east, and Buse, Konokòlò and portions of Liberia call themselves Maniyaka or the 'people of Mani place.' The name of this area, which is called Konya-Mani in this work, is not only inferred in the name Maniyaka, but in mid-nineteenth century traveler accounts which claim that Musadu was the "capital" of a "kingdom" called "Maani" or "Manding."²

Mani is a variation of Manden and Mali. Manden is the name of the region where Maninka live, and is the core area from which the Sunjata Keita and his Maninka allies expanded in the thirteenth century and formed the Mali empire. Neither the Sunjata epic, the Musadu epic or the Arabic sources address the issue of whether Konya-Mani became a fringe state of the Mali empire. There is no evidence that Mali exerted any direct political control over Konya-Mani, with a representative who lived there and a military presence which ensured that the people paid tribute to the empire. In the long run, however, the question of whether or not Konya-Mani became a formal part of the empire is not as important as the social and cultural impact that Mali had on the area. Certainly the names Manding, Mani and Maniyaka indicate a close affinity with the empire. Although the Kromah, Konè and other Maninka and Soninke clans might have migrated to Konya-Mani as early as the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries, the oral traditions indicate that they assimilated with the ancestors of the Kpelle and others who lived there. It seems that the Manding established control of Konya-Mani in the mid-to-late fifteenth century as the Mali empire was starting to fragment. As refugees and other groups started to leave the empire at this time, they forced the Maninka who lived in the south to keep moving closer to the forest. This was probably when Foningama and the clans associated

²Sims 1859-1860/2003; Anderson 1870/1971:5.

with him went to Musadu. Foningama's migration to Musadu marked a critical stage in the history of Upper Guinea; it was at this time that the Maninka and Maniyaka forced many of the ancestors of the Kpelle, Loma, Dã, Mano and the earlier settling Maniyaka to leave Konya-Mani. As the Maninka and Maniyaka gained numerical and political control of Konya-Mani, they enforced their own language, culture and social customs on the older established residents who chose to remain there.

Konya-Mani not only became a cultural and social outpost of the Mali empire, but oral histories that Europeans collected along the coast indicate that it developed into a powerful state by the mid-sixteenth century. Most versions of the Musadu epic that have been collected do not claim that Foningama founded a chiefdom or state after he became the leader of Musadu. Many traditions talk about the laws that he supposedly established and the famous *wakèlèn salaka* or 'sacrifice of one thousand' that he is said to have made. Both imply significant power and control of resources, but do not directly refer to any kind of a polity that was larger than Musadu. Only a few oral traditions imply that Foningama ruled other towns besides Musadu. The Maniyaka usually refer to Foningama as a *masa* (*mansa*), not as a *soti*. *Soti* just means 'town chief,' and *mansa* minimally implies the rulership of a small group of villages called a *kafu* or 'chiefdom.' A *mansa* can rule something as big as an empire as happened with Sunjata who was the head of the Mali empire, or as small as a town or chiefdom. One source did state that Foningama used Musadu as a basis to form a "chiefdom" that included the towns of Dukulela, Beyla, Diakolidu and Nyèla.³ The Maniyaka call these towns the *Konya so luulu* or the 'five towns of Konya.' It is possible that the Maniyaka categorize these towns in this unique

³Kromah 1961, in Massing 1985:38.

way because they formed the core of a greater Konya-Mani state that Foningama or one of his successors founded and developed. Although none of the oral traditions which describe the founding of these towns claims that they were part of a chiefdom that Musadu ruled, they all state that the persons who founded them migrated from Musadu.⁴ In addition, two accounts claim that the Musadu Kromah ruled twelve *jamanalu* or 'regions' before Foningama came to power, and that Foningama continued his rulership of these *jamanalu* after he became *mansa*.⁵ Although the number twelve can not be taken literally because the Manding attach so much symbolic significance to it, it does indicate a multiplicity of numbers. Finally, one informant said that the Maniyaka marched south and conquered all of land that extended from Musadu to the Atlantic coast. He stated that all of this land was the same at one time, and that it was ruled from Musadu.⁶ Although this claim is not to be interpreted literally, it does reflect other oral traditions which say that Foningama or some of his sons went to the coast. The Vai claim that some of their ancestors were the sons of a chief of Musadu in Mani (Konya-Mani) who broke a law and fled to the coast. Some of the Maniyaka versions of the Musadu epic similarly state that some of Foningama's sons were forced to leave Musadu because they broke some laws. I advance that it is likely that these Vai and Maniyaka stories refer to the same incidents, though from different vantage points. I also maintain that the Mani of Musadu that the Maniyaka and Vai talk about is probably the state of Mandi that European traders wrote about more than four hundred years ago. They claimed that a woman broke away from a *mansa* who ruled a polity called Mandi that was located in the distant interior, and that

⁴Geysbeek/Kamara 1991:67-68.

⁵Sidibé 1997:84, l. 235,411-413; Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16, l. 198-204.

⁶Seku Salifu 1965, App. 6.1.

she led a group of invaders called the Mane to the coast during the early-to-mid sixteenth century. The Mandi that they referred to cannot have been the Mali empire. The Mali empire seems to have been too far removed from the events that are associated with the Mane invasions, and was gradually weakening during the sixteenth century. The region of Mani that included Musadu was the only other Mani in Upper Guinea that is known to have existed in the sixteenth century. Linking the Maniyaka and Vai's Musadu-Mani with the Mandi of the European accounts represents one of the most significant historical contributions that this study makes to our understanding of West African history. The discussions in Chapters Six and Eight about the Maniyaka and Vai traditions that correlate with the European reports about the Mane invasions are only preliminary, and are worthy of further discussion, analysis and fieldwork.

The cultural importance of the Musadu epic

While Musadu's past interests historians, the cultural and social features of the epic are the most relevant to the Maniyaka and the other ethnic groups who claim that their ancestors came from Musadu. The epic is a social charter that helps the present-day Maniyaka order society and define Musadu's importance. The Musadu epic holds the same role for the Maniyaka as the Sunjata epic does for the Maninka. The Sunjata epic seems to have influenced the Musadu epic, and effects how some of the themes in the Musadu epic are narrated. The Sunjata epic represents a "symbolic classification whereby all individuals and groups can be placed within a single logical system using the Maninka idioms of primacy of arrival, seniority, host-guest relations, and division of power."⁷ The

⁷Hopkins 1972:17.

Sunjata epic also explains the legendary origins of the empire, provides a general structure for the political and social arrangement of society, and in this way helps the Maninka identify its heroes, key ancestors, clan relations, *horon-nyamakalaw* relationships, and other important institutions that help unify society.⁸

The Musadu epic correlates with the Sunjata epic in three ways. Some versions of the Musadu epic explain that one of Foningama's ancestors was Faran Kama, a supposed contemporary of Sunjata. While some informants claim that Faran Kama was a loyal supporter of Sunjata, others state that he resisted Sunjata's rise to power and had to flee from the Manden after Sunjata defeated Sumaworo.

The most important figures in the Musadu epic parallel the key individuals in the Sunjata epic. As Sunjata emerges as the hero in the epic now named after him, Foningama becomes the hero in the Musadu epic who defeats Zo Musa and becomes Musadu's chief. The epic shows how Foningama developed occult power over time, and indicates how he gained a diverse client base of bards, *morilu* and other people. Zo Musa represents the image of two men in the Sunjata epic, Fakoli Kromah and Sumaworo Kanè. Oral traditionists describe Fakoli as having been the most powerful sorcerer and blacksmith in the Manden, and the leader of the Komo society that everyone feared. Some narratives state that Fakoli or someone related to him named Musa went to Mecca and stole the medicine that was in the Ka'ba. The Maniyaka, likewise, say that Zo Musa was a powerful sorcerer who was associated with the Kòma society; the Kòma is the name for the Komo in the south. Zo Musa is not said to have gone to Mecca to get his medicine, but reportedly got his medicine from the sacred town of Musadu. His first talisman was

⁸Bulman 1989:181; 1990:323-344,393,457-462; Van Hoven/Oosten 1994:96; Austin 1999b:79; Belcher 1999a:112-113; Conrad 1999a:1.

supposedly a sheep horn which ate human beings and livestock. After a *mori* destroyed his sheep horn, he took some stones, tree branches and water from Musadu that were filled with spirits and planted them in some of the places where he settled. Zo Musa, like Fakoli or one of the Musa's, went on a journey; he established towns, named places where he went, and conquered people along the way. Zo Musa is also like Sumaworo to the extent that he appears in the Maniyaka accounts as the main antagonist in the story. Zo Musa and Sumaworo are both regarded as respected heroes and powerful sorcerers who ended up being defeated in a great sorcery duel. Their main problem was that they both abused their power and alienated some of their potential allies who could have helped them achieve victory. Zo Musa differs from Sumaworo in that he was not killed at the end of the story; he left Musadu and went south to create his own dynasty in Zota. Even in Sumaworo's death though, there seems to be a link between the two men. Some Maninka claim that the people who worshiped Sumaworo's spirit after he died started an initiation association called the Nyana. Although the Nyana does not seem to be well known in the Manding world, Nyana is one of the societies besides the Kòma that the Maniyaka associate with Zo Musa.

The Musadu epic is also important to the Maniyaka because it explains the basic way that society was politically, religiously and socially reordered after their hero Foningama came to power. One can be certain that many elements which reflect more recent concerns have been added to the epic which make it all the more difficult to analyze for historical purposes. Nonetheless, many of the stories have not changed for several decades, and serve as a general framework for our understanding of the past.

The major political aspects of the epic are twofold. First, stories in the epic that

tell how Foningama came to power legitimize the Maniyaka domination of Konya-Mani and the means by which they apparently forced the ancestors of today's non-Manding who lived there to migrate into the forest. The epic also establishes some basic guidelines that identify which clans can become its chiefs. The traditions explain that the Kromah were the first chiefs of Musadu, and that the Kamara succeeded then. The Kamara were eventually banished from Musadu and not permitted to hold political office there. The epic thus explains that the Kamara cannot be the chiefs of Musadu. The Dole, Bèrètè and Kromah are said to have become Musadu's chiefs after the Kamara, and this generally holds true today.⁹

The Musadu epic also helps identify some of the key religious leadership positions in Musadu. The *morilu* who are singled out as having been associated with Foningama are the Dole and Bèrètè. Other clans who supposedly helped Foningama defeat Zo Musa and bless his *wakèlèn salaka* were the Kanè, Sherif and Sware. The Cissé, Dukule and Fofana played crucial but less important roles. The first, second and third ranking imams of Musadu in 1993 were a Sherif, a Kanè and a Bèrètè.¹⁰ Some sources claimed that a Kanè was the first person who became an imam in Musadu.¹¹

The Musadu epic provides some information about how different social groups are connected in Konya-Mani. Two accounts, for instance, explain that the Kuyateh became the bards of the Kamara after the Kuyateh ancestor and Foningama formed a blood pact. The Maniyaka provide little other information about other *nyamakalaw* in the epic, which suggests that their role might not be as significant in the south as they are in

⁹Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35, l. 285-299.

¹⁰Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35, l. 277-284; Baba Dole 1992, App. 8.3.

¹¹Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35, l. 270-276; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a, l. 75. Another interviewee said that a Dole was the first imam of Konya-Mani (Alafā Konè 1992, App. 7.31, l. 270-276).

the north.

Lastly, the Musadu epic supposedly identifies how some clans formed unique relationships in Konya-Mani. The most obvious example goes back to the story that tells how the Fofana are said to have redeemed the lives of one of Foningama's sons after the son broke a law that required his death. Foningama accepted the sacrifice of a cow that the Fofana made and let his son live. The Kamara and Fofana are said to have formed a *lasiliya* ('binding relationship') or a *sananguya* ('joking relationship') because of this incident. 'Taboos' (*tanalu*) are another ways that people formed relationships that cut across lineage and clan ties. The classic taboo story in the epic is the one that explains how Foningama abandon the leopard taboo of his family and adopted the elephant taboo of his Kromah in-laws.

Future Research

More than one hundred sources dating back to the mid-nineteenth century are used in this work that allegedly tell what happened occurred in Musadu and Konya-Mani in the distant past. The sources range in length from a one line statement that was published in 1897 to the 1,474 line oral tradition that Tènu Kamã Kamara narrated in 1992. The accounts that this researcher and his colleagues recorded or purchased in the marketplaces of Guinea and Liberia provide a considerable amount of information about Musadu and Konya-Mani that outsiders have not known because research opportunities to conduct research in Guinea have only become available in the last few years. Nonetheless, even though the amount of material that has been collected is relatively substantial, there are several gaps that can probably be filled with additional fieldwork.

It would be ideal for a researcher to live in Musadu for several months to learn Maniyakā well, develop relationships within the community, learn the current cultural and political setting, and have much more of an ethnographic presence in Musadu and Konya-Mani than what I was afforded. Current political and social concerns directly affect what people say when they narrate oral traditions, so the awareness of such issues will help the researcher recognize elements of the traditions have been affected by present issues. It will also be important to conduct research in outlying towns like Beyla, Diakolidu, Tulela, Nyèla, Dukulela, Tabilala, Wanino and Nionsamoridu because part of Musadu's history is closely interrelated with these towns. Indeed, a story about the founding and growth of these towns as they concern each other and Musadu is the topic of another dissertation. Several of the informants who were interviewed for this study provided detailed information about the above mentioned towns in Konya-Mani. This author hopes to publish most of the traditions which were collected in Upper Guinea; these interviews will include the portions of the narratives about the traditional histories of the other main towns in Konya-Mani that do not appear in Volumes III and IV.

The following is a list of questions that should benefit future researchers. These questions seek to uncover information that is only vaguely dealt with in the current body of traditions which are available, and are in addition to the questions that appear in Appendix F.

1. What are the important *sananguya* and *lasiliya* in Konya-Mani? How did these relationships originate? How do *sananguya* and *lasiliya* differ? What are the origins of *lasiliya*?
2. What are the totems of each clan? How did each of the clans get their totems?

How did the Kromah and Kamara get their leopard taboo?

3. What are the names of the mountains and streams in Musadu and Konya-Mani?

What do they mean, and how did they get their names?

4. Who are the *nyamakalaw* in Konya-Mani? What clans are associated with each *nyamakala* sub-group? How did these clans become *nyamakalaw*? Which groups are *funé*? One can particularly ask this question in relation to Foningama who is said to have been *funé*. A researcher can also ask about the Masare or Keita who one informant said were the bards of the Kamara. The Keita are the descendants of Sunjata and not normally identified as being bards. Some also say that potters or *numumusow* are not numerous in Konya-Mani, so questions could be asked about them.

5. Which clans can become the *mansalu* of Musadu? Which clans are barred from being *mansalu*? Explain why. If the Kamara are said to be prohibited from becoming *mansalu*, ask why. Learn more about the Kamara-Dole oath. This might have been the most important law of Musadu, and perhaps the only law that can be interpreted fairly literally. More information about this oath and what the Kamara did to break this oath should reveal some information about the nature of Kamara rule in Musadu, why the Kamara were exiled from town, and why the Kamara are not allowed to be the *mansa* of Musadu.

6. Which are the most important *morilu* clans in Musadu? Why? Who are Musadu's present imams? Who are the imams of Musadu? Are the imams ranked? If so, why and how?

7. Who were all of Musadu's *mansalu* and imams? Provide as much information as possible about each person? *Mansalu* and imam lists should offer a better sense of

chronology for the pre-nineteenth century era than what is presently known.

8. Who were some of the most powerful women in the past? Explain why?

Specifically ask how women might have helped men become great, or hindered male heroes from achieving their full potential. Ask about a Mabete (Ma Béété) or Ma-Carico who is said to have been a woman warrior.

9. What are the ‘five towns of Konya’? Why are they given this special distinction? How were they founded? What is the relationship between Musadu and each of these towns? When were they founded in relation to the Musadu and each other? Why are nearby towns like Nionsamoridu and Wanino are not identified as one of the ‘five towns of Konya.’

10. Is there another name for Konya? Ask about Mani or Jò if these are not mentioned.

11. Was Foningama just the *mansa* of Musadu, or did he rule any other towns? Explain.

In addition to learning more about Musadu’s past by collecting more oral traditions, archeologists, linguists and art historians could apply their crafts in Konya-Mani to make an important contribution to our understanding of the past in this part of Upper Guinea.

GLOSSARY

Quick reference guide to regularly used Maniyaka terms

badèn: ‘mother’s child’

badènya: ‘mother-child-ness’

baraka: ‘blessing’

bla: ‘sorcery clan’

dalilu: ‘occult power’

dawali: ‘occult power’

donzo: ‘hunter,’ and a clan name

doo: ‘secret’

fadèn: ‘father’s child’

fadènya: ‘father-child-ness’

faama: ‘king,’ ‘person of power.’

funé: Islamic praise singer, usually Kamara

garanke: ‘leatherworker’

horon: ‘freeborn,’ divided by commoners and royalty

jèli: ‘bard’

jina: ‘spirit’

jòn: ‘slave’

jula: ‘trader’

jamana: ‘region, chiefdom’

kafu: ‘region, chiefdom’

karamogo (*kaamòò*): ‘scholar’

Kòma: initiation society, ‘masked dancer’

lasili: ‘binding relationship’

lasiliya: ‘condition of binding’

lu: plural marker as in *jèlilu*, *morilu*, *mansalu*, *jònlu*, *saafèlu*

mansa (*masa*): ‘chief, lord, ruler, king’

mansaya: ‘chieftaincy’

mori (*mori*): ‘cleric’

ngana: ‘master’

numu: ‘smith’

nyama: ‘occult power’

nyamakalalu: ‘craft status group’

nyana: initiation society, ‘masked dancer’

saafè: ‘sheep horn,’ mainly associated with Zo Musa, but also a Kamara emblem
chieftaincy

sabu: ‘provider,’ ‘source’

sananguya: ‘joking relationship’

(*su*) *suba*: ‘sorcerer’

sumuso (*subamuso*): ‘female sorcerer’

zo: ‘sorcerer’

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Stating the Case for Maniyakā as a Manding Language

There is not a clear consensus in the academic community about how Maniyakā, Konyakā and Maukā relate to each other and the broader group of Manding families. I agree with linguists who have worked in Liberia who imply or state that Maniyakā is one of several major Manding languages like Bamanakā or Maninka, and that Maniyakā is composed of several dialects - two being Maukā and Konyakā. Linguists need to conduct a comparative study of Maniyakā and other Manding languages and dialects in southeast Guinea or Liberia to test this hypothesis.

According to Maurice Delafosse, the author of the 1901 *Essai de Manuel Pratique de la Langue Mandé ou Mandingue*, one major group of Mande languages was called “Mande tan.” Malinke (Maninka), Bamana, Dyula, Soninke, and Manianka (Maniyakā) were some of the Mande tan “dialects.” Maniyakā, Delafosse wrote, consisted of three “dialects:” Gyomande (Guimande, Gyomani), Konianka (Konyakā) and Maniyakā. Delafosse reported that the Gyomande or the ‘Mande of Guio/Gyo’ lived in the region of Mau that encompassed Touba. The Konyaka were centered in Beyla and lived on up to Kerouane. He also suggested that the Manding who lived in the northwestern town of Odiene spoke Konyakā.¹ Delafosse wrote that the Manyaka migrated west from Konyamani to western Liberia, and that they lived in much of southeast Guinea west of Beyla

¹The Manding of Odiene speak an Ivorian dialect of Jula called Wojenekā (Derive 1983:18-20; Carr 1995.). I note, only from casual observation, that Wojenekā seems to be closely related to Maniyakā. When Boakai Yamah and I visited Odiene in 1992, Mark Rogers, one of the SIM missionaries who was nearly fluent in Maninka and Wojenekā, told us that he was surprised at how similar Boakai’s Liberian Maniyakā was to Wojenekā.

and in scattered trade towns like Bopolu in Liberia. Delafosse preferred to call these three closely related dialects Maniyakā, and labeled this area “Manianka” on his language map (see Figure 47). He added, however, that one could also use Konyakā or Jomande as cover names for these dialects.² Delafosse was correct when he preferred to use Maniyakā to define the Manianka-Konianka-Guimande area, but seems to have been wrong when he stated that one could replace Konyakā and Maukā for Maniyakā cover terms.

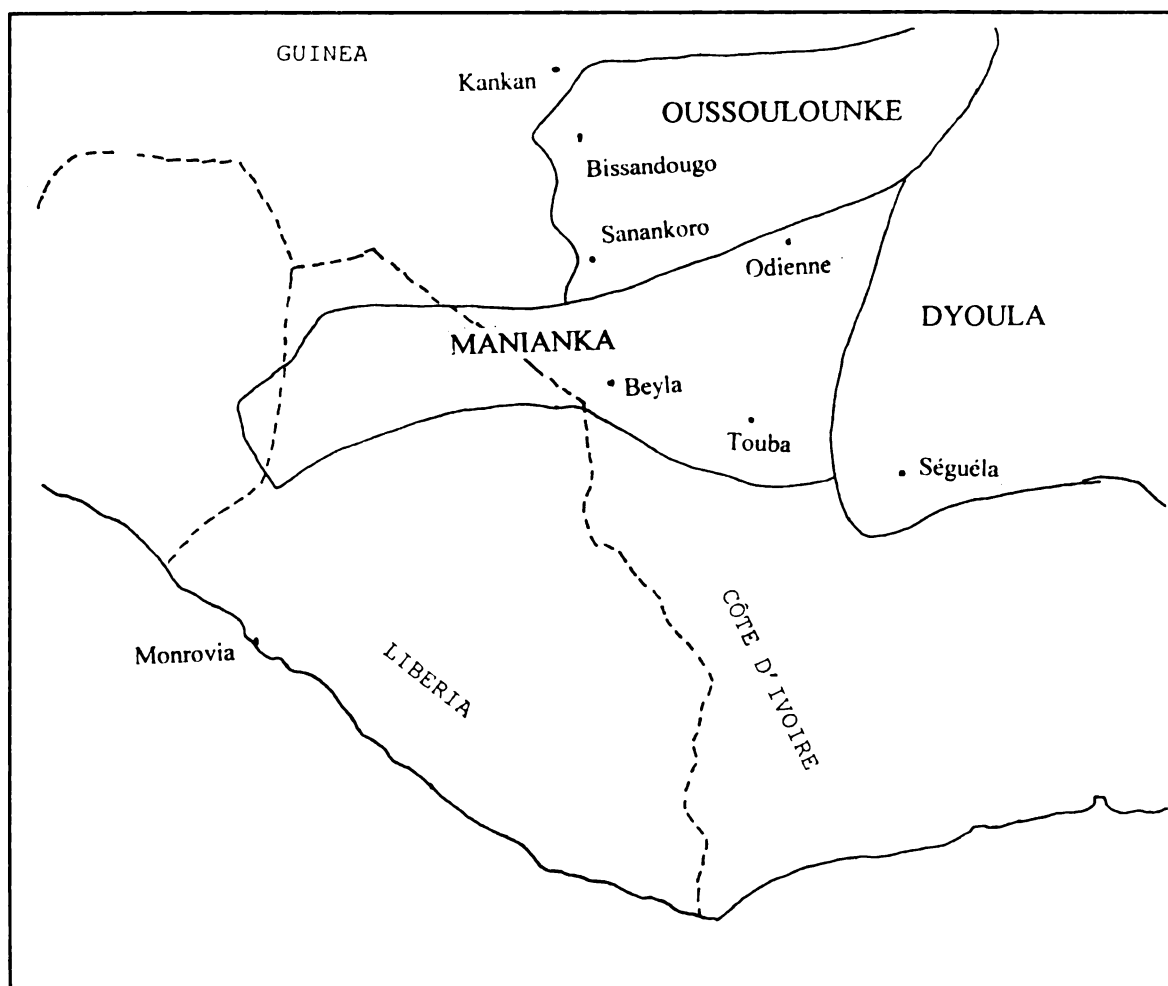


Figure 47: Delafosse language map (1901:304, facing page; enlarged)

In 1971, David Dalby called Maukā (Delafosse’s Gyomande), Konyakā, and

²Delafosse 1901:218-219,267-268,305; see Baumann/Westermann 1948:389; 1952:33-34.

Maniyakā - “Fringe Maninka,” implying that they were most closely connected to Maninka. “Yet,” Dalby cautioned, “the degree to which these groups are distinct linguistically from Mandinka/ Maninka speakers in adjacent areas has yet to be fully assessed, but it is suggested that the Manyanka, Konyaka, and Mauka have a certain ethno-linguistic unity among themselves.” Dalby supported Delafosse’s hypothesis that Maukā, Konyakā, and Maniyakā are closely related.³

There is a “certain ethno-linguistic unity” between Maukā, Konyakā, and Maniyakā, but I hesitate to call Maniyakā, Konyakā, and Maukā “fringe Maninka.” Although these three forms of Manding seem to be more closely related to Maninkā than the other Central Mande languages, Maniyakā is nonetheless distinct from Maninka.

In 1974, William Welmers conducted research in Liberia and printed a reference manual titled *Manya*. He wrote that most “Manya-kan” (Maniyakā) speakers lived along the uppermost border of Liberia and into Guinea.⁴ A “secondary settlement” of Maniyakā speakers lived in a few villages near Bopolu. Welmers noted Von Richard Heydorn’s statement that “Manya” was a ‘Mandingo dialect.’⁵ Welmers took Heydorn’s statement to suggest that Maniyakā was “a dialect or form of Guinean Maninka.” Welmers, however, noted that Maniyakā speakers told him that they could not understand Maninka spoken in Macenta and Kankan, “although they catch some individual words and phrases.” Welmers maintained that Maninka speakers understood Maniyakā more easily, perhaps because the Maninka traveled more and had to learn how to understand languages that are closely related to theirs. Based on the assumption that Maninka is not very intelligible to

³Dalby 1971:5,6.

⁴This would be the Koadu-Gboni area that includes the towns of Tuzu, Bakedu, and Voinjama in Liberia, and the town of Daro towards Macenta in Guinea (Fig. 3).

⁵C.f. Heydorn 1943/1966.

Maniyakã speakers, Welmers argued that “Manya, however, certainly deserves a separate description, and in the present author’s opinion should be recognized as a distinct language.” He cited that there were many lexical, extra-linguistic, grammatical, and tonal differences between Maniyakã and Maninka, and speculated that Maninka and Maniyakã started to separate from each other in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁶

Maninka does not differ as much from Maniyakã as what Welmers wrote, for Maninka and Maniyakã are mutually intelligible languages. I have had the advantage (that Welmers did not have) of visiting Kankan and communicating with Maninka speakers in my limited Maniyakã. Although there are distinct differences between Maninka and Maniyakã, my Maniyakã friends (and I to a lesser extent) communicated with the Maninka fairly easily, and quickly adapted some of the expressions, tonal changes and additions to words that mark some of the differences between the two languages.

Three years later, Luthern linguist Dale Federwitz, who worked with Welmers, wrote a short primer of “Mányá Kàn” (Maniyakã). Federwitz wrote that Maniyakã was a Northern Mande language, and that Maniyakã was more closely related to Maninka than to Bamanakã, Mandinka, or Jula.⁷

Sue Cutler and David Dwyer published *A Reference Handbook of Māniyakã* for the Peace Corps in 1981. They wrote that “Manya” or “Māniyakã” is a Northern Mande language.⁸ In the same year, Cutler, working with Abu Varflai Talawole, wrote the *Learner Directed Approach to Māniyakã* which was the companion volume of her work with Dwyer. There, Cutler and Talawole wrote that “kònyakan” or Konyakã is a “dialect”

⁶Welmers 1974:1-2; see Murdock 1959: back jacket map; McCall 1972d:5.

⁷Federwitz 1977. The backward slash (/á/) indicates a high vowel, and the forward slash a low tone. Appendix numbers are in brackets.

⁸Cutler, with Dwyer 1981:1.

of “Mandingo” or Maniyakã.⁹ Later, Dwyer wrote that “Konyanka” and “Mauka” were different “Manding” languages along with others like Maninka, Bamana, and Jula.¹⁰ Cutler, Talawole, and Dwyer essentially agreed with Delafosse that Konyakã is close to Maniyakã, but differed by saying that Konyakã is a dialect or subcategory of Maniyakã. Dwyer also marked a greater difference between Maukã and Konyakã than what Delafosse or Dalby recognized.

In 1990, Mohammed Chèjan Kromah, one of my Konyaka assistants and informants, explained that Maniyakã is the cover term for the Manding language spoken in Sumandu (Damaro etc.), Konya-Mani, Macenta and Lofa county.¹¹

More recently, Valentin Vydrine listed Mauka (Maukã), Konyanka (Konyakã), and Manya (Maniyakã) as three of several Jula “idioms” that stretch from Côte d’Ivoire to southeast Guinea and Liberia. He delimited Konyakã to the Guinea forest and Maniyakã to Liberia.¹² Vydrine cautioned in personal correspondence that “their common identification with Maninka is not so sure,” so it is best to identify them as Manding and not to connect them with one sub-branch or another (Maninka or Jula) until linguists conduct more research.¹³ Surely, field analysis of the Manding languages in southeast Guinea is long overdue.

⁹Cutler, with Talawole 1981:4.

¹⁰Dwyer 1989:50.

¹¹App. 8.2.

¹²Vydrine 1999:9.

¹³23 Feb. 2000 e-mail.

APPENDIX B

Konya-Mani's Boundaries

Sigismund W. Koelle made the first reference to Konya or “Kóniā” in 1854. The French later wrote Konia or Konya, and sometimes added the nasalized /ã/ as in Konyã, Konyan or Konian (Figure C). The French forms are the most recognized in the literature, so “Konya” is the spelling that is adopted for this work. Konya proceeds Mani in the hyphenated Konya-Mani that is used in this work to delimit the area that includes Musadu and that half-dozen towns that surround it because Gonya was, according to the oral traditions, the term first used by the Kpelle who preceded the Manding to the area.¹ Mani is the Maniyaka name for Konya.

The land that is known as Konya-Mani has expanded and contracted through the centuries. The focus of the original Konya might have first been the Koniya mountains that are located at the Koniya mountains north of Musadu, but then shifted to Musadu as Musadu became important. In time, people left Musadu and formed Diakolidu, Beyla, Dukulela and Nyèla which came to be known as *Konya so luulu* or ‘the five towns of Konya.’²

When some of Foniŋgama’s descendants traveled north to the area of present-day Damaro, they evidently applied Konya’s name to the areas where they traveled.³ Some now divide Konya into Upper and Lower sectors. Upper Konya and Lower Konya do not correspond to north and south, but rather to the descent in elevation from the Kourandou

¹The Maniyaka pronounce Gonya - Konya (Ch. 4). Goniya is Kpelle, and Konya or Koniya is Maniyakã.

²Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28, l. 1-28; Konneh 1992:115.

³Millimono 1989:12.

mountains into the Dion and Milo valleys.⁴ Upper and Lower Konya, then, respectively refer to the southern and northern parts of Konya. The central area of Upper Konya is where Musadu and the five towns of Konya are situated. Upper Konya's boundaries are Gbankundo in the north, Boronkenyi near Sinko in the east, the Tétini (Tyékele) massif in the south, and the Gbè mountains to the west. The major towns in Lower Konya are Makoun, Kosankolo, Damaro and Sanangoloni. Lower Konya's borders extend up the Milo valley to Kankan in the north, to Odienne in the east, Samana in the south, and Koningo to the west.⁵ In this work, the term Greater Konya-Mani is used rather than Upper Konya and Lower Konya to note the wider area known as Konya that extends beyond the core Konya or Konya-Mani.

Mid-nineteenth century Liberians called Konya - Maani, Manni and Manding, with Musadu as its capital.⁶ By the late-1870s, Liberians simultaneously referred to Greater Konya as Konya, Musadu and Medina, and said that Medina was the capital.⁷ The French placed Konya between Sanangolo and Toron in the center of Lower Konya when they started to occupy present-day southeast Guinea in the late-1880s, but started to delimited Konya's border to the Beyla-Musadu area after they established a military post in Beyla in 1893.⁸ As this dissertation only concerns the early period of Musadu's history,

⁴Ford 1991:310.

⁵Person 1968b:32. These boundaries for Lower and Upper Konya approximate those that Koelle wrote from his base in Freetown, Sierra Leone over a century earlier. Koelle placed Konya between Loma country to the south, Toron and Kankan to the west, and Wasulu in the north (1854b/1963:2-3).

⁶Sims 1859-60/2003; Anderson 1870/1971:5,7.

⁷"The annexation of the interior kingdom of Medina" 1879; Blyden 1882:117-119; "Colonization" 1886:11-13; "The North-western Boundary of Liberia" 1886:73-74; Bouyssou 1913, in LeLong 1949:25, App. 4.3; Fairhead et. al. 2003. For the location of Konya on some French maps, see Blondiaux (1897:342), Woelffel (1899), Rouget (1906), "Le Traité Franco-Libérien (1908:51), Chevalier (1909:25), Arcin (1911:527), Herbette (1911) and Bouex (1911:180).

⁸Peroz c. 1888; 1891; 1895; Archinard 1888-89; 1891; Delafosse 1899:130, 133; Duboc 1938:225; Person 1975:1483-1484. One French administrator also identified the Beyla-Musadu area as Modioulendougou ('land of Moriwulen' [Sisse]) and Ouorodougou or Worodougou ('land of Woro/Kola') (Binger 1892 I:133, II:399-402, centerfold map).

Konya or Konya-Mani is taken in the most narrow sense: Konyaba, Musadu and the immediate surroundings where Beyla, Diakolidu, Dukulela and Nyela are situated.

APPENDIX C

Important Place Names

	MANDEN	MUSADU	KONYA	MANI (KONYA-MANI)
Almada 1594				Mandi (?)
Álvares c.1615				Mandi (?)
Donelha 1625				Mandi, Malem (?)
Dapper c.1620s-30s				Melli (?)
British archives, 1840-41, in Jones (1983:73)		Massado		
Koelle 1849, 1854b			Kónīa	Máni Mani
Benson 1858		Moosá-doo (‘Moses’ town)		
Sims 1859-60				Maani, Manni
“Beautiful Manuscript”		Moosadek	Keni (?)	
Doreh/Barta 1870		Masadu		
Blyden, in Doreh/ Barta (1870)		Misādu Musādu		
Anderson 1870/1971		Musardu ¹		Manding, Western Mandingoes
Creswick 1868	Mani (?)			Mani
Gibson 1869		Musadu		
Tracy 1869		Misad[u]		
Bourzeix 1887				Manding

¹This is one of over one dozen spellings of "Musadu" that appeared in Liberian literature from the late-1850s to the mid-1880s.

Peroz c. 1888			Konia	
Archinard 1888-89, 1891			Konia	
Frey 1890				Manding
Smith 1893		Masadu		
Rouire 1894				Mandings
Combes 1896		Moussaya Massadougou		
Blondiaux 1898			Konia	
Delafosse 1899, 1901			Konian	Manianka
Woelffel 1899			Konian	
Dauvillier 1905 [3]	Mande	Moussadougou	Konian- ba	Mani (from Manian Malinkes)
Liurette 1908 [4.1]		Moussatazou Moussadougou		
Johnston 1906		Musadu		
Rouget 1906			Konian	
"Le Traité" 1908			Konian	
Chevalier 1909:27			Konian	
Lamole 1909 [4.2]	Mande	Moussadougou		
Arcin 1911			Konian	Mani (from Manianka or 'Mani people')
Herbette 1911			Konian	
Bouex 1911			Konian	
Buji 1911	Mandi, not Mendi			
Massaquoi 1911	Mani (?)	Musardu		Mani
Bouyssou 1913/1949 [4.3]		Misagadougou	Konia	
Ellis 1913, 1914	Mánde (?)	Musardu		Mánde

Krus & Vais 1917	Mani (?)			Mani Mandingo country
Humblot 1918, 1951 [4.4a-b]			Konian	
Klingenheben 1926		Musadugu		Mande country
"Who are the Massaquois?" 1930	Malistin Empire	Musadu Musahdu		Musadu, Western Division of the Malistin Empire
Germain 1946-47/ 1984 [4.5]		Missadougou	Konian	
Baumann/Wester- mann 1948			Konian	
Linard 1948 [4.6]		Moussadougou	Konia, Konian	
Le Long 1949		Misata		
Holas 1952 [4.7]		Moussadougou		
Camara 1979 [4.9]		Moussadougou		
"Monograph/ Beyla" c.1958 [4.8]	Mandé	Moussadou		
Korvah 1960/94, 1971, 1995	Mendi	Mosadu Musadu		
Kromah 1961, in Massing (1985:38)	Mandy	Musadu		
Sirleaf 1965 [5.1]		Misadu Masaka (?)	Konya	
Fisher 1971		Musadu		
Person 1968a- b, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1975, 1984		Musadugu Moussadougou	Konyā (Konyan)	
Sayon 1970 [5.2]		Musadu		
Kamara 1970 [5.3]	Mali Mande	Musadu		
Rodney 1970			Konian	

Kaba 1971		Musadu	Konya	
Turé 1972-73		Musadu	Konia	
Weisswange 1976		Misadu		
Kromah 1984 [7.2]		Misadu	Koniya	Maniya
Kamala 1985 [7.6], [7.39]	Mali Mani	Misadu	Kòniya Koynyā	
Sumawolo 1984 [6.1]		Musadu Misadu	Konya	
Dole 1985 [6.2]		Misadu		
Koesia 1985 [7.4a]		Misadu		
Sanyo 1985 [7.4b]		Misadu	Koniya	
Kromah 1985 [7.4c]		Misadu	Koniya	
Anonymous 1985 [7.4d]			Koniya	
Dole 1985 [7.4e], 1986 [7.8]		Misadu	Koniya	
Anonymous & Kromah 1985 [7.3]			Koyya	Mènya
K. Kamara 1985 [7.5], L.K. Kamara 1992 [7.16]	Mande Mani	Misadu Misawu	Gòniya Kòniya, Koniya	Mani (from Maniya, and below)
Sumawolo 1986 [7.7a-b]		Misadu	Gòni-nya Kòniya, Koniya	
L. Kamara 1986 [7.9]		Misadu	Koniya	
Liberty 1986		Musardu		
Sidibé 1989 [4.15], 1993 [7.32]/1997, 1993 [7.33B]	Mande Mandin	Misadu, Masata, Masaso Masakèlaso	Koniya Kòniya	
Kromah 1990, 1992 [7.17, 8.2]		Mussadu	Konya	

"Connaissance/ Beyla" n.d. [4.11]	Malian empire	Moussadou		
F.B. Kromah 1990 [7.10], 1992 [7.25]		Misadu	Kòniya	Maniya Mainya
Kamara 1990 [7.11]		Misadu Musa[du]		
Kièlè 1990 [7.12], 1992 [7.21]	Mande <i>jamana</i>	Misadu	Koniyaka	
Dole 1990 [7.13]	Mandi	Misadu	Koniya	
Kromah 1990 [7.14]		Misadu		
Kamara n.d. [7.38]	Mande	Musadu		
Konè 1992 [7.15]		Misadu		
Kènè 1992 [7.18]		Misadu	Kòeyā (Koyan?)	Manya Mènya
Kamara 1992 [7.19]	Mande		Goniya Koniya	Mèniya Manya Maniya
Kromah 1992 [7.20]		Misadu	Koniya	
Jabateh 1992 [7.22]	Mande	Misadu		Maniya
Konè 1992 [7.23]	Mande	Misadu	Koniya	Maniya
Komara 1992 [7.24]				Maniya
Kamara 1992 [7.26]	Mandi	Misadu	Koniya	Maniya
Kamara 1992 [7.27]		Misadu, Musa[du]		
Donso 1992 [7.28]		Misadu Misaso, Misata	Goniya Koniya	Mènya
Kromah 1992 [7.29], 1993 [7.34]		Misadu	Koniya	Maiyā Mènya
Dole 1992 [7.30]		Musadu Moussadou	Konia	

Konè 1992 [7.31]		Misadu	Koynya, Koniya	
Béété 1993 [7.35]	Mani	Misadu	Gòniya Konye	
Donzo 1993 [7.36a]		Misadu	Koniya	

APPENDIX D

Important Personal and Clan Names

	FONINGAMA	DIOMANDE KAMARA	ZO MUSA	FEMO DOLE
Dauvillier 1905 [3]	Fere Kama		N'zougou Moussa	
Liurette 1908 [4.1]	Fonikaman Diomandé	Diomandé		
Lamole 1909 [4.2]			Zogomoussa Koma	
Massaquoi 1911		Kamara		
Bouyssou 1913/1949 [4.3]	Falikaman	Djomannou	Zogomisa Koma	
Humblot 1918, 1951 [4.4a-b]	Farèn Kaman Faren Naman	Kamara Dioman'den		
Klingenheben 1926		Kamala		
Germain 1946- 47/1984 [4.5]			Zoho Missa Coma (Zohomissa koro)	
Linard 1948 [4.6]	Fonikaman Kamara	Diomandés		
Holas 1952 [4.7]			Zoumassakro	
Johnson 1952- 1962 [8.1]			Zoa	
"Monograph/ Beyla" c.1958 [4.8]	Faring Camara Foni Kaman		Zoo Missa Kone	Foromo Dore
Korvah 1960/94ff	Fali Kama		Musa	

Kromah 1961, in Massing (1985:37)	Feni Kamara		Zomusa, Musa	Filimo Totte (Dole?)
Sirleaf 1965 [5.1]	Fèngama, Fèlèngama		Zo Misa Kòma	
Fahnbulleh 1966	Fekamara (?)			
Fisher 1971	Fangamma		Zo Musakoma	Filimamu- dolay
Person 1968ff	Feren-Kaman Kamara Fèren-Kaman			
Kaba 1971	Fonikaman	Kamara Dyomande		
Ture 1972-73		Kamara Dyomande Dyumanu		
Beavogui 1973- 74	Fonikama Fenikaman	Diomande		
Sakou 1973-74	Fonikaman			
Weisswange 1976	Fonigama			
Camara 1979 [4.9]	Farenkaman Camara			
Kamala 1985 [7.6]	Fòningama	Jomande	Zo Musa Kòma	Fuemuò Dòle
Sumawolo 1984 [6.1]	Foniṅkama Kamara		Misa	
Dole 1985 [6.2]	Foniṅkama		Misa	
Koesia 1985 [7.4a]			Misa	
Kromah 1985 [7.4c]			Zo MisaKòma (a Kromah) = Zo to Misa to Kòma to Kòma's son	

Dole 1985 [7.4e], 1986 [7.8]	Fonɔŋgama Fòɔŋgama		Zo Misa Sanyo	Fuomuo Dole
Kamara 1985 [7.4], 1992 [7.16]	Faɔŋgama Fonɔŋgama Foniŋ Gamara	Jomani Jomanu Kamara	Misa Zo Misa Kòma	
Sumawolo 1986 [7.7a-b]	Fèŋgama Fòni Kama Fòɔŋgama		Zo Misa Kòma Zo Musa Kòma	
Kamara 1986 [7.9]	Fonɔŋgama			
Sidibé 1989 [4.15], 1993 [7.32]/1997, 1993 [7.33b]	Foninkaman Fonɔŋgama	Jomani	Zo Masa Kromah Zo Masa Kòlò Zo Masa Kòma Masata Zo	Férébori Doré
Kromah 1990, 1992 [7.17]	Fonɔŋgaman		Zo Mussa/ Musa	
"Connaissance Beyla" n.d. [4.8]	Foni-Kaman Camara			
Kromah 1990 [7.10], 1992 [7.25]	Fonɔŋgama	Jomani	Zo Masa Kòma	
Kamara 1990 [7.11]	Fòɔŋgama	Jomani Kamara Kamana		
Kièlè 1990 [7.12], 1992 [7.21]	Kamān Fonɔŋgama	Jomani Kamara	Zo Masa Kòma Zo Musa Koma Misa	
Dole 1990 [7.13]	Fèŋgama Fèɔŋgama	Jomani Jomanu	Musa	Dòlè
Kromah 1990 [7.14]	Fonɔŋgama	Jomani Jomanu Yomanu	Zo Masa Kòma Musa	
Kamara n.d. [7.38]	Fonɔŋgama	Jomani	Zo Musa Kòma	

Konè 1992 [7.15]	Foniŋgama	Jomani, Jomanu Kamanakalu	Zo Musa Kòma	
Kènè 1992 [7.18]	Fèniŋgama	Jomanu	Zo Misa Kòma Zo Misaba	Fumò/ Fuomuo/ Folomo Dolè
Kamara 1992 [7.19]	Kamã Foni Yama(Juku) Foni Yama Kamã Foniŋgama	Jomani/ Jomã dèn Jomanu, Jomaya Kamara	Misa Zo Misa Kòma	Flemo/Fèmo Dolè
Kromah 1992 [7.20]	Fèngama	Jomani, Jomandi Jomanu	Zo Masa Kòma	Fomo Dolè
Jabateh 1992 [7.22]	Joma Foni Kali Foni Kama or Fòniŋgama	Jomani, Jomaninu Joma dènu Jomanu		
Konè 1992 [7.23]	Fòniŋgama	Jomande	Misa Zo Masa Kòma	
Komara 1992 [7.24]	Foniògama	Jomani Kamara		
Kamara 1992 [7.26]		Jomani	Misa Zo Musa Kòma	
Kamara 1992 [7.27]	Foniŋgama		Zo Misa	
Donzo 1992 [7.28]	Foniŋgama	Jomani Kamara	Zo (Misadu Zo), Kò/Kòma, Misa Zo/So Misa Kòma	Fumo/Fomo Dolè
Kromah 1992 [7.29], 1993 [7.34]	Foniŋgama	Jomani Jomanu Kamara	(Zo) Misa, Kòma Zo Misa Kòma	Fèmu/Fèmò/ Femo/Femu/ Fuomuo Dolè
Dole 1992 [7.30]	Foniŋgama	Kamara	Musa	Famuo Dole

Konè 1992 [7.31]	Fèngama	Jomani Jomanu	Musa Zo Musa Kòma	
Béété 1993 [7.35]	Foniŋgama	Jomanu	Misa Zo Misa Kòma	Fuomuo Dolè
Donzo 1993 [7.36a]	Foniŋgama		Zo Misa Kòma	Fuomuo Dòle
Dole 1993 [7.36b]			Zo Misa	
Kamara n.d. [7.38]	Foniŋgama	Joma <i>dèn</i> Jomani	Misa Musa Zo Misa Kòma	Fuomuo Dòle

APPENDIX E

List of Episodes

Episodes

- 1) The Kamara in the Manden
- 2) The Kamara in Niani
- 3) The Kamara in Kaaba
- 4) The Kamara in Tabon
- 5) The Kamara in Sibi
- 6) The Kamara *funé*
- 7) The Kamara in Mecca
- 8) Kamara migrations south from the Manden
- 9) "Fonio" story - I: The Fulbe hid Kamã in *fonio* granary
- 10) "Foni" story - II: Kamã's mother, Foni Yama
- 11) "Foni" story - III: Kamã harvested *fonio* quickly
- 12) Foningama's family
- 13) Foningama's wife
- 14) Foningama's first child son
- 15) Conspiracy against Foningama
- 16) Foningama's character
- 17) The prophecy of Foningama
- 18) Kamara emblems of authority
- 19) Foningama warned
- 20) Foningama goes to the meeting
- 21) Failed meeting
- 22) Foningama's challenge
- 23) Foningama's meeting with his wife, and exile
- 24) Foningama met a Kuyateh *jèli*
- 25) Kuyateh's knowledge
- 26) Foningama's blessing
- 27) Kuyateh's sons
- 28) Journey to Mau
- 29) Blood pact
- 30) Meaning of the pact
- 31) Sumaka Kamara upset
- 32) Sumaka's curse
- 33) Divination for Sumaka
- 34) Kònsaba's problem
- 35) Fanyala's five sons given to Kònsaba
- 36) Fanyala's request
- 37) Sumaka's blessing
- 38) Jihad before Morocco
- 39) Alafã Konè and Masa Brahima Konè began their jihad in Morocco

- 40) Alafã and Brahim Konè in Mauritania
- 41) Alafã and Brahim Konè in Malaka
- 42) Alafã Konè died in Beledu
- 43) Brahim Konè went to Gbè
- 44) Kònsaba Kamara bribed Brahim
- 45) Brahim Konè did not fight Kònsaba
- 46) Brahim visited Sinko
- 47) Brahim went to Samana
- 48) Brahim traveled to Beyla
- 49) Kromah dream
- 50) Fènyabu Kromah rescued Foningama in Mau
- 51) Fènyabu escorted Foningama to Gbè
- 52) Foningama and Kònsaba
- 53) Fènyala introduced Foningama to Kònsaba
- 54) Kònsaba schemed against Foningama
- 55) Kònsaba made a sacrifice to the land
- 56) Kònsaba spoke to the land
- 57) Kònsaba plotted to kill Foningama
- 58) Old woman warned Foningama
- 59) Fènyabu rescued Foningama
- 60) Fènyabu returned for Foningama's *jèli*
- 61) *Jèli* and the mat
- 63) Fènyabu and Foningama's *jèli* encountered the Kòma
- 63) Fènyabu rescued Foningama's *jèli*
- 64) Kamara - Kuyateh *jèli* relationship
- 65) Kònsaba's conspiracy to kill Foningama in Mau
- 66) The Kamara settle in Gbè
- 67) The Kamara and Loma
- 68) Kpelle sacrifices
- 69) Kamara sacrifice
- 70) Kamara reaction to their sacrifice
- 71) The Kpelle leave
- 72) Kònsaba Kamara met a *mori*
- 73) The *mori* married Kònsaba's daughter
- 74) The *mori*'s message
- 75) The journey of the fish
- 76) The Kanè *mori* dreams in Timbuktu
- 77) The message
- 78) Mori Kanè and Musa Baayo journey from Timbuktu to Gbè
- 79) Mori Kanè met Kònsaba
- 80) Sacrifice items
- 81) Kònsaba's first sacrifice
- 82) The Gbè people's reaction to the sacrifice
- 83) Kònsaba's plea
- 84) Mori Kanè's response
- 85) The Gbè people's apology

- 86) Mori Kanè's curses and blessings
- 87) The two stones of Gbèsuba
- 88) Kònsaba's second sacrifice
- 89) Mori Kanè and the palm nut
- 90) Kònsaba planted the palm nut
- 91) Mori Kanè sent seeds to Foningama
- 92) Birds scattered the seeds
- 93) Mori Kanè shares his gift with Musa Baayo
- 94) Mori Kanè's instructions about the cane
- 95) Musa Baayo settles where the cane strikes and founds Koro
- 96) Mori Kanè's prayer for Musa Baayo
- 97) Mori Kanè founds Ferentela
- 98) The Sumaworo
- 99) Musadu's age
- 100) Kpelle areas
- 101) Loma areas
- 102) Early towns of Konya
- 103) Musa built a shelter at the Dion
- 104) Musa's livelihood
- 105) Musa's visitors
- 106) Musa's overseer moved to Musadu
- 107) Musadu's name
- 108) Intergroup relations
- 109) Musadu's founders and owners
- 110) "Konya," meaning
- 111) Konya's location
- 112) Musadu founded: the burning branch
- 113) Multiple Musas
- 114) Musa's background
- 115) Musa's overseer
- 116) Musadu's hosts
- 117) Zo Musa the sorcerer
- 118) Zo Musa's first *saafè*
- 119) Zo Musa *saafè* becomes destructive
- 120) Zo Musa and Doofatini
- 121) Nyana
- 122) Kòma
- 123) Poro
- 124) Foningama travels to Musadu
- 125) Musadu's 'strangers'
- 126) Zo Musa Kòma and Foningama
- 127) Tumaningèmè asked the clerics to make Foningama prosper
- 128) *Morilu* divine
- 129) Foningama defended Musadu
- 130) The Musaduka summon a cleric
- 131) *Morilu* prepared a counter-talisman

- 132) *Morilu* destroyed Zo Musa's *saafê*
- 133) Sacred animals in the Dion River
- 134) The "Manding" drove Zo Musa and his followers from Musadu
- 135) Zo Musa cursed Konya
- 136) Another talisman made for Zo Musa
- 137) Musadu's tree branches
- 138) Musadu's water
- 139) Musadu's stones
- 140) Zo Musa's wife
- 141) Zo Musa's companions
- 142) Sanwu
- 143) Kuan
- 144) Nionsamoridu
- 145) Kanikokela
- 146) Ndèdèmòadu
- 147) Kangòlò
- 148) Koesia Banangòlò
- 149) Wawakòlò
- 150) Manakòlò
- 151) Gbolò
- 152) Mt. Yewula (Jewu)
- 153) Boola
- 154) Wenzu
- 155) Kpologbiyani
- 156) Bòma
- 157) Kpanpala
- 158) Kelema
- 159) Kule
- 160) Duyaladu
- 161) Weyafinta
- 162) Zota-Guinea (Maboina)
- 163) Zo Musa's medicine
- 164) Zota-Liberia
- 165) Bokomu, Liberia
- 166) Mana
- 167) Wii (Sakleipie)
- 168) Yeiyi
- 169) Baytonwu
- 170) Mt. Minian
- 171) Zohota, Manbouan in the Filikolé-Zohota region
- 172) G'Bahana
- 173) Kossa-Guerzé
- 174) Klay (Bero)
- 175) Mt. G'Bian Ye
- 176) Boyeba
- 177) G'Ban-Houn

- 178) Gohoba
- 179) Lainé (Konodougou)
- 180) Didita
- 181) Kokota (Gouran)
- 182) Lola
- 184) Boola (Kpogola)
- 185) Yarayé
- 186) Blango creek
- 187) Bagbwéma
- 188) Klayé
- 189) Guérikopléya creek
- 190) Yokon
- 191) Lola
- 192) Gbènikiala
- 193) Gueasso
- 194) Kamara-Kromah relations
- 195) The Kamara succeed the Kromah in Musadu
- 196) The Kamara succeed the Traoré in Musadu
- 197) Foningama Kamara switches totem, from elephant to leopard
- 198) Sons/Land
- 199) Circumcision
- 200) Foningama's *wakèlèn salaka*
- 201) Distribution of the sacrifice
- 202) Foningama's first advisors
- 203) Foningama's *jèli*
- 204) Intermediaries
- 205) Kaamòò Sware
- 206) Kaamòò Sware's companions
- 207) *Molilu* summoned
- 208) Return to Musadu
- 209) *Molilu* bless Foningama
- 210) Reward
- 211) Negotiation
- 212) Famoela
- 213) Foningama's bananas
- 214) Banana seeds
- 215) *Molilu* still waiting for banana seeds in Nionsamoridu
- 216) The laws of Musadu
- 217) The laws violated
- 218) Punishment for breaking the laws
- 219) Law violated again
- 220) Redemptive sacrifice
- 221) Foningama's circumcision
- 222) Fanyala became the chief of Musadu
- 223) Division between Fanyala and Fasujan
- 224) Fasujan and his brothers rejected Fanyala

- 225) Fanyala's *wakèlèn salaka*
- 226) Kamara war in Musadu
- 227) Kamara expelled from Musadu
- 228) Post-Foningama *mansalu*
- 229) The division of Musadu
- 230) Movements beyond Musadu
- 231) The Kamara and the Maniyaka go to the ocean

APPENDIX F

List of interview questions

General questions

- Explain everything that you know about Musadu.

I ka ko su su lõ Musadu kolò.

- Explain the Foningama (or Zo Musa Kòma etc.) business to me?

Foningama ya ko kòlò nya fo n nyè?

Questions about Zo Musa (general to specific)

- How was Musadu founded/built?

Musadu lõni di?

- Who built Musadu?

Jènè/jeti na Musadu lò la?

- Explain everything that you know about Zo Musa.

I ka ko su su lõ Zo Musa kolò.

- What does Zo Musa Kòma mean?

Zo Musa Kòma kòlò ye minde le?

- What kind of work did Zo Musa do?

Zo Musa ya baale tèè minde la?

- Who was Zo Musa's slave father/master?

Jènè tèè Zo Musa ya jòn va le?

- Was Zo Musa good or bad?

Zo Musa tèè kan nyi ba a tèè man nyi?

- What religion did Zo Musa know?

Zo Musa tèè dina minde lō?

The Manding and Foningama in Musadu

- Who were the first Maniyaka to live in Koniya?

Mènya joona minde nani i sii la Koniya?

- What was their religion?

Ai tèè dina minde lō?

- What about Tumaningèmè?

Tumaningèmè do?

- Explain everything that you know about Foningama.

I ka ko su su lō Foningama.

- Who were Foningama's ancestors?

Foningama bèmè ye jèlèlu le?

- Who was Foningama's father?

Foningama fa tèè jènè le?

- What road did Foningama take to come to Musadu?

Foningama nani sia minde ka Musadu?

- What kind of work did Foningama do?

Foningama ya baale tèè minde la?

- What does Foningama mean?

Foningama kòlò ye minde le?

- What religion did Foningama follow?

Foningama tèè dina minde lō?

- How many children did Foningama have?

Dèn jèli tèè Foningama bolo?

- Who was Foningama's first son?

Jènè tèè Foningama dèn chè joona le?

- Tell me about the sacrifice of 1000.

Wulukèlèn salaka ko fo n nyè?

- Tell me about the division.

Talili ko fo n nyè?

- Who became the chief of Musadu after Foningama?

Jènè na kèla Misadu masa le Foningama kò?

APPENDIX G

***Fonio* and the Kamara: Parallel Images of Survival and Conquest**

There are several physical and spiritual dimensions of *fonio* that traditionists seem to relate to the Foningama Kamara. Over time, story-tellers might have chosen *fonio* from the geographic mosaic of the savannah to symbolize the strength, durability and longevity of the Kamara. *Fonio* is easy to sow, matures quickly, and smothers all weeds when it grows, but is difficult to harvest and thresh. The Kamara, likewise, spread rapidly and conquered many people, but were also hard to deal with after they became rulers.

Fonio is popularly known as “hungry rice.” The early-growing varieties of *fonio* are planted in March and April at the beginning of the dry season. The first harvest is designed to take place as the last store of rice from the previous growing season is depleted and before the first rice crop matures. *Fonio* is a staple of the Fulbe, as is consistent with the traditions which claim that the Fulbe hid Foningama in one of their *fonio* granaries (Chapter 3). *Fonio* is sown on the ground like rice, and only needs light hoeing to begin germination. “The tiny round grain” of the *fonio* “naturally possesses a great power of dispersion,” and its creeping pattern smothers all weeds that threaten its expansion. Layi Kèwulèn Kamara compared *fonio* with Musadu Foningama ‘s descendants who became rulers and conquerors, saying that ‘they were not empty *fonio* seeds.’¹ *Fonio* ripens in six weeks to five months, depending on the type of grain. At harvest time, reapers cut *fonio* by hand fulls with knives and sickles. Others follow and bundle the *fonio*

¹App. 7.16, l. 275-279.

into sheaves. Threshing is done by foot or in mortars.² The early-nineteenth century explorer René Caillié described the “great pains” that women near Odienne took in “separating” the seed from “estraneous matters.” Caillié said that the women let the “fonigné” dry in the sun, beat the grain in a mortar, removed the chaff “which requires considerable time and trouble,” repounded the *fonio* until it became white, washed and drained the water through a basket, and beat it lightly into a power for a third time after it swelled before it could be prepared to be eaten.³

Images of survival, sustenance and conquest in the production of *fonio* resemble Foningama and his ancestors. Planting, harvesting, and threshing *fonio* is hard work. *Fonio* is also hard to chew, and plenty of water is needed to swallow *fonio*. The Guinean guitarist and singer Blama Fofana sings the praises of Foningama, and interchanges his name with “Konyama.”⁴ *Koni* (*kuòni*) is the ‘cotton’ that surrounds the *fonio* ‘seed’ (*yama*). Commenting on this connection that Blama Fofana made between *fonio*, Foningama and Koni-yama, my assistants said that the difficulty in working with *fonio* resembled the challenge that people had in dealing with the Foningamasi and his ‘offspring.’

The spiritual connection between *fonio* and the Kamara is also significant. According to Germain Dieterlen’s “Mande Creation Myth,” the first two successful seeds that God created were *fonio* seeds - *fani berere* and *fani ba*.⁵ Pemba, the first human being, made *fani berere* impure after he stole some of its seeds from God and ate some *fonio* that he grew. Pemba’s twin sister Moussou Koroni Koundye desecrated the *fani berere* by eating

²Bangura 1919; Kaba 1971:327, fn. 1; Zahan 1979:118; Burkill 1997:226; Fairhead/Leach 1996:121,319; Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16, 1.277-279.

³Caillié 1830:330.

⁴App. 9.1.

⁵*Fani*, or *fonio*.

it with Pemba and planting its seeds improperly. In response, Faro, the male twin who was sacrificed to cleanse Pemba's sin and purify the earth, flooded the areas where Mouso Koroni planted the *fani berere* and recovered the seeds that she planted. *Fani ba* remained pure because Pemba did not eat any.

Kaaba (Kangaba) is the place where Faro supposedly came down to earth, where the first village was constructed, and where the all-important sanctuary was constructed. Kaaba now represents *fani berere*, the seed that Faro recovered from Moussa Koroni. Dangassa depicts *fani ba*. There is a ritual field for each crop in both towns where both types of *fonio* are annually grown. The first fruits of each years harvest are offered to the ancestors. The Keita and Kamara respectively control the ceremonies at the main shrines at Kaaba and Dankassa. The patriarch of each clan guards the temple and performs its rituals.⁶

These sanctuaries at Kaaba and Dankassa are called *kama blõ*. *Blõ* is a meeting area or enclosure that leads to a compound. The origin of the word *kama* is uncertain. The Kamara are reportedly the trustees of the "sacred huts" at Dankassa and a less well-known one at Kaaba. *Kama* could be an abbreviation of Kamara, or could be someone's first name.⁷ The famous sanctuary at Kaaba is also a *kama blõ*. If there is a connection between the famous *kama blõ* at Kaaba and the Kamara, one can speculate that the Kamara built the *kama blõ* at Kaaba and that the Keita usurped their control over this sanctuary after they conquered Manden. Even though the Kaba are considered the original inhabitants of Kaaba, the Kamara jointly founded Kaaba with the Traoré.⁸

⁶Dieterlen 1954:62-67; 1957:126-135.

⁷Conrad 1992:164-165.

⁸Dieterlen 1954:64; Jansen 1996a:123.

Leynaud and Cissé's claim that the ancestors of the Sibi Kamara founded Dankassa is supported by Dieterlen's statement that the Kamara are still the guardians of the sacred temples in Dankassa.⁹ If Leynaud and Cissé and Dieterlen are correct, and the association between the Dankassa Kamara and *foni ba* is as ancient as the ritual suggests, then it would have been natural for Foningama's descendants to retain associations with *fonio* as they migrated into the frontier.¹⁰ Foningama's link with *fonio* would have been strengthened if the Kamara were once the guardians of the famous shrine in Kaaba that is associated with *fani berere*.

⁹Leynaud/Cissé 1978:150-151.

¹⁰See Kopytoff 1987:3,12-15.

APPENDIX H

Clan Oral Traditions

This appendix provides information that is supplemental to the material about the Baayo, Kamara, Konè, Kromah, Traoré and Sanoé that appears in the Chapters 1-8.

Appendix H.1

Baayo

A strain of sources from today's Gambia, Senegal, Senegambia, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana connect the Baayo (Bagayogo) to the Jakhanke, either directly with Al-Hajj Salim Sware or more broadly with the Jakhanke. The Baayo are a Manding clan of Soninke origin who many sources link with Al-Hajj Sware.¹ Some claim that the Baayo and a few other clans are descendants of Abou Bakari (Bukakar Sidiki) the son of Kouâffa (Abi Gahafata).² This is Abu Bakr, the son of Kuhafa, who was one of the first converts to Islam who became the first leader of the Muslim community after Muhammed died.³

¹Other spellings are Baghayogho, Baghyu'u, Bahaiyokho, Barhayorho and Bayo. Baayo is a contraction of Bagayogo. Delafosse wrote that they are "Malinke" or "Mandingues" (I, 1912/1972:140). According to Andreas Massing, they were "part of the Wangara, who may perhaps be identified with the Maninka Mori, i.e., acculturated Soninke" (Jakhanke) (personal communication., 15 Jan. 2001). Earlier, Person wrote that the Baayo were of Manding or Soninke origin (1975:2242). The *wangara* were also early Soninke long-distance traders. One *jèli* in the Gambia said that the Baayo of Timbuktu were the leaders of all the traders (Kanute 1969, in Innes 1974:235-236, II. 2035-2046). In this instance, in an episode that is not very clear, Kanute said that 'Sunjata marched against him [Mamudu Baayo] at Tumutu; he captured him.' Youssouf Cissé and Wâ Kamissoko similarly wrote that Sunjata instructed Niani Mansa Kara Kamara's son Massa Dan Ni Kaman to 'conquer Bagayogo-Kongo' and 'bring... the head of its chief,' Fadjugui Bagayogo, to him. The authors said that Bagayogo was a great *mansa*, a brave and very religious man, and that he lived in Kamalé, in Bintinnia (Cissé/Kamissoko 1991:83, fn. 47,50). If Kanute and Cissé and Kamissoko's accounts are related, then Sunjata's army might have marched against the Baayo to solidify his control of trade in his expanding empire.

²Humblot 1918:539; Sayers 1927:99.

³Buhl 1953:8-9.

The sixteenth and seventeenth century Arabic writings are the first to mention the Baayo. The Timbuktu scholar Ahmad Bābā Aqit (d. 1627) wrote biographical sketches of the noted scholar Muhammad Baayo in 1596 and 1603; al-Sa'di wrote a similar biography based on Ahmad Bābā's 1603 work in his *Tarikhs al-Sudan* in 1655. John Hunwick published English translations of Bābā's first piece and al-Sa'di's *Tarikhs* in 1990 and 1999.⁴ These Arabic sources say that a scholar named Mahmūd Baayo, the son of Abu Bakr, died in Jenne in 1543.⁵ Mahmūd sired two sons: Muhammad who lived from 1523/24 to 1594, and Ahmad who died in 1571. Muhammad was the scholar who taught the renown scholar Ahmad Bābā. In 1593, the Moroccan overlord of Songhay arrested Muhammad Baayo, Ahmad Bābā and other leading scholars in Timbuktu. Muhammad remained in Timbuktu where he died the following year. The Moroccans exiled Ahmad Bābā and several other members of his family to Marrakesh in Morocco. All died in exile, except for Ahmad who returned to Timbuktu in 1608.⁶

Some Baayo remained in Timbuktu where they maintained their scholarly status. Other Baayo spread south from Timbuktu and possibly Jenne to Wasolon, Koro, Kaya, Dagomba, Mossi, Yendi and other places during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Baayo migrations to Koro are of particular interest because Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara linked these movements to their histories of Musadu.⁷ Kamala said that N'fa Musa Baayo ('My father Musa Baayo') migrated from Timbuktu to help the Kamara become the chiefs of Mau. Indeed, this story about the founding of Koro by Musa

⁴Hunwick 1990; 1999.

⁵The ruler of the Songhay empire, Askia Ishāq I, forced Mahmūd to become the judge of Jenne shortly before Mahmūd died (al-Sa'di c. 1655, in Hunwick 1999:26; Gomez 1990:20-21; Hunwick 1990:149-150).

⁶al-Sa'di c. 1655, in Hunwick 1999: lxi-lxii, 62-68; Hunwick 1990:160, fn. 46.

⁷App. 7.6; App. 7.37.

Baayo dates back to the late-nineteenth century.⁸ According to research that Andreas Massing has conducted, the Koro Baayo seem to have originated from Timbuktu and traveled to Wasolon. They initially stopped at Faragouaran, which is about one hundred miles slightly southeast from Bamako, and dispersed to Kelenya and other towns in Wasolon. Musa Baayo continued on from Kelenya and went to Koro.⁹

Massing's sources also claimed that the Jakhanke originated from Ja, and that 'the Bagayogo are their imams.' According to Massing, the imams of Ja or Ja-Bambuk are Quaraysh or Sherif, not Baayo.¹⁰ While the Baayo are probably not the current imams of Ja-Bambuk as Massing notes, the more important issue that the Baayo elders were raising was that they consider themselves to be Jakhanke. Their claim that their clansmen are the imams of the very town from where the Jakhanke originate is their way of saying that they are Jakhanke of high standing. Although the Jakhanke histories do not list the Baayo as being part of the student body whom Al-Hajj Sware taught after he moved to Ja-Bambuk, there is the tradition which claims that two of the "twelve famous '*ulema*' of the past" who went to Mecca with Al-Hajj Salim Sware were "Mahmūd Baghayughu, and his celebrated father, Muhammad Baghayughu."¹¹ According to an early-twentieth century Arabic source, Mohammadou [Mahmūd] returned to Timbuktu with "Hadji Salimou Souaré," and "Hadji Moussa Barhayorho" traveled with his twelve companions to the region of Touba (Mau) and founded Koro.¹²

⁸Blondiaux 1897:371.

⁹Massing 2000:290; forthcoming.

¹⁰Massing 2000:290; forthcoming. This would be Dia/Ja-Bambuk, not Dia/Ja-Macina, as the *Diakhanke* or *Jakhanke* hail from the former rather than the latter town.

¹¹Sanneh 1989:18; Wilks 1989:61-62,99. Rather, Mahmūd was the father and Muhammad was the son (Hunwick 1990:163). Wilks also wrote that a Sulayman b. 'Abdullah Baghayughu went from Timbuktu to Dagoma, and that the Baghayughu were one of "the earliest Suwaris to penetrate the Voltaic region" (1989:61-62,99). Moussa and the father Mahmūd (not Muhammed) were probably the Baayo who went on the pilgrimage; "Mahmūd and Muhammad Baghayughu have often been confused in the *Jula ta'rīks*" (Hunter 1977:188, fn. 1; Marty 1922:130,146-147; see Hunwick 1966:30).

¹²Marty 1922:130,146-147.

Other sources link the Baayo to the Jakhanke. In Senegambia, bards say that “Mamadi Bayo” was a student of “Mbembalie Suare” or Al-Hajj Salim Sware.¹³ One historian suggested that even though Muhammad Baghayughu traced his learning tradition back to several North African scholars, Muhammad “very likely had possessed an earlier *silsila* going back through al-Hājj Sālim Suwāri.” He added that “It is conceivable that it was Muhammad Baghayughu’s father, Mahmūd (d. 1522/959), qādī of Jenne,... who actually studied under al-Hājj Sālim,” and that Mahmūd rather than Muhammed went on the famous pilgrimage to Mecca.¹⁴

* * *

Appendix H.2

Kamara

Figure 48: Kamara Migrations from the Manden to Musadu

KAMARA FROM MANDE TO SIANO AND MUSADU:

Foningama from Malaka to Sibi to Musadu (AK; ML)¹⁵

Foningama from Sibi to Musadu (AJ)

Foningama from Sibi to Gbè; Kònsaba the first son (LKK)

Foningama from Tabon to Sibi to Kaaba to Musadu (SK)

Foningama from Kirina to Musadu (SS)

KAMARA FROM MANDE TO THE SIGUIRI-KOUROUSSA-SANKARAN TRIANGLE TO WASOLON, SIANO AND MUSADU:

Foningama from Mande to Kankan (Salamani) to Goye/Gbè to Musadu (D)

Foningama and Sèmini from Sibi to Kankan to Musadu (ML; SW; W; FMK)

Foningama from Mande to Sankaran to Konya-Mani (H)

Foningama from Sibi to Kankan (Salamanida) to Musadu (SB)

Foningama from Tabon to Kosa/Karala; Kònsaba to Gbè-Barala-Mau,

Foningama to Musadu (SKA)

Kamara from Kankan to Musadu (W)

Foningama and Sanoe from Karala to Musadu (S)

¹³Galloway 1974:156; see Kanute 1969, in Innes 1974:235.

¹⁴Hunter 1977:188, fn. 1.

¹⁵See Figure 6 for the sources that match these abbreviations.

Fonɔŋgama (Kamã) from Kaaba to Kankan (Falamani) to Toron; Fonɔŋgama from Worodugu to Mau, Kònsaba to Gbèsoba (LKK)

Kamara from Malaka to Kolo (Kobila?) to Bala to Gbèsoba to Sinko to Diemou; From Diemou, Kònsaba went to Gbè, Barala, Touba; Fonɔŋgama went to Musadu (MKE)

Fonɔŋgama from Sibi to Kankan/Falamani to Diemou to Gbèsoba to Mau to Musadu (TKK)

Fonɔŋgama (Kamã) from Sibi to Siguiri to Wasolon to Kankan to Musadu (FMK)
Fonɔŋgama from Sibi to Kankan & Kasiadou (AMK)

Kamã from Sibi to Kouroussa to Toron to Wasolon to Diemou to Musadu (WMK)

Fonɔŋgama (Kamã) from Sibi to Farinkamaya; 5 sons - Soumabale to Balea (Kouroussa), Soli to Kouroussa region, Firigui to Firia (Farana), Dioman to Siano, Sonkoli to Sonkoya (Dabola), Malle to Melae (Siguiri), Fato to Fatoya (Siguiri), Kinting to Kintingna (Siguiri); Dioman - Koy Fing, Koyfing Kamã & Fing Koy Fing in Siano; Fing Koy Fing from Siano to Dioman when he died or disappeared; Fonɔŋgama to Musadu (DC)

Fonɔŋgama from Mande to Farinkamaya; five sons
Souma Bala to Ballea (Kouroussa),
Frigui to Fria/Firiguia (Farana), Sonkoli to Sokoya/Sonkolya (Farana),
Dioman to Siano, an unnamed fifth west of Siguiri; Dioman's son was Koïfing who sired Kònsaba and Fonɔŋgama; Fonɔŋgama to Siano to Musadu (MB; MS; VK; YP; probably from DK)

Kamara from Sibi; five sons Sonabale to Kouroussa, Dioman to Siano, Friki and another son to Fria, Miakèdè and Sonkoli's destinations not stated; Dioman to Koyfing; Koyfing sired Kònsaba, Fonɔŋgama, Famola and Sessa in Siano; Fonɔŋgama to Musadu (MS)

Kamãjan sired Fè, Fè sired Kamã, Kamã sired Kòngejan who left Sibi and went to Kankan, Wasolon, Kewa (Toron), and Diemou (Worodugu); Kòngejan sired Sumaka in Diemou whose sons were Kònsaba, Fayala, Fonɔŋgama, Kòsmama and Kònsaku; Fonɔŋgama to Mau; Sumaka & Kònsaba from Diemou to Solona; Fonɔŋgama from Mau to Solona to Musadu (VK)

KAMARA FROM THE MANDEN TO FUTA TO MUSADU:
Fonɔŋgama from Sibi to Futa to Kankan to Musadu (LK)

KAMARA FROM THE MANDEN TO THE COAST TO KOUROUSSA TO SIANO TO MUSADU:

Kamara from Kaaba to Sierra Leone/coast [Kono-Vai]; back to Baleya (Kouroussa) to Siano (Kònsaba); Fonɔŋgama from Siano to Musadu (Person 1971)

KAMARA FROM MANDE TO KISSILAND TO MUSADU:

Fonɔŋgama from Mamanda mountain (in Mande?) to the more fertile Kissi area in

the South (FO; FA)
Foningama from Mande to Kissiland (FA)

* * *

Appendix H.3

Konè

Figure 49: Konè Migrations from the Manden to Konya-Mani

MANDEN (SKR, SKO), Segu to Do (VK2), after Sunjata (FS, MAK), Beledu (ALK)
DIOMAN (Niane 1960:47), Siguiri (Niane 1960:46; 1975:98); Nora[ssoba] &
Noukoukan (Humblot 1951:111), Silakuò (FS, Moundekendo 1979:19) &
Kulukuò (?) (FS)
KURANKO (SKO, MKE)
SANKARAN (Humblot 1919:421; 1921:137; 1951:111,113; Niane 1975:100; Person
1964:325; 1970:284; Kaba 1971:64; Kamara 1977:4; Moundekeno 1979:19),
Farana (Ture 1972-73:21), Bassando (Kamara 1977:4, Moundekendo 1979:19,
AD1, MKE); Fadama (Kamara 1977:4; Moundekendo 1979:19; SKO), Amana
(Niane 1960:47), Dalayan (Dialaman stream, Dialamantamba?) (SKO, MKE);
Farana (Person 1968a:74); Baté (Person 1964:325, FS, SKO, KK), Takoura,
Konicro, Baro (Niane 1960:46)
EAST (Marty 1922:145-171), Bako, Djiborosso, Ganhoue (Mau), Sarhala (Derive
1990b:51-58)
TORON (Person 1964:325; 1970:284; Kaba 1971:328), Komandu (Turé 1972-73:21),
Kalala (FS)
WORODUGU (Person 1968a:103, SKO, MKE), Linko (pers. knowledge)
GBEREDU (Moundekendo 1979:19)
GREATER KONYA Gbè (ALK), Diemou (VK, FS), Chewa (?) (SKR), Sinko (ALK),
Beyla-Farana (AD1, ALK), Koniya (Kamara 1977:4, YD)

* * *

Appendix H.4

Kromah

Figure 50: Kromah Migrations from the Manden to Musadu

MANDE (Person 1971; MK), Bamako (HL, CB)
NOROSOBBA (in NEGEBORIA) (MK, VK, Millimono 1989:10, Camara 1980:82; Niane 1984:133)
HAMANA (VK), Kulay (?) (Person 1968b:219, n. 6)
SANKARAN (VK, MK16), Kulu (?) (VK)
KANKAN (BATE) (HL), Baranama (CB, AD1), Janvodu (?) (MK16), Kounadou (Millimono 1989:10)
SABADU (YP, AD1, Millimono 1989:10), Kossa (Person 1968b:219, n. 6), Karala (AD1)
TORON (SB)
KEROUANE (MK, AKK), Sanangolo (MK), Toumandou (HL, SB), Gbagbadou (?) (YP, MK), Kouroubadou (?) (CB)
LOWER KONIYA (YP), Diemou (VK), Tina (Worodugu) (HL, SB, VK, AKK, AD1), Solona and/or Sinko (Farana) (VK, AKK, ALK, CB), Fuala (HL, ALK, CB, AD1), Guirila (area) (HL)
GOYE (GBE) (AD1)
KONIYA (D, HL, M), near Wanino (MB), Nèlèkèlè creek (MS), Musadu (WMK, AD1; Jones 1983:73), Dagbanò (VK)
FOREST (D; Jones 1983:73)

Figure 51: Kromah Ancestors from Norasoba to Konya-Mani

V. Kamala (App. 7.6)	L. Donzo (App. 7.28)	Kabine Kromah (App. 7.29)	Beavogui (App. 4.13)	L. Kromah (App. 7.11)	Beyla (4.9)
Fakoli's <u>children:</u> <u>sons:</u>	<u>Ancestor's sons:</u>	<u>Ancestor</u>	<u>Ancestor:</u>	<u>Bakari's sons:</u>	<u>Tumani</u>
Tumani	Toumani	? (Tina) Tumani (Musadu)	Tumani (Musadu)	Tumã	
Yiabèè- Kagbè Sina (Tina) J/Yakèèjan Va-Yagbè Fèny/gabu Makula Dama	Youssouf (Tina) ¹⁶				
	Solomana (Fuala)	Sowana (Solona)			(Fuala, Sinko)
	Fantouma (Baranama)	Fatama (Kerouane)		(Baranama)	
	Ahmadsì (Diakolidu)				
X (Diakolidu)		Famèvi (Gbana)			
		Sofeina			
				Vase/Manduma Bala	
(Kouroubadou)					

* * *

Appendix H.5

Traoré

According to Vase Kamala and Wata Mammadi Kamara, Foningama's father arranged his marriage to a Traoré (Talawole) in the town of Diemou in Worodugu. Many

¹⁶The Manyaka often interchange /s/ and /t/, which means that Sina and Tina are probably the same. Kagbè is a woman's name. Thus, Kamala's Kagbè Sina could be one of Tumani's daughters, or a man whose first name was substituted for the town from which he came. If this is the case, one can reasonably speculate that this Kromah from Tina could have also been Kagbè Youssouf given the information in this source and Donzo (n.d.)

oral traditions claim that some Traoré migrated south to the Dioman and Toron after the Sumaworo-Sunjata war.¹⁷ Kamala added that Traoré gave birth to Foningama's son Fanyala (Fèn-jala) when they lived in Diemou. The oral traditions claim that the Traoré were one of the great sorcerer, warrior and hunter clans in the Ghana and Mali empires. Claims that Foningama married a Traoré are thus important because this symbolically connected him with a powerful Soninke clan. As a runaway warrior who was seeking to forge his own destiny, Foningama needed the political and spiritual support of clans like the Traoré.

The Traoré were one of the four royal Soninke clans who allegedly ruled Ghana.¹⁸ Oral traditions claim that some Traoré moved to the Manden early on; they were supposedly one of the first peoples to speak Maninka, and were *bula* or one of the original inhabitants of the Manden.¹⁹ Traoré hunters reportedly founded Kaaba with the Kamara, and were early occupants of towns like Kirina that are near Kaaba.²⁰

As *bula*, some Traoré were also sorcerers. Sumaworo's three mothers were alleged to be Traoré. One interviewee said that Sumaworo's fetus supernaturally passed through the wombs of the first two sisters before the third sister gave birth to him.²¹ Eissiriba Traoré was reputed to have been one of the nine famous sorceresses of the Manden.²² Mansa Traoré, who is claimed to have been one of Sunjata's contemporaries, supposedly had eyes in the back of his head that gave him special powers to see and

¹⁷Humblot 1918:534-536; Leynaud/Cissé 1978:147-148; Moundekeno 1979:19-20. For etymologies of Traoré, see Leynaud/Cissé (1978:147, fn. 1) and Johnson (1986:194, n. 305, 203, n. 794).

¹⁸ Conde 1974:iii; Forbenus/Cox 1938:130-143; Hunwick 1999:408. Some maintain that the Traoré are Maninka (Delafosse 1912/1972 I:140), Bamana (Sayers 1927:52; Conde 1974:iii; Massing 2000:296), or of "Berber and Arab origin" (Massing 2000:282, fn. 12).

¹⁹Humblot 1921:137; Conrad 1992:177.

²⁰Jansen 1995:188; Leynaud/Cissé 1978:148; Conrad 1997d:141.

²¹Kouyaté 1987, in Conrad 1999a:174,199, ln. 1196.

²²Kante 1960:10.

divine.²³

That the Traoré were one of the Manden's original 'sixteen noble warriors or carriers of the quiver' is seen in descriptions of Mansa Traoré who is said to have led a formidable cavalry of archers who helped Sunjata defeat Sumaworo.²⁴ The warring credentials of some Traoré stem back to traditions which state that the Traoré were some of the most formidable hunters who lived along the Upper Niger river.²⁵ Several oral accounts say that two famous hunters, Danmansa Wulanba and Danmansa Wulani Traoré, walked to Do and killed the 'buffalo woman;' the 'buffalo woman' turned out to be the mother or sister of Sogolon Konè - Sunjata's mother.²⁶

The Traoré might have been some of the first Soninke to convert to Islam. Ja-Macina is one of the towns that oral traditionists associate with the ancient Traoré. If Ja-Macina is the same as Zāgharī (Zagha) that the mid-fourteenth century writer Ibn Battūta said was a center of Islamic learning, then some of the Traoré who lived there might have become Muslim.²⁷ Some Traoré were certainly Muslim by the fifteenth century. Many oral traditions claim that Alhaji Bakari Traoré was one of the twelve famous pilgrims who went to Mecca with Alhaji Salim Sware, the founder of West Africa's Jakhanke clerics.²⁸

The Traoré, like the Kamara and several other clans, have fabricated stories to trace their ancestry back to the time of Muhammed. It is claimed that the ancestor of the

²³Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:55; Sisòkò 1968, in Johnson 1986:108,194, n. 305.

²⁴Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:55; Conrad 1992:176-177; Kouyaté 1988, in Conrad 1999a:63. One oral tradition claimed that a Musa Traoré was the only warrior who had enough courage to tell Sumaworo that he should not circumcise women and men together (Sila Nani Kamara, Douama-Sobala 29 October 1990, l. 134-150, translation not in this appendix).

²⁵Leynaud/Cissé 1978:149.

²⁶Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:6-9; Kouyaté 1987, in Conrad 1999a:164,167; see Vase Kamala, App. 7.6, l. 148-310; Asumana Jabateh 1992, App. 7.22, l.4-91.

²⁷Battūta 1356, in Hopkins/Levtzion 1981:287; Wilks 1989:61.

²⁸Marty 1922:130; Wilks 1989:61-62. Later, in the seventeenth century, a Traoré became one of the judges in Jenne (Al-Sa'dī c. 1655, in Hunwick 1999:27).

Traoré was Abdulayi, and that some of his thirty sons who fought with Muhammed in the battle of Khaybar in 628 A.D. were killed.²⁹ The battle of Khaybar is memorable in early Islamic history because several Muslims were killed there.³⁰ Early-twentieth century African writings also claim that the Traoré are the descendants of Muhammed's uncle "Abdul Motalibi" (Abu Talib), Abu Talib's son "Alihyu" (Ali), and Ali's son "Al-Hassana" (Hasan).³¹ Hints of the link between the Traoré and Muhammed's family linger to this day. Demba Kouyaté, for instance, said that 'Sedina Ali was the ancestor of the Tarawele.'³² Sedina Ali, or 'Prophet Ali,' is a reference to Abu Talib's son Ali and Muhammed's cousin and son-in-law. This link to Muhammed's family also makes the Traoré part of Muhammed's family, or Sherif. Likewise, one Maniyaka said that the Traoré and Sherif were the same in the beginning, but that they became separate clans after a Sherif refused to sell Hausa medicine to the person who became the ancestor of the Traoré.³³

* * *

Appendix H.6

Sanoe

The Sanoe, Sayon or Saghanughu are Soninke or Maraka who appear earlier in the epic as possibly having migrated to Konya-Mani and Gbana and been one of Musadu's hosts.³⁴ The Sanoe are one of the five original Muslim clans in the Manden who have rich

²⁹Sisòkò 1968, in Johnson 1986:108; see Belcher 1985:245. Sisòkò said Kayibara.

³⁰Ishāq, in Guillaume 1955:518.

³¹Humblot 1918:538; Sayers 1927:99.

³²Kouyaté 1987, in Conrad 1999:164. The Maniyaka say Seidna.

³³Kabine Kromah 1993, App. 7.34, l. 413-421, 443-456.

³⁴Humblot 1918:523. The Sanoe are also known as Sano, Saghanogho, Sanyo, Syyo, Sanko, Sânoe, Sakho, Sanokho, Sakhaoui, Sa'anorho and Sarhanorho.

historical traditions that extend back to North Africa and Muhammad.³⁵ Ibn Battūta mentioned the first reference to the Sanoe when he visited Zāghari in the Jenne region in the mid-1350s. There, Ibn Battūta noted the presence of a ‘white’ Kharijite-Ibadi sect called the Saghanugu.³⁶ Wilks argues that Ibn Battūta’s Saghanugu were Sanoe or Saghanughu of Maghrib background, and that they were forced to convert from Ibadism to Sunni Islam as the Maliki school of law became prevalent in West Africa.³⁷ After the Sanoe adopted Sunni Islam, some of their number became a “specialized ‘clerical’” clan that filled many judicial and religious functions in *jula* communities. Some Sanoe became great teachers of Maliki law and established several schools. Others became judges, lawyers, and imams, with the latter establishing many mosques. The Sanoe had their greatest impact in the northern and western parts of present-day Côte d’Ivoire and western Burkina Faso, and developed secondary centers of influence in Sierra Leone, western Liberia, the Sankaran and Baté regions of eastern Guinea, and southeastern Guinea.³⁸

According to Arabic sources, we can date the earliest Sanoe presence near Konya-Mani to Muhammad al-Afi Saghanghu. Muhammed al-Afi was a teacher who died in Koro in the mid-eighteenth century. This is the same Koro in current Côte d’Ivoire, about seventy-five miles west of Musadu, that the Musa Baayo is said to have founded (Chapter 4). Muhammad al-Afi’s son al-Abbas moved seventy miles west to Kani. He died in 1764/65. al-Abbas’s son Muhammad al-Mustafa moved from Kani to Boron and died in 1776/77. Muhammad al-Mustafa was one of many “outstanding” Sanoe teachers who drew students from present day Ghana and other parts of Côte d’Ivoire. Muhammad al-

³⁵Dieterlen 1957:125.

³⁶Battutta 1356, in Hopkins et. al 1981:287; 1356/1994:41.

³⁷Wilks 1966:14-15; see Hiskett 1984:45; Battuta 1356, in Hamdun/Noel 1994:85.

³⁸Skinner 1978:48; Anderson 1870/1971:26-27; Humblot 1918:523, 528, 539; Howard 1997:5, n.

Mustafa's sons and grandsons sparked a "great renewal of Suwarian learning" among the *jula* and formed important centers of learning in Kong, Bobo-Dioulasso, and the Volta region of present-day Ghana.³⁹

Oral traditions that I collected in southeastern Guinea concur that the Sanoe were traders and devout Muslims. Alhaji Fomba Lanse Donzo, a retired school teacher from Diakolidu, wrote about Mustafa Sanoe.⁴⁰ According to Mr. Donzo, Mustafa Sanoe came from Jafunu, the homeland of the Jakhanke. After Mustafa married and went to Mali, he went on a pilgrimage to Mecca. From Mecca he traveled to places like Kano, France and England as an itinerant evangelist. Although Donzo's Mustafa Sanoe appears as a composite figure of the historical Muhammad al-Mustafa, al-Mustafa's descendants, the Jakhanke, and the *jula* who settled in Nigeria, Donzo's depiction of Mustafa as a great teacher who traveled widely and influenced many people characterizes our collective understanding of the Sanoe. Furthermore, could the Sani Sanoe who appears in the Musadu epic represent a faint memory of Muhammad al-Mustafa's father Abbas who lived in Kani during the mid-eighteenth century? As the Manding sometimes attach the name of a town to a great person, Abbas Sanoe could have been called Kani Sanoe. Years of distortion and a simple consonant shift from /k/ to /s/ could produce Sani instead of Kani.

When Kabine Kromah, Yaya Dole and Tènu Kamã Kamara's statements are put in context with our knowledge that the Sanoe who immigrated from Mande were important Muslim teachers, it is evident that some Sanoe seem to have intermarried with the Kpelle, cast off Islam as they moved away from Muslim trade towns, adopted Kpelle

³⁹Wilks 1966; 1968; 1989; 2000.

⁴⁰Lanse Donzo n.d.

as their primary language, and gradually assumed a Kpelle identity. Later, as Islam became more important, many converted back to Islam and became Maniyaka (or at least more able to shift from being Kpelle to Maniyaka whenever it was to their advantage). The process certainly intensified during the late-nineteenth century when Samori Touré conquered Konya-Mani and sought to purify its Muslim population.⁴¹

Not all of the Sanoe, however, abandoned Islam and their Maniyaka identity. According to Kaamòò Dòle, the Sanoe of Gbakèdu in Gbana fought against their clansmen because they wanted to live within Musadu's walls rather than remain unprotected in the smaller outlying towns.⁴² These Sanoe apparently wanted to live in Musadu for economic reasons - because they wanted to trade, and for religious reasons - because they wanted to continue teaching and leading prayers. That is how the Sanoe in Konya-Mani could be key Muslim traders, and the Sanoe in nearby Gbana could be farmers who belonged to the Nyana.

⁴¹Person 1979.

⁴²App. 7.13, l. 141-159.

APPENDIX I

Kamara Chieftaincy Emblems

The Musadu epic identifies several items which were the symbols of Kamara power and authority: occult-laden hats, *saafèlu* or ‘ram’s horns,’ gold and iron bracelets, stools and sheep skins (Chapter 2). These items are believed to provide protection from spiritual and physical danger, and were passed from one ruler to the next. One reason why Foningama’s brothers supposedly plotted against him was because their father gave him the chieftaincy symbol of their clan to Foningama.

Sorcerer caps are the most common objects that the oral traditions associate with Kamara kingship. Two informants called the Kamara chief’s hat the ‘Joma hat’ or ‘Jomani hat.’¹ It is a historical fact that the chiefly descendants of Foningama in Kuankan wore a special hat in the late-1850s. Kuankan is a Guinean town located about forty-three miles southwest from Musadu. When the Americo-Liberian explorer George Seymour traveled to Kuankan in 1858, he wrote that the chief Jaka Kamã Kamara was “crowned with a large Mandingo cloth hat, thickly set with trinkets, covered with red flannel and a leopard skin, with two claws of a mountain eagle, which he informed me would often carry away sheep and goats.”² Kèwulèn Kamara, speaking from Kuankan well over one hundred years later, said that the same hat was passed down to Jaka Kamã’s successors.³ According to Wata Mammadi Kamara, this was a warrior-chief’s hat that *morilu* sewed

¹Wata Mammadi Kamara, App. 7.37; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1069. Another cap in the traditions was one that Jusinyèn Konè gave to Fakoli in the Wolof region. Konè allegedly acquired his hat from his ancestor, Sama Suna, whom Muhammed allegedly blessed (Ch. 4). This cap reportedly prevented Fakoli from being conquered or wounded by bullets, knives, swords or spears (Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 552-581).

²Seymour 1859-60/2003.

³Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5.

with different size threads, and was attached with *lisimu* or handwritten charms.⁴ Earlier, the Kamara were said to have acquired a special cap when they moved to the forest and began to integrate with the local peoples. The talisman on the cap was called a *dioman*, and the people who wore the hat were named Jomani after the *dioman*.⁵ According to Tènu Kamã Kamara, Fakoli made a hat with his *dawali* or *dalilu* and gave it to Foningama.⁶ The wearer reportedly could not be defeated in battle.⁷

The hats that Seymour and Wata Mammadi Kamara described are sorcerer hats; they have the heads of “predator birds - as hawks, egrets, vultures, or owls” which attest to the wearer’s power and ability to kill harmful human beings or spirits.⁸ Great sorcerers are able to maneuver through the threatening setting of the forest and the occult; many sorcerers were renown hunters and warriors.⁹ The hat that Seymour described probably existed well before the 1850s, but one cannot use oral traditions to prove this.

Another symbol of chieftaincy was a *saafê* or ‘sheep horn.’ A *saafê* can become a conduit of occult power when it is correctly packed with the right medicine. One of the informants, Tènu Kamã Kamara, inherited a *saafê* when he became the leader of the Kamara in the Macenta region (Figure 20). Moliké Sidibé claimed that an ‘eminent’ *mori* named “Djenne Moussa” gave the *saafê* to Kònsaba, and said that *saafê* controlled evil forces.¹⁰ Most informants state that Zo Musa’s instrument of power was a *saafê* (Chapter 5).

⁴App. 7.37.

⁵Humblot 1918:530.

⁶App. 7.19.

⁷Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20.

⁸Cashion 1982:160-162.

⁹Levtzion 1973:57.

¹⁰Sidibé 1989:8. Djenne Moussa is probably a reference to a mythical chief of the *jina* who is sometimes said to give special powers to people (D. Conrad, personal communication, 7 Jan. 2002).

Vase Kamala claimed that Foningama's father gave Foningama a gold bracelet.¹¹

Gold was a highly valuable investment, trade item and symbol of power and prestige.

Gold was also associated with the occult and the Komo society. The Kamara were leading goldsmiths in northeast Guinea; they were ancient residents, and the land spirits with whom they had close contact helped them mine, process and safeguard the gold.¹²

The Kamara and others also used skins of sheep, leopards and other animals to symbolize chieftaincy. Foningama supposedly said he did not want to sit on the sheep skin when a plot was set against him in Diemou more worthy persons should be sitting on the skin, or because that skin was the property of his ancestor.¹³ The Manding sometimes sacrifice white sheep to their "significant ancestors," so the skin could have represented the authority of an ancestor that was transferred to chiefs.¹⁴

Stools were another chiefly symbol. Some Manding chiefs had special stools or chairs that symbolized their office.¹⁵ One elder lamented the theft of a late-nineteenth century chief's chair because, he explained, 'No one could sit on it in those days beside a *masa*. You would know that it was a *masa*'s chair as soon as you saw it.'¹⁶ Foningama's would-be killers ostensibly wanted to honor Foningama by having him sit on a 'fine seat.'

¹¹Vase Kamala 7.6, l. 1068-1069; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37.

¹²Perinbam 1996:267-268.

¹³Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; App. 7.38; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20. For leopard skins, see Kamara (App. 7.37, l. 1183-1184).

¹⁴Brett-Smith 1994:96.

¹⁵See Wilks 1991:91.

¹⁶Bolon Mori Kamara, Lassaou, 1 June 1985 (l. 130-137) interview by T. Geysbeek and Makula Mammadi Kromah, translated by Faliku Sanoe; see Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, ln. 1054. This chair reportedly belonged to Mami Kamara of Koligblama who supported Samori Turé. Vase Kamala said that Samori had a gold chair, a silver chair and a 'tall chair' (App. 7.38, l. 1190,1915). According to Kèwulèn Kamara, the mid-nineteenth century founder of Macenta Sonindènè Bakari Kromah had a 'chief's throne' that was covered with a large cloth (App. 7.5, l. 1024-1027). Mythical images of important stools from this region go back to Kaaba where, according to one legend, special stools are reserved for each clan (Asumana Jabateh 1992, App. 7.22, l. 156-187). A similar house that has chairs for each clan is said to exist in Bon, Côte d'Ivoire (Faliku Sanoe, personal communication, 1994). In the Sunjata epic, some hammocks are said to have been considered sacred (Conrad 1999a).

APPENDIX J

“Pygmies” in Upper Guinea

There is considerable indication in oral traditions that “pygmies” or smaller than usual size people were some of the earliest inhabitants in Upper Guinea from Baté to today’s central Liberia. In the north, the Bamana are said to have resided with ‘little people’ who were ‘savages’ in Kankan and Kouroussa before the Manding started to migrate south in the thirteenth century.¹ Two writers from Kankan identified these ‘little people’ as “Krogba” or “Korogba.” The mid-twentieth century N’Ko script founder Soulemana Kante published an oral tradition in his N’Ko dictionary which claimed that the “Korogba” were a “dwarf” or “pygmy” race who lived in houses that had very small entryways, and whose chief’s name was Monson.² The Manding drove the Korogba into the forest, but only after the Kologba decapitated most of their enemies.³ According to Guinean historian Saa Moundekendo, Krogba “pygmies” lived in Upper Guinea before

¹Niane 1960:44.

²Kante 1962/1992:282.

³Thanks to Valentin Vydrine for translating this tradition from the N’Ko script (personal communication, 22 Nov. 1995). Because of the relative inaccessibility of Kante’s dictionary and difficulty in translating from N’Ko, Vydrine’s translation of the two following entries is given:

Korogba: a dwarf race that the present-day negroids found in Africa = pygmy, negrils. The name of their chief (*masakè*) was Monson, our ancestors chased them away to the forest.

Korogba war, or Monson war: the war that our ancestors waged against Korogba to take hold of the country. People say that the Korogba war was hard, so that today’s wars cannot be compared with it. Korogbas ran away and spent a year [hiding] so that nobody saw them. Then they came to a village suddenly one day and put a man with a knife by each door at mid-night, while the others gathered at the center of the village and yelled and howled “bokoko!” If anybody said that he wanted to get out to see what sort of noise there was at the square, the man at the door would cut his head off. In this way they exhausted the forces of our ancestors. When the Korogba were driven away, our ancestors moved to their houses, but their entrance doors were small. That is why the person who entered touched the doorway. [A variant translation for the last sentence is: ‘That is why our doors are being locked on a low height,’ V.V.]. Till now, there is a saying that all envious people perished at the Korogba war (or Monson war), except that [for the] one person who lasted immensely long and rose up.

the Bamana, but probably did not assimilate with the Bamana when the Bamana moved south. Moundekendo lamented that this is 'a subject of very difficult research because one knows that they have left no trace of their existence.'⁴

Further south, the Kpelle told stories of 'pygmies,' 'little red headed people,' bad *jina*, 'man-monkeys,' 'small *jina*' and 'small men of the forest' who once lived in the Guinea forest and certain mountains.⁵ One writer speculated that the 'savages' who once lived in the forests of western Côte d'Ivoire might have been pygmies, and linked scrapers, polished stones and axes to these mountain dwellers.⁶ Down in Liberia, a "pygmy race" is said to have lived in the forest.⁷ Scholars conjecture that this "pygmy population," if it did exist, was probably "extinguished" or "assimilated" in part by the immigrating Kru people.⁸

The veracity about whether or not "pygmies" once existed in this part of Africa relates to the evidence for such claims, to the Africans who gave the information, and to the Westerners who reported their stories. Unfortunately, data is not available about the informants or conditions under which the stories were recorded. The issue of data collection is even a problem in central Africa where pygmies still live. In Jan Vansina's opinion, descriptions of pygmies in present-day Congo were the products of imagination and second-hand accounts; the few outsiders who had sustained contacts with them did not provide very much information.⁹ It was fashionable to write about pygmies at the turn of the twentieth century because they were an "exotic appeal" for those who wanted to

⁴Moundekendo 1979:10.

⁵Viard 1934:11; Jacquier 1935:58-59; Schnell 1949:4; Holas 1952a:42-43; Germain 1984:30-33.

⁶Jacquier 1935:58-59; see Schnell 1949:4.

⁷Johnston 1906/1969:887.

⁸Schroeder/Massing 1970:5.

⁹Vansina 1990:17.

see what they believed life was like at the earliest stages of humanity.¹⁰ Since smaller than normal size people still live in central Africa, some of the reports about pygmies do represent “dim memories” of the past.¹¹

Most of the information that is given about pygmies from our case study is not very helpful. Some of the writers largely defined them as “savages,” and none of them explained if they were hunter-gatherers, farmers or fishing people.¹² The presence of scrapers, polished stones, axes and pots do provide some evidence of social organization and metallurgy. The absence of pygmies in the region under study does not permit one to confidently declare that they once existed here, but one must still interpret these claims. Did latecomers attempt to justify their occupation of the land by calling the first persons who lived there pygmies and therefore dehumanize them?¹³ Might some of these pygmies be the “cannibal tribes” who allegedly inhabited Baté before the Manding and Soninke forced them into the forest?¹⁴ Some memories of cannibals might refer to ancestors of the South-East and South-West Mande speaking peoples who lived almost as far north as Baté; Manding who lived in Konya-Mani did view some of these peoples in similarly disparaging ways.¹⁵

Shorter than normal people could have resided in Upper Guinea centuries ago, even though their existence has not been conclusively proven. Some authors probably wrote about “pygmies” because such topics were popular themes in the travel and scientific literature of the time. Africans also had a tendency to represent autochthones as

¹⁰Vansina 1990:29.

¹¹Vansina 1990:56-67.

¹²See Vansina 1990:56-67.

¹³See Kopytoff 1987:10,57; Vansina 1990:56.

¹⁴Kaba 1971:328.

¹⁵Ford n.d.:9-10; see 1991:95.

pygmies or some combination of human being, spirit and animal to legitimate their conquest, so one should not be surprised if people claim that legendary “pygmies,” spirits and man-monkeys lived in Konya-Mani and surrounding regions at one time.

APPENDIX K

Musa and his Associates

Figure 52: The Multiple Musas

SKR (from Musadu): Zo sired Misa, Misa sired Kòma, Kòma's son (Zo Misa Kòma?) was driven from Musadu by Foningama

AB (from Musadu): Zota Misa was a *zo* who owned Misa; AB did not make a distinction between the founder and person whom Foningama chased into the forest

MD (from Musadu): Zo Misa and his companions died in Musadu; their descendants went into the forest

AKK (from Diakolidu): Misa was a *zo* who founded Musadu; Misa's son Kòma became a stronger *zo*; AKK mixed the names after he made this distinction, though one can presume that Kòma was the person who had Left Musadu because his *saafê* caused so much trouble

AD2 (from Diakolidu): Zo Misa or Misadu Zo founded the original Musadu; he sired Kòma, and Kòma sired Misa or So Misa Kòma

TKK (from Womandu, Macenta): Misa founded Musadu; his son Zo Misa Kòma made the *saafê* and was driven away

MKU (from Bokesa, Liberia): An unnamed person founded Musadu; this person named "Misadu" after his son Misa

RELATED ACCOUNTS

VK (from Fombadu): Zo Misa Kòma had a grandfather

FMK (from Douama, Macenta): Zo Misa's name was changed to Misa after he was forced to pray

MKO: (from Musadu): Misa was Kpelle, and Zo Misa Kòma was Loma; the men were contemporaries

Figure 53: Musadu's 'hosts'

Key to persons: B = Béété, BA = Baayo, BM = Bama; FD = Fofana, Donzo; FDS = Femo Dole, Dole or Sumaworo; JK = (Jufa) Konè; JM = Zo Jala Misa; KA = Kamara; KS = Kamò Sanè, NM = Ngana Misa (Kromah); SA = (Sani) Sanoe; TA= Traoré; TK = Tumaningèmè Kromah (Fakoli, Kromah); ZM = Zo Musa; x = category not clear

	Hosts														
	Formally identified as 'hosts' with Musa														
	#	Z M	T K	J K	J M	N M	F D S	K S	S A	B A	B M	B Y	K A	F D	T A
MB	3	X	X	X											
AD2	3	X	X	X											
YD	3	X		X	X										
KK	1	X													
MKE	1	X									X				
TKK	3	P	X				X		X						
AKK	3	X	X	X											
AB	3	X		X		X									
MD	3	X		X		X									
FS	3	x	x				x								
SES	3	X	X					X							x
MS							x					x		x	
SK													?		
LK													?		
FMK													?		

Figure 54: Persons associated with Musa

Note: This figure only represents a selection from the most detailed traditions

	Musa's Associates								
	Not formally identified as 'hosts'								
	Z M	T G	J K	N M	FD	KS	SA	BA	BM
D	X	X							
BA	x	x	x						
J	X								
SK	X								
SS	X								
MNMT	X								
YP									
VK	X	X				X			
AKD	X	X			x				
TAD	X	?							
MS	X	X							
MKE								X	
YD/AB									X
WMK	X	X							

APPENDIX L

Equivalent clan names in Upper Guinea

The discussion about some of the identities of the various Maninka and Soninke peoples who might have settled in Musadu only offer a small hint at how complex identities are in the Mande speaking world and how much more difficult it is to understand and interpret these relationships. Peoples were classified into multiple groups that varied from one place to the next. These groupings took on different levels of importance depending on region, circumstance and individual. People were linked by *sananguya* ('joking relations'), *lasiliya*, adoption, marriage ties, landlord-stranger relations, occupations, social status (noble, *nyamakalaw*, slave), political alliances, broad ethnic identities, clans, lineages, religions, languages, equivalent surnames, honorific names, taboos, blood pacts, points of origin, values, esoteric societies, secret names, play names and other mechanisms.

The complexity of how malleable identities could become is highlighted by examining one of the above listed categories, the flexible system of "double-surnames" or "honorific names" that exists in Manding and Soninke culture. Several such examples are noted from Upper Guinea; the Kromah are Dumbuya, and the Dole, Sumaworo, Kanè and Bama are the same.² Double surnames can represent a clan founder and a clan name

²Also, Baayo = Sissoko = Kromah, Kromah = Dumbuya = Fakoli = Sissoko, Kamara = Jomande, Keita = Masare, Fofana = Kromah, Fofana = Donzo = Nyèn, Dole = Sumawolo, Sumawolo = Kante, and Kia (Kiate) = Miate (Humboldt 1918:526-528; Zahan 1966:60; Monteil 1966:90; Moundekeno/Nay 1968:13; Person 1968b:78; Massing forthcoming; see Sayers 1927). Some people have developed a system of equivalent names to correspond between modern day ethnic groups. For instance, see Suret Canale (1963:34-35) for the Loma and Manding, and Spindel (1988:135), Launay (1995a:156) and Delafosse (1931:197) for the Senufo and Manding.

(Fakoli - Kromah, Foningama - Kamara),³ two clan names (Fodigi Sanū [Sano]),⁴ a clan name plus a conversion name (Kromah - Dumbuya), a clan name and a location (Jafunu-ka, Jafunu - Kaba),⁵ or a noble and *nyamakalaw* (Dumbuya - Baayo).⁶ Clans formed equivalent relations and names between each other because of social mobility, conflict resolution, common ancestry through blood ties, assimilation through alliances and client relationships,⁷ adoption of politically or religiously dominant names,⁸ and familial linkages between fathers and children, fathers and mothers, and brothers.⁹

Double surnames in one area do not always mean that they are equivalent in another area. The Dumbuya, who people often regard as Kromah, are sometimes considered ‘part of’ the Kromah.¹⁰ The equivalence of the Kromah and Baayo in Wasulu suggests that the same relationship might exist between both clans in a neighboring region, but one can not automatically make that assumption. The Kromah and Baayo in Wasulu might have formed a unique equivalent clan relationship because of an encounter that two of their ancestors had in the past, but this equivalence may or may not have anything to do with the relationship between the two clans elsewhere. Names can also represent different relationships from one place to the next. For instance, Kromah and Fofana are identical in some areas, but only ‘joking partners’ in other places.¹¹

³Clan, or lineage in each of the following examples.

⁴From the sixteenth century jurist of Timbuktu, Fodiye *al-Faqīh* Muhammad Fodigi Sānū al-Wangari (al-Sa’di c. 1655, in Hunwick 1999:24).

⁵Hopkins 1972:4; Kaba 1972:8.

⁶Massing forthcoming.

⁷Kaba 1972:8; Buhnen 1994:37, fn. 11.

⁸Conrad 1992:177; Tully 1994:311.

⁹Jèli Mori Kouyaté 1988, in Conrad 1999a:65; Misugin/Vydrin 1994:105; Jansen 1996c:19.

¹⁰Humblot 1918:528. Delafosse 1912/1972 I:140.

¹¹Sayers 1927:41,77; O’Sullivan 1976:65; Launay 1995a:165.

APPENDIX M

Saafè

Travelers from the late-eighteenth century and scholars in present times have written about *saafèlu*. Mungo Park made the first known reference to *saafèlu* when he encountered “saphies” during his journeys in West Africa in the late-1790s.¹ Park wrote that some “saphies” were “prayers” or “sentences from the Koran” that clerics wrote on paper. They were enclosed in objects such as alligators skins, and worn around body parts such as ankles. Other “saphines” consisted of chicken blood or flesh, muttered words, and *nasi* or water that had been used to wash religious words that people had written on wooden slates. Sheep horns, he said, were good for containing solid objects. People also used “saphines” to gain favors or protection from “superior powers” to guard against snake bites, enemy weapons, disease, hunger and thirst. A quarter century later, René Caillié observed that Manding who he considered Muslim wore “saphines” around “their necks and different parts of their bodies. They hung them at the entrance of their huts, as a protection against fire, thieves, and other accidents.”²

More recently, Gerald Cashion wrote that one type of hunters’ medicine is made

¹ Park 1799/2000:92-95; see McNaughton 1988:62; Sanneh 1989:208-209. *Saakè* and *saakili* mean ‘sheep (*saa*) horn (*kè/kili*).’ Two Maniyaka said “sheep horn” in English (Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1992, App. 7.17a; Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30a). Translations from Maniyaka sources whose original interviews are not available say ‘sheep horn’ (Mammadi Dole 1985, App. 6.2), ‘charm’, ‘gris-gris’ (Dauvillier c. 1905, App. 3), ‘juju’ (Fisher 1971:ix-x; Sumawolo 1984, App. 6.1) and ‘devil’ (Sumawolo 1984, App. 6.1). *Saafè* (pl. *saafèlu*) is literally translated ‘sheep (*saa*) thing’ (*fè*).’ *Saakè* and *saakili* mean ‘sheep (*saa*) horn (*kè/kili*).’

According to Valentin Vydrine, “*saakèlè* looks like a Maniya form for Maninka *saakèrè* which means, effectively, ‘ram’s horn.’ Logically, in some southern Maninka dialects intervocalic -l- and -r- are dropped, and it becomes *saakèè*.” He states that *saafèè* derives from the Arabic *safaHa* which means ‘to write,’ and from which words such as ‘paper,’ ‘text,’ and ‘amulet’ derive (Vydrine, personal communication, 28 Dec. 1998). A historian notes that the “origin of the Maninka word *safè*” is “unclear. The nearest Arabic word is *sifā’a*, meaning medicament, and with a slight vowel shift the Mandinka word can be derived. But this is all speculative” (Sanneh 1989:208, fn. 52).

²Caillié 1830:375-376.

from a “single male ram’s horn” (*saga-jigi-binye*). Herbalists place onions, shea butter oil, red peppers, salt, ginger, powdered roots and ram’s tails in the horn.³ West African art historian Labelle Prussin published a photograph of an amulet from Sierra Leone which consists of a “ram’s horn wrapped in a printed sheet of Arabic script.”⁴

Several publications describe sheep horn amulets in Liberia among peoples who had extensive contact with Manding clerics and traders. An early traveler wrote that the Dey and Americo-Liberians used “ram’s horns” and other “amulets” to protect a town during a rebellion. In the center of the town was “a horn whose point was stuck into the earth, and which was filled with a greasy substance.”⁵ A half century later, a Vai writer wrote that his people in one town placed their “household god... in the horn of a ram and glued over... [to] ward off any sorrow or misfortune that might chance be hanging over the family.”⁶ A few years later, a drawing and picture of a “ram’s horn” was published, with the caption that Vai and Mende women wore them under their arms (Figure 40).⁷ An anthropologist who traveled into Liberia’s interior in the mid-1920s reported that “most of the influential men... have a sheep’s horn” which they use as a protective device. The horn is “filled with a black oily mixture of which a little bit is licked from a stick or porcupine quill every day.” This camwood powder and palm oil “mixture” was poison, but one became immune to the poison by digesting fragmentary parts on a regular basis. The antidote came from the powder of a *tu* tree. The *tu* powder was placed on food, and a person would vomit if the food was poisoned.⁸

³Cashion 1982:192-193.

⁴Prussin 1986:80.

⁵Whitehurst 1836:210.

⁶Besolow 1891:27.

⁷Johnston 1906/1969:893,978.

⁸Schwab 1947:402.

APPENDIX N

Musadu's 'Strangers'

Appendix 55: 'Strangers' associated with Foningama

Key - People and Clans: B = Bèrètè, TG = Tumaningèmè, D = Dukule, F = Fofana/Donzo, FD = Femo Dole, FG = Foningama, FZ = Fèzuma, K = Kane, M = Masale/Keita, MA = Masama, NM = Ngana Musa (Kromah), SH = (Talata) Sherif
Key - Sources: See Figure 6 for the capital letter abbreviations of the sources.

Strangers											
Persons formally identified as 'strangers' with Foningama											
Sources	#			Bards			<i>Morilu</i>				
		TG	FG	NM	M	FZ	FD	B	K	MA	SH
MB	3		X	X			X				
AD2	3		X	X			X				
YD	3	X	X				X				
KK	4	X	X		X				X		
MKE	4		X				X			X	
TKK	3		X		X		host		X		X
AKK	4		X			X	X				
AB		X	X				X				
MD	3	X	X				X				
FS	2	x					x				
SES	3		X				X		X		
JK	3	X		X			X				

Appendix 56: Persons associated with Foningama

Key - People and Clans: A = Anonymous *mori*, B = Bèrètè, D = Dukule, F = Fofana/Donzo, FD = Femo Dole, FG = Foningama, K = Kane, KU = Kuyateh, MD = Moussa Dioubatè/Jabateh, SA = Sayon, SW = Sware, TA = Traoré

Foningama's Associates												
Persons not formally identified as 'strangers'												
Sources			Bards		<i>Morilu</i>							
	TA	FG	KU	MD	A	FD	B	K	F	D	SW	SA
D		X			X							
S												X
BA		x										
J					X							
SK		X										
SS	X	X										
MNTN		X				X		X				
YP		X					X					
VK		X	X			X		X	X	X	X	
AKD						x						
MS		X		X					X	X	X	
WMK		X	X									

APPENDIX O

References to Foningama's Sons in Maniyaka Sources¹

- 1) Fanyala (Jala, Fanyala, Fāyala, Fanya, Fènyala, Fayala, Fasa or Faza)
- 2) See Blama (Cé Birama, Séré Birama, Sé Brema [Fen Séméné's son], See Blama, See Bliama)
- 3) Fasujan (Fasu, Fassou, Fossou-Dian, Fassoudjan, Va Sudyan - 'Tall Father')
- 4) Sèmini (Fing Semene, Fon Siméné, Fen Séméné)
- 5) Seman Fila (Séman Fila, Sémana Fila - sometimes given as Fanyala's son)
- 6) Famoy (Famoe, Famoï, Famoyli)
- 7) Wusu
- 8) Monson (Monson Quila)
- 9) Fin Blama (Fen Brema)
- 10) Kounou Missa (Kouroumissa)
- 11) Samoyen (Va Samory Da)
- 12) Moro (Moso Dyila)
- 13) Sétouman (Sétuma - also given as Fen Séméné's son)
- 14) Fanumawulèn
- 15) Fangoloni
- 16) Fasona Bala
- 17) Donou Fon Moe
- 18) Farmia-oy
- 19) Gnan Touman
- 20) Fila Fabou
- 21) Koma (Kossa)
- 22) Séko
- 23) Faciné
- 24) Sosso
- 25) Sano-Yaté
- 26) 'Sons of the Fula'
- 27) Kònsala
- 28) Fengèbou

Sources: 1) Fanyala - Camara 1979, App. 4.9; Person 1968b:263,270,429,445,567,579; Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Fofin Sumaworo 1986, App. 7.7a; Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Lanse Kamara 1990, App. 7.11; Mousse Kièlè 1990, App. 7.12; 1992, App. 7.21; Briama Kromah 1990, App. 7.14; Soko Konè 1992, App. 7.15, l. 295-306; Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16; Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Jèkè

¹Foningama's sons names are listed by the number of times that a person's name was cited, from the most number times that a name is mentioned to the least.

Kamara 1992, App. 7.26; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29;² 2) See Blama - Camara 1979, App. 4.9; Monographique/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8; Person 1968b:55,270; Lanse Kamara 1990, App. 7.11, l. 83-106; Soko Konè 1992, App. 7.15, 281-296; Moussa Kièlè 1990, App. 7.12, l. 242-255; Jèkè Kamara 1992, App. 7.26; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29; 3) Fasujan - Camara 1979, App. 4.9; Monographique/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8; Person 1968b:87-88,160,192,227,570,591; 1971:679, fn. 28; Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6; Fofin Sumaworo 1986, App. 7.7a; Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37; Kabine Kromah 1992, App. 7.29, 4) Sèmini - Liurette 1948, App. 4.1; Camara 1979, App. 4.9; Monographique/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8; Person 1968a:108; 1968b:55,242,256,263-264,270-272,284,304,1383; Jala Kamara 1992, App. 7.27, l. 338-362, 5) Seman Fila - Camara 1979, App. 4.9; Person 1986b:270-271,570,579,591; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19, 6) Famoy - Camara 1979, App. 4.9; Monographique/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8; Person 1968b:304, 7) Wusu - Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19; Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3, 8) Monson - Liurette 1948, App. 4.1; Camara 1979, App. 4.9, 9) Fin Blama - Camara 1979, App. 4.9; Person 1968b:270,578, 10) Kounou Missa - Camara 1979, App. 4.9; Monographique/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8, 11) Samoyen - Camara 1979, App. 4.9; Person 1968b:263,567,587, 12) Moro - Monographique/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8; Person 1968b:304, 13) Sétouman - Monographique/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8; Person 1968b:55,270; 14) Fanumawulèn - Amara Kamara 1986, App. 7.9; Tènu Kamā Kamara 1992, App. 7.19, 15) Fangoloni - Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16; 16) Fasona Bala - Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20, 17) Donou Fon Moe - Camara 1979, App. 4.9, 18) Farmia-oy - Daouda Damara 1979, App. 4.9, 19) Gnan Touman - Monographique/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8, 20) Fila Fabou, 21) Koma/Kossa, 22) Séko, 23) Faciné, 24) Sosso, 25) Sano-Yaté - Monographique/Beyla n.d., App. 4.8, 26) "Sons of the Fula" Lanse Kamara 1990, App. 7.11, l. 83-106,³ 27) Kònsala - Jigbè Kamara 1970, App. 5.3.⁴

²/J/ changes to /y/ when preceded by a nasal vowel.

³Kamara spoke about Foningama's Fula sons, implying that one of his wives was Fulbe.

⁴Jigbè Kamara's Kònsala is close to Foningama's 'brother' Kònsaba. Father Bouyssou wrote that Zogomisa Koma, Zogofakoni and Fongébou were Foningama's sons (Le Long 1949:25, App. 4.3). Zogomisa Koma and Zogofakoni are Zo Musa and his Kone companion, so are not listed. Fongébou seems to be a variant of the same name as one of Tumaningémè's reported brothers, Fènyabu. For some comparative lists, see Geysbeek/Kamara (1991:59-63).

APPENDIX P

The Laws of Musadu¹

- 1) Kamara-Dole Oath. The Dole are the clerics of the Kamara. They must intercede for and support the Kamara (2), recognize the political dominance of the Kamara as the *mansalu* of Musadu (1), and permit the Kamara to practice their own religion (1). The Kamara must guarantee the security of the Dole and guard the 'sacred village' of Musadu (3).
- 2) Don't disrupt a full market and steal (7)
- 3) Don't steal (3)
- 4) Don't commit adultery (3)
- 5) Don't deceive anyone (3)
- 6) Don't call anyone a bastard (3)
- 7) Don't beat your wife on a farm where she can't be protected (2)
- 8) Don't threaten to kill anyone (2)
- 9) Don't close a door and beat a woman (1)
- 10) Don't have sex with a pregnant woman (1)
- 11) Don't have sex with a woman who is breast feeding (1)
- 12) Don't beat up a pregnant woman (1)
- 13) Don't abort a child (1)
- 14) Don't beat a person in public (1)
- 15) Don't lie about others (1)
- 16) Don't anger anyone (1)
- 17) Don't say, "I will cut your ass" (1)
- 18) Don't threaten anyone with a knife (1)
- 19) Don't threaten anyone with a gun (1)
- 20) Don't cause trouble with your mouth (1)
- 21) Don't cause trouble with your hands (1)
- 22) Don't strike anyone with iron (1)
- 23) Don't fight anyone who is in a tree (1)
- 24) Don't fight anyone who is on a roof (1)
- 25) Don't discuss how your sibling was born (1)
- 26) Don't fight your older brother (1)
- 27) Don't attack your father (1)
- 28) Don't cause anyone to make his/her father do something disrespectful (1)
- 29) Don't enslave others (1)
- 30) Don't let cows, sheep, goats or other animals destroy another person's crops (1)
- 31) Don't let the paths become overgrown (1)
- 32) Don't allow your medicine to catch babies, humans, and chickens (1)

¹There is no correct order to the listing of these laws. The Kamara-Dole oath and the market law are listed first because the sources mention them the most times. The next several decrees are roughly ordered in the way that Vase Kamala, Wata Mammadi Kamara or Tènu Kamā Kamara listed them, followed by four additional laws at the end. The number in parentheses behind every law indicate how many times the said law was mentioned. See Chapter 7 for the source(s) where these laws are found.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 1

LOMA TRADITION ABOUT MUSADU

Appendix 1 consists of two excerpts from a court case that took place in Voinjama, Liberia, on 4 December 1936. In the case, representatives from the Wonnegomai and Wubomai Loma chiefdoms argued about where to draw the present Sierra Leone-Guinea boundary. The critical information for this work is the story which relates that Fernigamah's (Foningama's) sons Farwubar (Fala Wubo) and Vra Mussah stole some food that was set aside for members of the Poro society. In doing so, the two supposedly switched from being of "Mandingo stock" like their "brothers" to being "Loma" or Loma.

District Commissioner V.J. Fahnbulleh presided over the hearings. The persons who represented Wubomai were Chief Ngallima and Sarbo Garwo Ballah. Because the testimony is so difficult to follow, two versions of their testimony are supplied: the original (1.1a) and an edited version (1.1b). In the latter, I have added some punctuation and identified personal names that seem most consistent with the flow of the story.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 1.1A (Original)

INVESTIGATION AND DECISION OF [THE] 1936 LOCAL BOUNDARY DISPUTE BETWEEN WONNEGOMAI CHIEFDOM AND WUBOMAI CHIEFDOM OF BONDI-WUBOMAI CHIEFDOM," VOINJAMA DISTRICT, 4 DECEMBER 1936

CHIEF NGALLIMA [Wubormai]: ... The mother of Farhn Wubar is called Torlu and she is a Mandingo. That is why Torlu when she was a full grown woman they told Fernigamah that she will born a boy, that will become a great ruler, but you [he] will do a thing that is shameful. This is what the molley man told him, that is the woman he got for

¹Slashes around numbers indicate original page numbers.

boy, he followed her this boy was a slave. The woman was pregnated (Torlu). Farleh to his father why is it whenever I called my wife she never came to me, the father or ter, wait my boy. We will see the result. It was so till the time came for the woman to n and Fernigah, the head woman used Fatta lived in the house of Torlu, and said to her t is the matter with you or in your mind. Will you not assist it? Then she said or ed the oldman Faringamah, and Faringamah head woman slapped her, and nigamah rushed in the house and slapped his wife, Fatta and said to her, is it because u had a child for me and she called my name, then you slapped her. The child was a n boy. Fernigamah action being very bad toward his slave, gave two virgin girls in e of Torlu. The second son of Torlu was /7/ Vra Mussah. Then we are all brothers, n they see the sons were grown up and they were promising young men they say this e labour of Farwubar. Farwubar became very powerful, his boy, Basah was sent to ssadou to work for the master. We were r_ssing [sic., passing] by and we saw him. n Mussadou we came to Luormah where we met Wai Massa dissolving the Poro h. And they gave us four bowl of rice, two were eaten by the children of Torlu, then others said since you had eaten the Poro meal or rice then you are no longer with us, a BUZI, and we of the Mandingo stock. When they went back, they fought for ngamah's property who was dead. (There our Grandfather was till Saymah) --- After y fought for the property then Sesimah came...

* * *

SARBO GARWO BALLAH FOR THE DEFENDANT ON THE STAND
ubormai]: Farwubar was the first that came in the country before our father Saimah came. I hear from our fathers that Farngamah[s'] son was Farwubar, and his father's dren drove Farwubar because he ate the Poro food. Farngamah born Farwubar and Missa, F Wai-Massa. Farngamah had 9 children.

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SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 1.1B (Edited)

“INVESTIGATION AND DECISION OF [THE] 1936 LOCAL BOUNDARY DISPUTE BETWEEN WONNEGOMAI CHIEFDOM AND WUBOMAI CHIEFDOM OF BONDI-WUBOMAI CHIEFDOM,” VOINJAMA DISTRICT, 4 DECEMBER 1936

CHIEF NGALLIMA [Wubormai]: ... The mother of Farhn Wubar is called Torlu, and all are Mandingoes. That is why Torlu, when she was a full grown woman, they told ingamah, “She will born a boy that will become a great ruler, but you will do a thing is shameful.” This is what the molley man told him. That is the woman he rlingamah's father] got for his boy [Farlingamah]. He followed her.

This boy [Farhn Wubar] was a slave. The woman was pregnated (Torlu). Farleh to his father, “Why is it, whenever I called my wife, she never comes to me.” The er or master [said,] “Wait my boy. We will see the result.” It was so till the time came

for the woman to born and Fernigah, the head woman used [sic., named?] Fatta lived in the house of Torlu. and [Torlu] said to her [Fatta], "What is the matter with you or in your mind. Will you not assist it [the delivery of the baby]?" Then she [Torlu?] said or called the oldman Faringamah, and Faringamah['s] head woman [Fatta] slapped her [Torlu.] and Fernigamah rushed in the house and slapped his wife Fatta and said to her, "Is it because Torlu had a child for me and she called my name, then you slapped her?" The child was a born boy. Fernigamah action being very bad toward his slave, gave two virgin girls in place of Torlu. The second son of Torlu was /7/ Vra Mussah.

Then we are all brothers. When they saw the sons were grown up and [that] they were promising young men, they said, "This is the labour of Farwubar." Farwubar became very powerful. His boy, Basah, was sent to Mussadou to work for the master. We were [pa]ssing by and we saw him [Bassah?]. From Mussadou we came to Luormah where we met Wai Massa dissolving the Poro Bush. And they gave us four bowls of rice. Two were eaten by the children of Torlu [Basah and Fala Wubo]. Then the others said, "Since you had eaten the Poro meal or rice then you are no longer with us, but a BUZI, and we of the Mandingo stock." When they went back, they fought for Feringamah's property who was dead. (There [is where] our Grandfather was till Saymah...). After they fought for the property then Sesimah came.

/18/SARBO GARWO BALLAH FOR THE DEFENDANT ON THE STAND

[Wubormai]: Farwubar was the first that came in the country before our father Saimah Vra came. I hear from our fathers that Farngamah[s'] son was Farwubar, and his father's children drove Farwubar because he ate the Poro food. Farngamah born Farwubar and Vra Missa, F Wai-Massa. Farngamah had 9 children.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 2

GOLA CONNECTIONS TO MUSADU AND ISLAM

Appendix 2 comprises two oral traditions about ancient “Gola” connections to Musadu and Islam that probably derive from Gola or some of their ancestors who intermarried with Maniyaka traders in the past.¹ Warren d’Azevedo and Tim Geysbeek, separated by two decades of work, collected information from informants who lived in separate countries, belonged to different ethnic groups, and followed different religions. d’Azevedo interviewed Dua Jei Kpo Asmana in the town of Zoi (Zuei) deep in the forest of westcentral Liberia in 1967 (Appendix 2.1). Dua Kpo explained how the Gola migrated from Jida (Jeddah, near Mecca) to Musadu and finally to Mana near Zoi. Dua Kpo initially said that a man named Musa was a Muslim cleric who accompanied the Gola to Mana. Later, he claimed that Musa was “a Gola man” who “built Musadu.”

Geysbeek collected an account from Lanse Kromah in Macenta in 1984 (Appendix 2.2). Kromah told how the ancestors of the Gola immigrated from Mecca. He said that the Gola were descendants of the Arabs who converted their Qur’an into a sacrificial object after they settled in the forest and abandoned Islam. Dua Kpo and Lanse Kromah claimed that the Gola were called Kolèsi or Kolasi. d’Azevedo noted that Kolèsi means “‘heathen’” (or, non-Muslim in this case). Kolasi can be translated ‘descendants (si) of kola’ in Maniyakã.

¹Person 1972:14.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 2.1

INTERVIEW WITH DUA JEI KPO ASMANA, ZOI, LIBERIA, 24 APRIL 1967

Provided by Warren d'Azevedo²

According to Professor d'Azevedo, Dua Jei Kpo Asmana was from the town of Fala in the Kongba Chiefdom. Asmana was his "Christian-Mohammedan" name. d'Azevedo interviewed Dua Kpo in Zoi (Zui) in Kongba on April 24, 1967. Dua Kpo said that he was about fifteen years old during President Cheesman's time (1892-1896), which means that he was probably in his early-eighties at the time of the interview. He died in 1969.

Dua Kpo was a renown Gola historian, respected by scholars, government officials and people who lived in the surrounding chiefdoms. d'Azevedo wrote that the notes that he took from Dua Kpo on Gola chiefdom history and the relations between the Gola and surrounding groups were "among the best" in his files. Concerning the story itself, d'Azevedo wrote:

On the first page in the section indicated he is giving the version of Gola origins common among Gola converts. The Gola were told that they originally came from a place called Djida (Jida) in Arabian (Laabu) country where all the different

²For a summary of this story, see d'Azevedo (1969a). Many thanks to Warren d'Azevedo for sending me a photocopy of this part of the interview that he conducted with Dua Jei Kpo Asmana. d'Azevedo also sent a cover letter that provided information about the speaker and the interview. The introduction and notes are taken directly from Professor d'Azevedo's response to me on November 29, 1994. What follows is a near exact reproduction of the copy that d'Azevedo sent from his field notebook. All non-English words are italicized, and personal and place names are not underlined. d'Azevedo underlined most of the Gola and Arabic terms and proper names. d'Azevedo's comments about the text that he placed in parentheses when he typed the interview are footnoted, and some of the words which come after the ellipses have been capitalized. My additions in the oral tradition in the footnotes are enclosed in brackets. In a couple of cases, parentheses are added where they were overlooked. Concerning orthography, /E/ has been changed to /è/ and /O/ to /ò/ in keeping with the system used in this work.

³This sentence marks the beginning of d'Azevedo's commentary.

people of Africa came from. (Ironically, the Old man is not aware that *kolesi* refers to “heathens”). Then the Gola settled at Musadu from whence they moved on to establish Mana in ancient Kongba (now occupied by the Belle) when they were displaced by the Manding.

Note that on the first page he speaks of the Gola leader [Gwui] bringing a “Mole” (Islamic seer) named Musa with him to Mana. But on the second page Musa becomes the Gola man who “built Musadu,” and Gwui is another Gola leader who migrated to Mana. This discrepancy is easily resolved in the discourse of Gola elders - their last statement on the subject is the final one! Moreover, the version of Gola origins given here is quite different from the traditional chiefdom myths of Kongba that trace the emergence of ancestral families from the mountains (see his comment at the bottom of page two that such stories are ‘a lie’). An elder of Zoi town came to me after this session to explain that Dua Kpo had become too (Mole) (Islamic) and had no respect for the old historical traditions... but that he was a great historian, etc.”

Duo Jei Kpo Asmana: /1/ Mana Bla came from the interior.³ The town that Mano Bla came from as my people told me was *dji Dã* [Jida]... in an Arabic country [Laabu(a)].⁴ Plenty people were around there... many different people were there... and all the different people began to migrate away from there. (The white man went one way, the Arabs another way, the black man another way). The Arabs used to call the Gola *kolèsi*. So the Gola came down to a place called Musadu. A Gola man said, “I am going down.” This man and his wife came down. He had a Gola woman and a Gisi [Kissi] woman. The Gola and Gisi are one people... due to those women.

When he came down, the first town they built was Mana. The Gola man’s name was Gwui. This Guwi built Mana. His wife was called Má Bù (Mabu). They had many children. He brought a... Mole man named Musa who set up the *kpakpa*. Gwui’s praise name... the name the people called him by was Gwui Yuyu.⁵

His first son was Se Kpoa. His second son was called Kongo. (My great grandparents did not see Mana... it was *bla* when they knew of it).

The third son was called Dawulè Sama.⁶

They built Mana and it became one of the largest ancient towns. (Today the forest in that section is different from any other forest. The trees are ancient and very big, but there is very low brush so you can see far under the trees... You can see elephant grazing far off, and it is dark with patches of sun. It is very mysterious and wonderful... No one goes there now).

Mabu, the wife of Gwui, was the first Gola woman to see the Loffa River and fish in it. She was the Gola wife. She had the children named above. Mabu fished the Loffa so much that her head went in that water... and the *ne kuwi* of the river came behind her.

/2/ Mana Bla spread and became so big with so many towns it went all the way to the Mwa (*kpalè*) Moa River.

⁴Jii Dã is in Arabia near Mecca. [Some Gola believe that the Qur’an mentions the Gola, and that the Gola originated from Mecca (d’Azevedo 1962b:29-30)].

⁵Guwi: with big praise sound behind him... A man moves with many singing people.

⁶Dawulè can be left off... [That is] his medicine name.

So when you ask where the Gola came from, they came from the Laabu nations... from there to Musadu... from Musadu to Mana... from there to all of Kongba and the Mwa River. The only tribe between them and the sea were the Dei. The Gbandi call us Mana... That is their name for us... They are our nephews because we gave them our sisters.

They (the Gbandi) call us *a mana ya*.

Duaò Kwi built Zui.

Kongba built Fala.

Mesadu is still in existence... It is Arab country⁷... "It might take a year to walk to Laabu (Arab) country... [It is] far past the Mandingo country... My ancestors told me the ancient people used to travel plenty, and they heard of all those places... The old people used to travel away and settle in far different and distant places." ("Misadu is still in existence and is a Mandingo nation). It was Gola when the Gola came there... Then the Mandingo came and took it over. The Gola came there and settled... The Mandingo moved in around them. Then the family of Gwui left and came down to build Mana.

The Man who built Musadu was called Musa... a Gola man. He settled there and built a big village. Gui was a powerful and wealthy Gola man who finally moved down to Mana. "My parents told me that the Gola came from a country in Arab country called *jii Dã*. My view is that Musa was a Gola man... The *du* part is Mandingo for town. Later, many Gola followed Gwui to Mana when Mandingo rule came about. Many kinds of people were in that town (Musadu)."

The Gidi (Gissi) are where they were... I wasn't told anything about them except that Gwui had one Gisi wife... That is all.

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 2.2

INTERVIEW WITH MATENE LANSE (MOLIGBE) KOMAH, MACENTA, GUINEA, 27 AUGUST 1984

When Tim Geysbeek went to Macenta in August 1984, he asked the *kabila kundi* or 'clan head' of the Kromah, Fata Bakari Kromah, to explain how the Kromah migrated to Macenta. Fata Bakari deferred the interview to Lansé Kromah who was the previous clan head and the oldest member of the family. In this portion of the interview, Kromah claimed that the Gola who came from Mecca were Muslims, but that they abandoned Islam and made the Qur'an part of a ritual object after they settled in the forest. Aspects

⁷Apparently he means by "Arab" country.

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of Lanse's interview that deal with Musadu appear in Appendix 7.2.

[The Gola migrate to Bopolo and renounce Islam]

Mammadi: ...The Manya in Liberia... The Manya in Liberia... How did they become Liberians? How did the Manya in Bopolo get that place?

Lanse: They were, èh,

- 1175 Some Kpelle are there,
They understand the Mènyakã.
They and the Wola who were there...
They and the Maniya fought in the past.
I don't know how those things happened or how those Maniya became Liberians.
- 1180 But those particular people...
Those Wola.
They came from, èh -
They came from Makka.
They are descendants of the Arabs.
- 1185 They came from kola land.
They are the *kolasi*.
Things changed and they,
They are called Kua [Gola].
Their Qur'an is their,
- 1190 And they even make offerings to it today.
They make sacrifices to their Qur'an.
They take a prayer mat and lay it [the Qur'an] on it [the mat] and tie it.
They kill a sheep on it and make a sacrifice.
Those Kola.
- 1195 Eh, when fast month comes,
Ah, when the dancing day reaches,
They go around their houses and sing "*kilo kilo alima kilo di kilo alima kilo*."
You learn about the people you live with.
You do not learn about people if you do not live with them.
- 1200 They told me about those things.
They said, "Our ancestor came,
But he stopped reading his Qur'an and saying those things,
So they do not pray any more."
That is why they take the whole Qur'an and tie it in a skin.
- 1205 It is laying there.
[They say,] "We make offerings on it.

1176 Mènyakã: Maniyakã.

1177 Wola: Gola, also Kua (l. 1188) and Kola (l. 194). The equivalence of the Gola with kola indicates that they were involved in kola trade (Brooks 1993:73).

1183 Makka: Mecca.

1189 Qur'an: = *kafa*, the Qur'an written on single sheets of paper.

We can't even let a Maniya person touch it.
That has become our sorcery pot.
We make offerings to it."

1210 Do you hear?

1208 'sorcery pot' (*duda*): Literally, 'ground (*du*) pot (*dā*),' but the context implies the use of occult. **The** people made the Qur'an into a *boli* or sacred object.

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SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 3

CAPTAIN DAUVILLIER'S HISTORY OF MUSADU, c. 1905

James Fairhead and Melissa Leach thoughtfully sent me a handwritten copy and translation of this portion of Dauvillier's report. This represents the first known substantial Maniyaka account of Musadu's early history, including the first mention of Foningama (Fere-Kama) and Zo Musa (N'zougou Moussa).

Translated by: James Fairhead¹

The history before the reign of Samori is only related by anecdotes surrounded by legends, and hardly dates back further than the period when the Malinke arrived in central Soudan. This is the only evidence which enables the past to be retraced without too much improbability. The exposure of one of these anecdotes, keeping its form, at once legendary and semi-historical, will show the degree of veracity which it seems to contain, to accord to this historical reconstruction by drawing together stories of the same genre.

[Part I:] The history of the captive Fere-Kama, considered by the Manian Malinke² as the ancestor of the wider family of Kamara Diomandes³

Long ago, the ancestors of the Manian Malinkes lived in Mande country. One day a griot of the Mande King Sondiata made the following declaration to his all-powerful master:⁴ one of your captives will become a king, and you will know him on the way to visit your crops, as this captive will not get up to salute you. The next day, in effect, a captive called Fere-Kama⁵ did not rise when the king appeared, and the latter on his return gave the order to kill him.⁶

¹Fairhead and Leach located this document in the French archives in AFOM APC 105, carton 5, dossier 14 - Papers of Dauvillier, c. 1905. The translation of Dauvillier starts in the next sentence.

²Manian, or Mani. These Maniyaka were also known as the "Manni-Mohammedans" or "Manni people" in the nineteenth century (Sims 1859-1860/2003).

³Diomandé or Jomande is an alternative name for Kamara as Dauvillier wrote later in this piece.

⁴This griot was perhaps Jankuma Duga (see Wilks 1999:34).

⁵As a captive, this oral tradition is indicating that Fere-Kama or Foningama was one of Sunjata's slaves.

⁶This tradition compressed all of the leading Kamara who migrated from the Manden to Musadu into one person, Foningama. Others claim that between two and six generations separated the Faran Kama who left the Manden and Foningama who went to Musadu (Ch. 3; Fig. 52). Other accounts say that "Foningama" fled from the Manden because he lost a civil war that involved competition between his

Fere-Kama, warned in time, fled to Kankan where he sought protection from some Peuls who consented to hide him in a rice store.⁷ The king followed his captive with an army of these Peuls, who payed him a tribute of cattle, but he had to return without having discovered the fugitive. Fere-Kama, who remained a long time without drinking or eating, left from his hiding place half dead. Once recovered, he journeyed to Goye (Cercle of Beyla) after having promised an eternal recognition to his saviours. It is in memory of this hospitality that the Manian Malinke and the Peuls have never made war, as Fere-Kama is the father of the large family of the Diomandes.⁸

The chief of Goye, once he had made the captive tell the details of his evasion, resolved to make him perish,⁹ but the latter succeeded again in escaping, and went to Moussadougou, where he was well received. The inhabitants of the village were complaining that one of them¹⁰ possessed a maleficent charm (*gris-gris*); the people died in large numbers, the harvests were poor, and misery reigned over all the families. Fere Kama promised to remedy these ills. He first went to do his ablutions nearby the village with the marabouts and immediately a large stream began to flow to fertilize the land. This water course was called Dion which signifies captive in Malinke.¹¹ He then went himself to cook his rice near the new river, and this place rose up into a large mountain, the Konian-ba, on which diverse crops can grow; lastly, his *gris-gris* which he had put into the ground became a forest containing fruiting trees.

The Mande captive, profiting from the astonishment of the inhabitants, drew together the marabouts to eradicate the *gris-gris* which had caused such misfortunes to the village. The Marabouts gathered together all the population, made them put the *gris gris* on the ground and reflect in prayer, and then their chief wrote some invocations on a small horn¹² which he thrust into the mouth of a frog which jumped into the air and fell on the evil *gris gris* which cracked into two.¹³ The owner of this *gris gris* had to take off

brothers and other "countrymen" (see Korvah 1995:11; Ch. 2).

⁷Some informants similarly claimed that the Fulbe or Peul hid Foningama in a small grain called *fonio*, which explains how Foni was added to his (Kama's) name (Ch. 3).

⁸Other oral traditions state that the Kamara and Fulbe became 'joking partners' or *sanangu* because of what happened between the Kamara and Fula on this occasion (Ch. 3).

⁹According to Vase Kamala and many other oral traditionist, a Kromah from Musadu took Foningama to his brother Konsaba in Gbè. Foningama fled to Musadu after Konsaba tried to kill Foningama because Konsaba felt that he was a threat (App. 7.6; Ch. 3). Kamala claimed that Foningama was raised in Diemou, and that Foningama fled from Diemou because an attempt was made on his life. Sumaka had given Foningama his blessing, which made Konsaba jealous. Kamala said that Foningama's first son Fanyala was born in Diemou, and he stayed in Diemou with his mother after Foningama fled to Mau (Ch. 3,7; see Geysbeek/Kamara 1994:60-61, l. 20-48).

¹⁰'Them' is Zo Musa, or N'zougou Moussa in the second part of the tradition that Dauvillier collected.

¹¹Dion or *jòn* means 'slave.' According to some accounts, the name of this river derives from a story related to Zo Musa's wife (Ch. 6).

¹²Oral traditionist call this 'small horn' a *saafè* or 'sheep horn.' Zo Musa's *saafèlè* is said to have roamed around town and 'swallowed' human babies and livestock (Ch. 5).

¹³The Manding, Kpelle, and Kono narrate similar stories of how the clerics fastened a talisman around the neck of a frog; Zo Musa's horn exploded or lost its power when it consumed the frog (Holas 1952b:19; Germain 1984:76; Geysbeek/Kamara 1994:71, l. 355-363; Ch. 5).

into the forests of Toma country,¹⁴ and his captives [took against him] and refused to follow him as he was accompanied by ill luck.¹⁵ In recompense for the good deeds which he had bestowed on the village, Fere-Kama was elected head of Moussadougou.¹⁶

He had fifteen sons, but killed four who became robbers, because their father was once a captive.¹⁷

Thirty years later, he left on a journey through Toma country with several of his sons, with the aim of reaching the sea which is found far to the south.¹⁸ On his way, our travellers, being lost, met in the forest a hunter named Saramoro, to whom they made the present of a wife, on the condition that the latter guide them as far as the sea, and this he did in earnest.¹⁹

When returning, one of the sons of Fere-Kama fell ill, then stayed in the country and became the founder of the Gani (Gassi), a province of the Liberian hinterland (ill, translating as Gani in Malinke).²⁰

On his return, Fere-Kama split his goods between his sons; the eldest who was a good and charitable man went to make 'souche' in Bouzie, others governed different provinces and his preferred son, Diara, stayed in Moussadougou.²¹ A little later, Fere-Kama wanted to go alone to Kankan, breaking the defense of his gris-gris, which had forbidden him to return towards his natal country. Also, his son Diara followed him without letting him know, in order to assist him in case of danger. On arriving near Kankan, Fere Kama noticed his son, called him, gave him his ring, and descended in the bed of a stream from which he never returned; it is the marigot of Salamani - no Malinke can eat the fish of this river without dying during the year. Diara returned to Moussadougou after having vainly searched in vain for his father, and being convinced of the futility of the numerous sacrifices of the gris gris to find him.²²

During one night, Diara dreamed that he carried on his head a heavy calabash full of Kobi oil, and that all his teeth had fallen in another calabash filled with rice. The next

¹⁴According to several accounts, Zo Musa first went to Mount Kanikokela which borders the Loma forest. He then traveled south with his followers and settled in Zota (Ch. 6).

¹⁵Some say that one of Zo Musa's slave-companions broke away from Zo Musa because Zo Musa was the leading member of a secret society (Ch. 6).

¹⁶An analysis of several oral traditions suggest that the transfer of political power from the Kromah to the Kamara was not as smooth as the scenario presented here (Ch. 7).

¹⁷The number of sons that Foningama had varies from twelve to seventeen (Ch. 7; App. O). Several accounts explain how four of Foningama's were executed for raiding a market. Foningama instituted several laws, but this was the only one that required the death penalty. The disruption of the market threatened the economic and political stability of the chiefdom (Ch. 8).

¹⁸Several Maniyaka traditions make references to the descendants of Foningama attempting to go to the coast (Ch. 8). Some Loma tell how Foningama led his troops west and raided the land of the Kissi (Korvah 1995).

¹⁹Does Saramoro = Sumaworo?

²⁰Gani/Gassi: Could be a reference to Kissi.

²¹Diara is Jala, Fèn-Jala or Fanyala. There is a dispute about the identity of Foningama's first son. *Dauvillier's* informant said that Foningama's eldest son (unnamed, Fasu-jan?) went to Bouzie or Buse while Diara stayed in Musadu. According to Vase Kamala, Foningama's oldest son was Fanyala who was **born** in Diemou, and that Fasu-jan was the first son who Foningama sired in Musadu. Kamala also seems to **differ** with *Dauvillier's* source by saying that Fasu-jan remained in Musadu while Fanyala was the son who **left** (App. 7.6; Ch. 8).

²²Other informants claim that Foningama descended into a body of water never to return (Ch. 8)

day, he convoked the marabouts in order to interpret his dream. The latter declared that the calabash carried on his head signified that he would have a large burden of governing, and that his teeth fallen in another calabash indicated that his children would equally become important chiefs. This prediction came true, and the narrator goes on to detail endlessly the lands which were governed by the descendants of Diara.²³ Noting only that the third son, and delinquent hunter, one day crossed the Milo, noticed a family of elephants which had just given birth. At this place, he planted a branch of a silk cotton tree, installed himself, and founded the country of Kerouane where his descendants live; the mother of Samori, Sonasti Kamara issued from his family.²⁴

[Part II:] The following summary of the history of the country until the reign of Samory is taken from a series of stories analogous to that of the captive, Fere-Kama.

The large empires of Ghanala, Sontizia, Mali and El-Hadi-Omar do not appear to have extended as far as these distant regions where there remains no vestige of their passage, nor traces of ancient royalty and powerful empire.²⁵ The aboriginal population of the cercle was of the Toma race; it extended as far as the dense forests to the south, already inhabited by the cannibal people of the Guerze race who always viciously resisted attempts made to breach them.²⁶

In the 17th century, under the reign of Sondiat, the Mande King, the Malinkes went back up the Niger and progressively invaded their land, but without important struggle, little by little pushing back the original Toma and Guerze population towards the dense forest to the south and west.²⁷

²³For other descriptions of where Fanyala's descendants settled, see Chapter 8, Person (1968b:263,270,429,445,567,579) and Geysbeek/Kamara (1994:75, lines 495-503).

²⁴Similarly, according to Vase Kamala, Fanyala's first son Setuma settled in Kerouane (Geysbeek/Kamara 1994:75, lines 494-498). Liurette published another version of this elephant story three years later. He wrote that the hunter's name was Sèmini or Monson, and that the hunter founded Malikoun (App. 4.1; see Kantè 1971-72:19). The direction that the hunter or the men are said to have walked is the same - west, but the location is different. The Milo river begins near Nionsamoridu and flows north past Kerouane and Kankan to Niandankoro where it merges with the Niger River. Dauvillier wrote that Fanyala's hunter son crossed the Milo and founded Kerouane. In the oral tradition that Liurette collected, Fonigama's two sons walked much further west; they crossed the Milo and Niandan before they reached the Kouya which is situated southwest of Kankan. Liurette's Malikoun may be the Maliko tributary of the Kouya situated about forty miles north of Kissidougou. Both accounts claim that at least one of Fonigama's descendants found a town where he saw a newborn elephant. None of the late-twentieth century interviewees told this story, suggesting that this episode might not be as central in the normal discourse of the Musadu epic as it was one hundred years ago.

²⁵El-Hadi-Omar or El-Hajj Umar established an Islamic state in today's central Mali during the 1850s and early-1860s. Ghanala and Mali are the Ghana and Mali empires. Perhaps Sontizia is the sixteenth century Songhai empire.

²⁶The Maniyaka continue to claim that the Kpelle and Loma were the original inhabitants of the Beyla area, and that the Maniyaka pushed some of the Kpelle and Loma back into the forest. Some assimilation also occurred between the Maniyaka and these groups (Person 1961:47-49; 1971:674; 1984:317).

²⁷Sunjata ruled the Mali empire during the early-to-mid thirteenth century, not the seventeenth century.

The first Malinke who came and established himself in these regions was a warrior of Sondiata called Toumani Kourouma, who received from his king the authorization to go and settle for good, there, it seems, with his family and his following in recompense for his good services.²⁸ Toumani came in the Konian and one of his captives, N'zougou Moussa who preceded him, chose the site of the present village of Moussadougou where Toumani subsequently installed himself. This was the first village of the Manian Malinke. It retains the name of the captive, Moussa (dougou signifies village in Malinke).²⁹

Relatives and descendants of Toumani spread out in the country; one of them Dialakolo created the village of Diakolidougou, situated near the present seat of the cercle. The Kourouma or Doumbia, a common family name, consider as their ancestor this Toumani Kourouma. The Diomandé or Kamara descended from the captive Fere-Kama, whose legendary history is reported above. Two sons of a person called Yousouf Beiete, a Malinke who came from Kong, founded the village of Beyla, once called Berela signifying the land of Bèrètè. Some Bambaras from Sankaran, Peuls from Ouassoulou and Sarracolets from the Sahel came in the wake of the Malinkes to sow themselves in groups in the diverse populations where their descendants are still established.³⁰

Around 1860 chief Saadigui who had taken the title of King of Gaukouma and achieved in assuring the predominance of the Manian Malinkes in pushing back definitively the weaker armies of the Tomas in the forests which they inhabit today.³¹ The Manians penetrated better in the forests of Bouzie of Kolibriama and of Kounoukoro, succeeding to establish themselves there among the Toma after some desperate struggles. Now they make up about a quarter of the population of these provinces. Some have even settled in N'zebela and the N'Sapa-Zolou region as Dioula merchants.³²

To the south, the Malinkes penetrated equally, quite far into the forest zone among the Guerzee populations of Kouayua and Kouodougou; now about a third of Karagua as well as its chief Garagara Oule are Malinke, the latter are always of small number in the Konodougou, and the village of N'Zo is the extreme southern limit that they have penetrated.³³

²⁸The Kromah commonly associated with Sunjata is Fakoli (Conrad 1992). The Kromah who migrated to Konya-Mani also claimed descent from Fakoli (Ch. 7; App. H.4).

²⁹For a summary and description of a popular etymology that explains how Musa founded Musadu, see Chapter 4.

³⁰Sarracolete is another term for Soninke.

³¹Person 1968b:440-444. Speaking of Saji Kamara who made his headquarters at Gbangunò a few miles north of Musadu.

³²See Person (1968b) and Weisswange (1976) for discussions about the movement of the Maniyaka into Macenta province during the nineteenth century.

³³See Germain 1984. Oule is Dole.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 4

MANIYAKA SOURCES TRANSLATED FROM FRENCH TO ENGLISH

Translated by: Marie Miran

Many thanks to Marie Miran who kindly translated all of the materials in this section from French to English. The original paragraph settings, text layouts, parentheses and page numbers (with slashes on either side of numbers) are retained. Information in brackets consist of editorial changes or the insertion of French words where meanings are not clear. A few stylistic changes not indicated in the text or footnotes are the capitalization of all proper names; additions or changes with regard to quotation marks, commas, colons, semi-colons and periods, and the italicization of all Kpelle and Maniyakã words. While we realize that there are legitimate arguments for revealing these changes in the text, we want the translations to be as “user-friendly” as possible when providing a good translation.¹

In the footnotes, Miran’s comments and those of the authors are identified. All of the other statements are by Geysbeek.

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 4.1

“MONOGRAPHIE SUR LE CERCLE DE BEYLA, 1908-1909” BY M. LIURETTE

*“The Legend of Foninkaman”*²

¹Hair/Jones/Law 1992:lix-lxi.

²Ibrahima Kalil Turé included this excerpt from Liurette in his thesis (1972-73:172). Without seeing a copy of Liurette’s report, we can not verify that the author quoted Liurette verbatim. The same can be said for the selections that he drew from Linard in App. 4.6. Turé’s scholarship seems strong, so one suspects that he closely copied what Liurette and Linard wrote.

Fonikaman Diomandé left his village Sibi (today Kangaba-Niger) around the year 1200 accompanied by his eldest son Sémini Diomandé. He first went to Kankan where he stayed for two years. Around 1202, he took the road again, southwards... The next year, he stopped in the Toma village Moussatazou, today Moussadougou where he lived until he died. He had 16 sons among whom five died at an early age.³ The eldest son, Sémini, and his younger brother⁴ Monson left Moussadougou at about 1225 in the month proceeding Ramadan... At the time of their departure, Fonikaman made the following recommendations to his son: "Walk in the direction of the sea, and you shall stop only when you will meet on your way a female elephant accompanied by her baby. There you will plant in that place a baobab branch, and around this branch you will found a village that you shall name Malikoun (Head of Mali)." Sémini stopped on the banks of the Koya river, tributary of the left bank of the Milo, where he founded the village of Malikoun which still exists to this day, and the tree which was planted by Sémini is still the object of the greatest veneration on the part of all the Diomandé (Kamara). The legend of the Diomandé and the Kourouma is common to nearly all the provinces of Beyla (Bela) and Kérouané (Keruwane), and their descendants glory⁵ today to be the grand-sons of the great Fonikaman...

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 4.2

LT. LAMOLE. "MONOGRAPHIE DU PAYS GUERZE," *REVUE DES TROUPES COLONIALES* 90 (1909)

/529/ Originally, the Guerzés would have lived in the vicinity of the present-day village of Moussadougou in the district of Beyla. Not being numerous, they were living by families, under the leadership of only one chief, Zogomoussa Kòma, when they were driven out by the Malinkes coming from Mande, in the region of Bammako. Their peaceful disposition, as well as the weakness of their forces, did not enable them to resist the invaders. Thus they moved southwards and put in between them and their aggressors the barrier of the Mount Minian.⁶

This exodus, which should not date back too long ago, as well as its reasons, seem highly probable, and things could well have happened this way. But this resignation to what was supposed inescapable, this fear of knocks to say it clearly, put up, though, with a true devotion for the mother land.

The tradition reports indeed that before leaving, Zagomoussa Kòma took some water from the three creeks of Dion, Niaouléné and the Diarako which are in the vicinity of Moussadougou. He then cut a branch from one of the three big *kapock* trees which

³Other sources describe the premature deaths of Foningama's sons because they broke one or more of Musadu's laws (Ch. 8).

⁴Or, 'youngest brother' (M.M.).

⁵Or, 'pride themselves' (M.M.).

⁶Guerzés and Malinke are respectively the French forms for Kpelle and Maninka.

were shading the market square of this village and he removed one of the large stones which were located in front of the fetish huts and which were used to “make sacrifice.” Then he entered with his tribe deep into the forest zone, nowadays occupied by his descendants, and stopped in the present-day district [“canton”] of Booué, in the triangle formed by the Diani and the Oulé.⁷ With the water which had been brought, he baptized under the above-mentioned names three streams which are flowing into the Diani and which are still perpetuating the memory of the lost mother land.

The branch of the kapock tree was planted at the spot which was to become the village of Zogota. The stone was placed at the feet of the young tree and huts were constructed around. Lastly, Zogomoussa divided the country between the different family heads.

/530/ These little data are all of the history of the Guerzé:⁸ if the proverb says the truth, these [the Guerzés] can thus be counted among the happy peoples.⁹

Zagota still exists, at the center of the district of Booué, and the stone which is at the feet of the kapock tree, at the market’s place, still plays its function.

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 4.3

**PERE BOUYSSOU (1913), PUBLISHED IN LELONG, M.H. N’ZEREKORE:
L’EVANGELIQUE EN FORET GUINEENNE. PARIS: LIBRAIRIE
MISSIONAIRE, 1949**

/24/ According to the local legendary traditions, Misa-/25/-gadougou was founded by Falikaman, the ancestor of the Malinke clan of the Kamara of Djomannou, at about the 17th century. His numerous children have founded the Konia province: Koradougou, Simandougou, Famoela, Maghana.¹⁰ Some of them: Zogomisa Kòma, Zogofakoni,¹¹ Fengébou, were expelled from Misagadougou and settled themselves in Zogota, southwards, where they gave birth to the Guerzé clan of the Déla, to the clan of the Lama, to the Djégbé family of the G’Baya-Galakpay region. The present mosque of Misagadougou would have been built¹² on the grave of one of the daughters of Falikaman whose name was Magnambouy. This was because she was married to a certain Mori Konaté, the first foreign marabout coming from the North, who introduced Islamism¹³ in this region. The father adds: “Thus we had crossed, in this region, the country of origin

⁷The Diani River is known as the St. Paul in Liberia.

⁸This is the only data that the French or Westerners know about Guerzé history (M.M.).

⁹The proverb means: happy people have little or no history (M.M.).

¹⁰Bouyssou gathered this information from the Beyla Maniyaka, which suggests that the Maniyaka still felt that Konya-Mani’s boundaries extended well beyond the area that the French allotted in the late-1890s.

¹¹Zogomisa Kòma is Zo Musa the Kòma. Zogofakoni is Father Jufa Konè.

¹²would have been built’: the formulation expresses doubt (M.M.).

¹³Islamism: This is an old way to say Islam (as in Christian-ism). This has nothing to do with fundamentalism (M.M.).

of the Guerzés.”¹⁴

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 4.4A

HUMBLLOT, P. “DU NOM PROPRE ET DES APPELLATIONS CHEZ LES MALINKE DES VALLEES DU NIANDAN ET DU MILO (GUINEE FRANCAISE).” *BULLETIN COMITE D’ETUDES HISTORIQUES ET SCIENTIFIQUES* (1918)

/530/ The word of Dioman’dén might signify (mean) “children of the Dioma,” Dioma being the name of an important province nowadays included in the circle of Siguiri. But, according to some traditions, the word should be interpreted differently. A Kamara migration would have moved towards the Konian several centuries ago, under the leadership of a chief named Farèn Kaman. This migration, after having left on its way, in particular in the Sankaran, some settlements of Kamara, would have walked as far as the neighborhood of the forest where, by contacts with the aborigines, the descendants of those who were making it up, would have become ‘savages’ again. There, they would have taken up the habit to wear a cap of a particular form, trimmed with a talisman called “dioman.” And the name of the ornament characteristic of their headgear would have remained attached to them...¹⁵ Farèn Kaman Kamara, the chief of the Kamara Diomandén...

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 4.4B

HUMBLLOT, P. “EPISODES DE LA LEGENDE DE SOUNDIATA.” *NOTES AFRICAINES* 52 (1951)

/13/ The Konyates became the griots of the Traoré. As for Fakoli, he had a woman from the Kamara family; the same as that of Fanoni Konde, one of the ancestors of the Sankaran and Feren Naman, father of the Kamara of Konian, who are called the Diomandé. That is why the Kamaras, the Kouroumas, and the Kondes are considered as related by alliance and constitute the true Malinkes of the Upper Niger valley. The other families are known as the Taraore and the Konaté Bambaras, or the Maraka muslims from

¹⁴“The father”: presumably Bouyssou and Aloy’s informant.

¹⁵1: *Note of M. Delafosse*. - I was given other versions of the etymology of Diomanden, among which one translated this name by “children of who?” and justified itself by the fact that one would ignore the origin of this clan. This version is corroborated by the translation given by the Bambara of the word Diomanden which is *Dioumessi*: this latter word means “race of who?” in the Bambara dialect (Humbloit’s footnote).

the north as the Kaba, Bèrètè, and Soare etc.

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 4.5

GERMAIN, JACQUES. *PEUPLES DE LA FORET*. PARIS: ACADEMIE DES SCIENCES D'OUTRE-MERE, 1984¹⁶

/76/ Two questions arise: who were these groups who were leaving the Konian for the forest. Certainly, some of these were Malinké, but were all Malinké? Was there still an important residual Kpellé population residing in the Konian? And are the Zoho Missa Coma, Miao, Zohomissakoro, etc. Kpellé or Malinkés of the Konian? It is difficult to give a verdict on that, and it is possible that the first hypothesis might be true in a case and the second in others.

Missadougou would have been founded by Falikaman, the local ancestor of the Camara clan, around the 17th century, and his children (or descendants?) would have spread into different parts of the Konian: Koradougou - Simandougou - Famoela - Mahana. Falikaman would have given his daughter, Magnambony, in marriage to Mori Konaté, a foreign marabout (probably Soninké), who introduced Islam into the Konian, and it is on the grave of this daughter that the first mosque would have been built. /77/ If credit is to be given to the notes taken in 1913 by Father Bouyssou, who established the mission in the Kpellé land, it was some members of the Falikaman family who were expelled from Missadougou and settled themselves in the Kpellé land.¹⁷ Though it was not said, it seems that this expulsion would have been based on religious grounds. We know that, according to the tradition collected by B. Holas in Lola, Zoumassakro (that I identify for my part with Zoho Missa Koro, brother of Zoho Missa Coma) would have been the youngest son of a Muslim Malinké family of Missadougou, but to my opinion, there is a doubt on that.

Indeed, if we see him with a Coran and beads, he is also portrayed as a great magician with powerful spells stored in a ram horn, which is not of pure Islam. True to say, in this region...!¹⁸

But Zoho means fetichist priest, sorcerer, and Zoho Missa Coma is described as such a great fetichist priest that he was initiating others even before having initiated himself! This could obviously mean that we are dealing here with animist Mandé who were not initiated in the Poron when they first arrived to the forest, but who were swiftly assimilated in the midst of the population into which they merged...

/90/ According to the legend, four brothers, Zoho Missa Coma, Zoho Moussakoro, Barako etc... (the name of the fourth one is unknown), left Missadougou

¹⁶Jacques Germain was a French official in N'Zerekore from 1946-1947, so most of the information that he collected can be dated to these years. When he published his book in 1984, however, he drew from several later sources.

¹⁷113: M.H. Lelong. - *Nzérékoré, l'Evangile en forêt guinéenne*. pp. 24-25 (German's footnote).

¹⁸The Maniyaka call this 'ram horn' a *saafè*.

together and went southwards. They reach Klya in the Béro after having crossed the G'Banhana and the Kossa-Guerzé. There, they broke apart: Zoho Missa Coma continued toward the South-West and his three brothers toward the South-East.

Zoho Missa Coma spent a night on Mount G'Bian Ye in the Moné where he forgot the tongs which he used to fill his pipe: so the name of the mountain. Then he reached Boyeba where Mahagpoulé, chief of the Doula clan, was living. The wife of the latter was about to give birth. Zoho Missa took care of her, and as a reward was permitted to settle down not far from there. He then founded the village which bears his name: Zohota, and he received the chieftaincy of Manbouan, Filikolé-Zohota region. He is the grand-son of Zoho Missa, Zohoa Yagbaolo, who was remembered as the greatest warrior whereas Zoho Missa is remembered as an extraordinary sorcerer; he was such a great Zohomou that he was initiating the others before being initiated himself: he was criticized for that and it was the ones he initiated who initiated him! Wherever he went, he was badly received because of his gris-gris: he was crossing walls and when flies would touch him they would fly down. This reputation was also attached to his descendants and the people of the Zohota are so feared by their neighbors that any attempt to join this tiny district to a more powerful neighbor have failed for this reason.

Zoho Missa was from the Maliéma clan and was accompanied by groups of the Bienyé or Galda and Moné or Koulata clans. His son Magona would have founded a village of cultivation on the location of the future G'Balo (district of Boo).

The second of the four brothers, Zoho Missakoro, took the direction of the Konodougou where Lainé had already been founded by G'bangá Yoko and where the G'Bon clan was also living. The latter was occupying the village of G'Ban-Houn whose chief was G'Banmon Zotoi. The latter received Zoho Missakoro as a guest and when he died, Missa-/91/-koro preferred to be buried alive with him, declaring that the Kanala was henceforth linking the two clans. Missakoro's son, Yoakou, resumed his walk southwards and founded Gohoba, nowadays in ruins; his son Yoakou Holomo came to Lainé to settle down where he became G'Banga Yoko's warrior: the latter entrusted him quickly with the chieftaincy. Missakoro would have been from the Kolo clan, which is a clan related to the Téninguéta one.

The two other brothers left Klya (Béro), came past Didita and Kokota in the Gouran and arrived in Manon country where Barako founded Lola, while one of his warriors belonging to the Gokolo branch of the Lola clan left Lola to found Gokota.

The legend collected by B. Holas¹⁹ speaks of a certain Zoumassakro that I identify with Zoho Missa Koro but who, far from stopping and ending his days in the way we have seen in G'Ban Huon, would be the founder of Lola, chief place of one of the four Kono districts.

By contrast, G'Barko G'Bamou, who is identified as a descendant of Zoumassakro by B. Holas's informant, would be in my opinion a brother, maybe in the African conception of the term, of Zoho Missa Coma and Zoho Missa Koro and would bear the like name of Barako. While according to Holas, G'Baeko would be born in Lola and would have only changed the location of the village founded by Zoumassakro, Barako is for me the true founder of Lola.

¹⁹119: *Les masques Kono*. p. 19 (Holas footnote).

But we conceive that it is difficult to choose a version or another in the lack of any document. The chieftaincy of Lola indeed slipped out from Barako or G'Barko's family to go to a family of the Doré clan, the same clan as the one who imposed its domination on the Manon of Zan through the agency of Bossoucoura.

Barako's brother went eastwards and settled in Manota, a Manon village of what was to become the Mossorodougou. He was known to be a great warrior. A certain Karaga, chief of Malou or Kani, would have called him for help in the course of a war and would have given him his daughter in marriage as a reward for his services. He has a son in Manota who was named Mossourou. The Togbalo chief of Guéasso, defeated by a village, would have called the warrior Mossourou Lolamou and would have appointed him chief of the Mossorodougou region out of gratitude.

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SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 4.6

LINARD, H. "NOTES SUR L'HISTOIRE DU CERCLE DE BEYLA," 1948

*"The legend of the Kamara"*²⁰

The Kamara or Diomandés have for a totem: the panther. They appear as one of the major Konia families and claim to be the first conquerors. Their tradition is consistent with one of the Kourouma since they both recognize the co-existence and alliance of the great ancestors: Toumani Gamé and Fonikaman Kamara. The legend attributes to the latter, the ancestor of the Kamara, tribulations analogous to these of Toumani. It seems that the alliance with the Kourouma would have included a division of lands (a division of Moussadougou), leaving the important regions of Simandougou, Kérouané, Konianko (Koninko), all North-West of Macenta, Guirila, Goye and Karagoua to the Kamara and the remainder of the Konian to the Kourouma.

The tradition also sanctions the alliance between the Kamara and the Kourouma: in case of assassination, the fine is handed over to the Kamara, the "price of blood" to the Kourouma;²¹ for the sacrifices, the best parts are divided. As for the Kourouma, the Kamara would have been defeated in the East: four sons of Fonikaman who went to plunder Ouanino (Côte d'Ivoire) would have been expelled from there following an important battle. To chastise them on their return,²² their father would have cut off their heads. They would have been buried not far from the mosque, under a black stone which is still venerated to this day: important oaths are taken on this stone...

*"The legend of the Kourouma"*²³

²⁰In Turé (1972-73:173).

²¹"price of blood": the Kromah apparently received the fine levied for killing or injuring someone.

²²'To chastise them on their return'; presumably to Musadu.

²³In Turé (1972-73:174).

The tradition of the Kamara and the tradition of the Kourouma intertwine and complement one another. The Kourouma (equivalent: Doumbouya; totem: the *sil[urid]*)²⁴ claim to be the owners of the land; their great ancestor is Toumani Gamé Kourouma. Toumani Game, having left from M'Bamou - Bamako - reached Ouroudougou while following back upstream the flow of the Kourouk(?)²⁵ (round pebble).

Some details of the legend show that at that time, the Malinkés Kamara were already occupying the Goye...

The Kourouma seem to have stopped for a while in the region of Tina (Ouroudougou) and to have pushed their sons ahead in the direction of Kérouané (Toumandougou), of Kankan (Kourouma of Salado)²⁶ and of the Guirila. The Kourouma would have founded Fouala (= savannah; this may indicate that the forest was not reaching this latitude) and they would have taken sides afterwards with a race of hunters, the Donzo (Fofana), who would have been invited to live with them...

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 4.7

HOLAS, B. *LES MASQUES KONO*. PARIS: PAUL GEURHNER, 1952B

/19/ Account of the foundation and ancestry of the Lola chiefs (according to several informants from the Doré, Souomou, Gbamou and Soromou families):

The Kono nowadays settled in the district of Lola are originating from the district of Beyla, in a village named Moussadougou.

About two hundred years ago, Zoumassakro, the youngest son of a Malinké Muslim family from Moussadougou, was considered by local inhabitants as a great magician, owner of powerful spells as well as a just and generous man. That is why he founded himself in constant disputes with his jealous brothers. Because these disputes would never end, Zoumassakro decided, one day, to break with them. Thus, in agreement with his own family and a few intimate friends who had remained faithful to him, he decided to leave his native village and go and settle somewhere else.

But as soon as his brothers learned about the news, they attempted to strike him in his magic power, which was contained in a spell of much value: a hollowed out ram horn full of strange magical substances. They took a toad, an impure animal, and placed it on the magic horn. The spell thus ruined all of its occult power, but Zoumassakro would still keep his abilities as a magician - thanks to his Qur'an and his beads.

After that event, the migrants took the road southwards without delay. They crossed the Northern savannah where they found, at the edge of the forest, an enormous mushroom called *kpogo*. Zoumassakro took it and placed it /20/ on the top of a high termite hill and said: "Here will rise a big village one day." His prediction being realized afterwards, the village which was founded there took the present name of Kpogola

²⁴A catfish.

²⁵One letter seems to be missing from the page that was originally photocopied.

²⁶The last letter of Salado was not photocopied.

(Village of the Mushroom, Boola on the maps).

This said, Zoumassakro and his people resumed their journey and entered into the forest, around the location of the present-day village of Lainé, in the district of Konodougou (district of Nzérékoré). They then reached the present-day village of Kokota, where Zoumassakro left some of the members of his suite to play the role of an outpost in case his brothers would decide to pursue him.

The others, following their road, stopped at the feet of the mountain. After having walked for a while, Zoumassakro's wife realized she had lost her belt (*yara*). A young man was then sent to look for the object. Meanwhile, the migrants, still walking, arrived at the side of a creek. There, everyone performed their ablutions, and preceded on the road again. The creek once crossed, Zoumassakro suddenly remembered that he had forgotten his beads on the other side. A child was sent to look for it and he brought it back quickly to his chief. In memory of this event, the creek was henceforward called Blango, meaning the River- of- grains (that is: of the beads). Then, they stopped on a hill, located on the northern side, not far from the present-day village of Lola.²⁷ When she reached the place, Zoumassakro's wife layed down the last rice supply and gave some to her young child to eat. That is why this hill took the name of Bagbwèma (*Ba* = rice; *gbwè* = finished; *ma* = upon: that is to say, on the hill).

The messenger charged to bring back the forgotten belt to Zoumassakro's wife rejoined the group at the feet of this very hill. That is why the first mountain (that is: the one from which the belt was taken back) was henceforth called Yarayé, The-Mountain-of-the-belt (the forgotten one).

At the place where the messenger rejoined his fellows, there was a stream which the woman named. Yarayiri: "here, I put on (*yiri*, literally: attached) my belt (*yara*)."

By the end of this long journey, Zoumassakro was suffering from parasites. Consequently, he stopped on the top of the next hill to get rid of his lice. And that is how, ever since, the place was called Klayé (*kla*: louse; *yé*: small mountain). After having crossed two more creeks, Guérikopléya²⁸ and Yokon,²⁹ the head of the expedition decided to settle /21/ in the place located very near the Liberian border, where was already living, under a mere hut, a man, Malinke too, who has arrived lately from the East, with all his family.

To mark the end of the pilgrimage, Zoumassakro planted in the middle of his future village the cutting of a tree called *tagba* which he had taken care to carry with him from his village of birth. And it is at the time that he gave to his new village the name of Lora, today known under the name of Lola.³⁰

Afterward, the migrants being harassed by the Manon invasions, their southern neighbors, left in their turn this first encampment to go and settle - going back northwards

²⁷It is on and around the slopes of these hills that are now located the fields of the family of the Doré chieftains (Holas footnote #1).

²⁸Guéri was the name of a man whose wives were drawing water there, *ko* meaning bone (?); *plé*, to drink, and *ya*; water (Holas footnote #2).

²⁹Nere, no etymological explanation was available (Holas footnote #3).

³⁰The etymology of this term does not seem to be known by the present inhabitants of Lola, but some of them tend to see it in association with the words *lo* = 'enter' (imperative pronoun) and *ra* = 'rest, lay down' (idem) (Holas footnote #1).

- in a place located in the savannah and to which they gave the name of their first village.

It is probable that by that time, Zoumassakro was already dead. One of his descendants, Gbarko Gbamouu, born in the second location of Lola, then became the chieftain of the new village. One day, he left to look for new cultivation soils and he indeed found in the neighborhood a very fertile land. Gbarko founded there a *fonio* field, and the first harvest was so satisfactory that he began thinking to establish there all his village.

But he addressed a diviner first, as required by the custom. And though the latter's answer was positive, his fellow were so attached to the soil of their new homeland that they showed no disposition to leave it. The soothsayer, consulted again, knew nonetheless to indicate the remedy: he gave Gbarko Gbamou black magic powder (that is called in the country by the generic name of *foungo*) and recommended him to sprinkle with it in the skin of his big calling drum and to hit it every evening; this would rally the recalcitrants. Effectively, he obtained this result after several attempts and that is how the village went to settle where it is to be found today.

The tree of Zoumassakro, which became sacred for the inhabitants of Lola, was transplanted at each of the successive moves, and we can see it today, majestically erecting its high top on the outskirts of the village of Lola, on the eastern side.

By the death of Gbarko Gbamou, his widow, in a plan to get rid of (eliminate, kill) the sons of the deceased, who were nonetheless his legitimate successors, took hold of his *séa bi*, the bag containing the hereditary spells of the chiefs and she gave it to the father of a certain Ségbi. Thus a new lineage of chieftains was founded, of which the family is presently known under the name of Doré.³¹

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 4.8

“MONOGRAHIQUE DE LA REGION ADMINISTRATIVE DE BEYLA: PART - ETAT DE GUINEE FEDERATION DE BEYLA” N.D. [C. 1958]

/1/ Originating from the Mandé, they [the Camara] settled themselves in Farinkamaya, not far from Siguiri, from where they were expelled by the Keita. Five half-brothers migrated westwards with their families:

- The first, Souma Balde Camara, took the direction of Kouroussa and founded Ballea.
- The second, Frigui, came to Faranah and founded Fria, deformation of Firiguia.
- The third, Sonkoli, followed Frigui to Faranah, currently a customs house between Hermakono and Samboudougou, Sonkoya (sic.) is a deformation of the name Sonkolya.
- The fourth _____, settled himself west of Siguiri and became the ancestor of

³¹For accounts about the Doré who accompanied Zoumassakoro to Lola, see Holas (1952a:33-34; 1975:85).

the Camara in this region.

- The fifth, Dioman Camara, came to Sianoh in the Mahou and was prosperous there. He had for a heir Koïfing Camara, who, at the time of his death, was survived by several boys, among whom Faring Camara or Foni Kaman, ancestor of the Camara of Beyla. Following a plot hatched by his brothers, Foni Kaman withdrew to Moussadou by his uncle Toumani who, a few years later, appointed him chief of Moussadou. Foni Kama had sixteen (16) sons, namely:

/2/	1° - Fandjara	3° - Famoï
	2° - Fassoudjan	4° - Moro
	5° - Sétouman	11° - Kòma or Kossa
	6° - Kouroumissa	12° - Séko
	7° - Fon Siméné	13° - Faciné
	8° - Séré Birama	14° - Sosso
	9° - Gnan Touman	15° - Sano - Yaté
	10° - Fila Fabou	16° - Séman Fila

Fandjara excepted, who is said unquestionably to be the first son by everyone, the birth rank of the child is not respected.³²

To give an example of justice, Foni Kaman put to death five of his sons and one of his griots who committed a crime in Moussadou against the marketeers.

This youngest one³³ was handsome, active, popular. His qualities put him in conflict with his elder brother Kònsaba who was indeed outshone by him. The situation between them was tense; the two brothers eventually left one another. This separation enabled the younger to join his uncle from the maternal side, Toumani Koroma, who was living at the feet of the Koniaba mountains near Wanino.

Beyla, at least according to our humble opinion, has a brilliant historical past. Indeed, some of its sons left vivid memories. We mention some of them:

- 1° - Gnama CAMARA - Damaro
- 2° - Sadjì CAMARA - Gouankouno
- 3° - Dougbé Kaba CONE - Diassodou
- 4° - Massasbory CAMARA - Guirila
- 5° - Gbara-Gbara Oulén DONZO - Guéasso
- 6° - Almamy TOURE - Sanankoro
- 7° - Massé Mamady CAMARA - Gouana

/4/ The six above-mentioned great personalities of Moussadou, among whom three are natives and three are foreigners:

- Toumani KOUROUMA: authoctone

³²The formulation is unclear and grammatically incorrect. In other terms, he says that apart from the first born whose rank is unattested, the birth rank of all the others is uncertain (M.M.).

³³Sic. It is unclear to whom this refers. But according to what comes afterward, it seems that it refers to Foni Kaman (M.M.).

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| - Zoo Missa KONÈ | -“- |
| - Djifa KONÈ | -“- |
| - Foni Kaman CAMARA: | Foreigner |
| - Gnamissa KOUROUMA: Griot | -“- |
| - Foromo DORE: Marabout | -“- |

/11/ The name of Beyla is a deformation of Béretela. Indeed, according to the chroniclers of the country, Beyla was founded at an already far-fetched date by a certain Mory Yousouf Bereté, an adventurer originating from the Mandé. He settled down with the agreement of Foni Kaman Camara, then the chief of Moussadou. Then the Cone of Beyla came, the Donzo of Niela and other families of which the Cherifs are the last to come. Beyla counts twelve distinct families. They are believers impervious to civilization. They are fanatic. At that time, internal wars were frequent, the inhabitants of Diakolidou were living in insecurity and were taking refuge in Beyla each time they were threatened, their protection wakèlèn salaka as thus assured. Through these contacts, they became Muslims as were the inhabitants of Beyla.

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 4.9

CAMARA, DAOUDA. “ARBRE GENEALOGIQUE DE LA DYNASTIE CAMARA...” c. 1979

Oversize genealogy.³⁴

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 4.10

SIDIBÉ, MOLIKÉ. “MONOGRAPHIE HISTORIQUE DE DAMARO (PREFECTURE DE KEROUANE): DES ORIGINES A 1958.” MEMOIRE DE DIPLOME DE FIN D’ETUDES SUPERIEURES, UNIVERSITE DE KANKAN, 1989

After the death of Foninkaman’s father Koifing, the four brothers were called to attend the funeral of their father. After the funerals, they asked their younger brother for the horn, who would have received it from their father. Foninkaman protested, and knowing the impact of the horn, their brothers plotted against him. Foninkaman, warned by the old woman Koumba, was saved at the very last minute from an ambush at a public square

³⁴Camara’s genealogy is too large to include here, so contact the author of this work for a copy.

where he was to be assassinated.³⁵

Toumani Kourouma received (welcomed) Foninkaman in Nérékoro, who was accompanied by Férébri Doré and Moussa Dioubaté his griot. Being warned of an armed attack, they moved from N'zérékore to Moussadou, a strategic place. The war broke out in Moussadou but the group of Toumani Kourouma, an uncle of Foninkaman on the maternal side, won.

Foninkaman, who drew attention to himself during the war, was promoted to the rank of chief of the villages, though no unanimity was reached for this decision. Even if Foninkaman's power does not come from the horn, one should recognize that on a psychological level, the horn played nevertheless an important part, when we know the place occult sciences had occupied in our traditional societies.

The famous legend of Foninkaman, like the Mandingo epic, is still living in the Koniaka folklore and *enrangué*³⁶ all his /10/ descendants. It tells the courage of the former in the course of his various expeditions.

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 4.11

**“CONNAISSANCE DE LA REGION ADMINISTRATIVE DE BEYLA”
(HANDWRITTEN PAPER ACQUIRED IN KANKAN), NOVEMBER 1993,
n.d.: 1-4**

/1/ The history of Beyla can but very difficultly be situated in time. However, one might recall that the events are related to the apogee of the Malian empire, in the first half of the 14th century. Beyla, chief place of the region, is composed of two distinct villages, separated by 1,500 meters. These are: Beyla itself and Diakolidou.

Beyla itself:

The name of Beyla is a distortion of Béréféla. Indeed, according to the chroniclers of the country, Beyla was founded at a very remote date by Mory Youssouf Béréfé, an adventurer originating from the Mandé. He settled himself there, with the permission of Foni-Kaman Camara, then the chief of Moussadou. At that time of internal wars, the dwellers of Diakolidou were coming to take refuge in Beyla each time they were threatened. Such was their protection, and through their contacts, they became Muslims as were the inhabitants of Beyla, for until then, they had embraced no religion.³⁷ Friendship grew between the two villages, religious and political unity followed. Beyla

³⁴1: Falikou Kourouma: a noble of Fombadou, 74 years old (Sidibé footnote). This seems to be Sidibé's source for this story.

³⁵Enrangué: I have not heard of this verb. Probably from old French. This may mean 'enlist in rank' (all his descendants) (M.M.).

³⁶This sentence is incorrect in French. The whole text is filled with orthographic mistakes (M.M.).

remained sovereign. The news that whites [French] were settled in Nionsomoridou provoked (was followed by) the migration of the two villages to Foubadoukoro (old Forimbadou). They came back to Beyla and Diakolidou only after the invaders went on pursuing the Almamy Samory in Côte d'Ivoire.

Diakolidou:

It was founded much after Beyla by the descendants of /2/ Toumany Kourouma, who was coming from Bambouk. Toumany Kourouma had four children from the daughter of his guest, who gave birth respectively to the Kourouma of Baranama (RA³⁸ Kankan), or Kouroubadou near Kerouané, of Diakolidou and of Fouala (Sinko). Diakoli, with the help of his brother Fomba, founded Diakolidou. The location of Diakolidou was originally occupied by the Guerzés who, after disagreements within the Kourouma, had to withdraw southward.

Waves of Migration

All the country, with the exception of Simandou, was occupied by the Guerzés, the Guirila being occupied by the Toma. During the invasions southwards, the Koné or Diarra were the first to settle in the lands watered by the Dion and its tributaries, thus driving back the Toma and the Guerzés into the forests of the South. The Koné remained there until the arrival of the Camara who, by infiltrations, succeeded to conquer the country. The latter consolidated their supremacy especially in the Simandou and the Guirila. Originating from the Mandé, they settled in Farin Kamaya near Siguiri, from where they were expelled by the Keita. Five half-brothers migrated westwards with their families:

- a) The first, Soumabalé Camara, went in the direction of Kouroussa and founded Baléa.
- b) The second, Firiguia, went to Faranah and founded Fria, a deformation of Firiguia.
- c) The third, Sonkoli Camara, followed Friguia to Faranah and founded Sonkoya, nowadays the border station between Hérémakono and Sambadougou - Sonkoya is the deformation of Sonkolia.
- d) The fourth settled west of Siguiri and became the ancestor of the Camara of this region.
- e) The fifth, Dioman Camara, came to Sianoh in the Mahou and he was prosperous there. His heir was Koïfing Camara who after his death, was survived by several sons among whom were Faring Camara and Foni-Kaman Camara, ancestor of the Camara of Beyla. Following a plot hatched by his brothers, Foni-kaman withdrew to Moussadou.

The Camara dynasty favored the successive settlements of the Kanté in Moussadou, the Kourouma in Diakolidou, the Béréte in Beyla, and the /3/ Donzo in Nionsomoridou.

So, the last to come are presented here to be the Donzo and the Kanté...

³⁷Unsure of what RA means (M.M., T.G.).

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 5

“TEXTS CONCERNING MUSADU” FROM THE SVEND E. HOLSOE COLLECTION

Svend E. Holsoe collected three oral traditions in 1965 and 1970 that deal with Musadu’s early history (Appendix 5.1-3). Professor Holsoe titled these oral traditions - “Texts concerning Musadu.” Holsoe conducted most of his research among the Vai people of Liberia in Vai and English, so these interviews that were conducted in Maniyakã are unique to his collection.

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 5.1

ALHAJI SEKU SALIFU, WITH BRIAMA SALIFU

Interviewed by: Svend Holsoe, with Mohammed Salifu (?), in Monrovia on July 12, 1965. Holsoe asked his questions in English, and his assistant tried to relate Holsoe’s questions in Konyakã.

Annotated by: Tim Geysbeek

Background: Alhaji Salifu stated that he came from Musadu (l. 796), and Geysbeek’s assistant Boakai Yamah said that Alhaji Salifu was a good Konyakã speaker. Salifu also knew Kpelle and some Liberian English. Holsoe’s assistant Mohammed, perhaps a Salifu himself (l. 814), did not communicate some of Holsoe’s questions to Seku Salifu accurately. Yamah suggested that Holsoe’s assistant may have not understood all of the questions, or that he may not have spoke Konyakã fluently.

Two other people contributed to Seku Salifu’s oral tradition. One was Holsoe’s

translator, and the other was Briama Salifu (l. 1025). Braima Salifu encouraged Seku to say good things about the Salifu (l. 584, 596), and was well versed in many of the stories that Seku Salifu told. Seku sometimes asked Briama for specific information, such as the names of people and places.

Transcript, transliteration, and translation: Seku and Braima Salifu's statements are translations from Maniyakā to English unless otherwise indicated. Both men knew Liberian English. Holsoe's assistant usually spoke Liberian English. Background noises such as children playing distorted parts of the interview, sometimes making it difficult to determine who was speaking.

Boakai Yama transcribed, transliterated, and translated this interview in Monrovia in September and October of 1992. Amara Cissé assisted Yamah. Cissé was helpful because he was from Musadu and spoke Konyakā, the same dialect as Alhaji Sefu. Yamah is from Lofa County and speaks a more western dialect of Maniyakā called Gboningā. Geysbeek read the transcript and translation with Yamah. He revised some of Yamah's original handwritten transcript so the final translation would read more smoothly and more accurately reflect what the speaker said. Geysbeek then revised the translation and made additional changes with Yamah on the first two typed drafts in Monrovia in September and October of 1993.

Geysbeek checked the translation as he listened to the tape in Michigan in May of 1995. While this translation is good enough to generally communicate what the speakers said, the translation is incomplete because a few of the interchanges that Salifu and members of the audience had with each other were not translated. This translation should thus be carefully checked and revised before it is published if at all possible.

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[GENEALOGIES]

[The Salifu Family]

Seku: Salifu, Mammadi Salifu.

His daughter's name is Fatumata Salifu.

She born twins.

One was named Lasana.

_____: Eh, èh, èh, èh (quieting children)

1 Salifu: The speakers also said Sefu and Sirleaf. Could the name be related to the root word 'to pray' (*sèli*)? Mammadi Salifu: The Prophet Muhammad. Muhammad's family and their descendants are commonly known as Sherif.

- 5 His child was, èh-èh-è-èh - Mammadi Salifu.
 His child was Zede Salifu.
 His child was Kaniwale Salifu.
 His child's name was Talata Salifu.
 Talata Salifu, his child's name was Musa Salifu.
- 10 Musa Salifu, his child's name was Alinju Salifu.
 Alinju, his child's name was Wènka, (pause) ancestor Wènka.
 Ancestor Wènka, he came from Misadu.
 Ancestor Talata Salifu, he came from Tumutu,
 He went to Misadu.
- 15 He came to Misadu.
 He met the *masa* in Misadu,
 His name was Fèlèngama.
 Fèlèngama gave his daughter to ancestor Moe Talata Salifu.
 Talata Salifu sired three sons from his wife who he had married.
- 20 He had three sons.
 One's name was Jala Salifu, Sefu Jala.
 The name of one of the three sons was Sefu Jala.
 The name of another son was Sefu Musa.
 The name of the other son was Sefu Usumana.
- 25 Those Salifu...
 Salifu Jala is our grandfather.
 Salifu Jala sired Salifu Usumana.
 Salifu Usman sired Salifu Alinju.
 Salifu Alinju, he sired Mammadi Sali -
- 30 He sired Mammadi.
 Nyangbè Mammadi - [He] sired Nyangbè Mammadi Salifu.
 Mammadi Siafa, he sired Siafa Mammadi.
 Siafa Mammadi, he sired Brahimu.
 He sired us.
- 35 Talata, èh-èh...
 Nyangbè Mammadi, he sired Ba-Mammadi Saò.
 Ba-Mammadi Salifu, he sired Vamunyè Salifu.
 That was the Vamunyè Salifu who went to Bakèdu.
 He stayed in Bakèdu.
- 40 The child that he sired there...

8 Talata: Also said Tèlèlè.
 10 Alinju (Anliju): From Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law Ali. Local variants are Vani and Vali (see Humblot 1919:398).
 13 Tumutu: Timbuktu, Mali.
 17 Fèlèngama: More commonly, Fèngama. This is Foningama.
 18 'his daughter': Mayāmoi, l. 357.
 21 Jala: = 'lion.'
 24 Usumana: = Usman, Ansumana and Ansu. Assistants said this name derives from Solomon (Sulaiman) (see Humblot 1919:398-399).
 32 Siafa Mammadi: Also Ba-Mammadi Saò (l. 85).

- The child who he sired,
 Eh - there was, èh - Kèmò Samuka.
 Vamunyè Sefu had fifty children, fifty.
 He sired Alifa.
- 45 He sired Boakai.
 He sired Kèmò Malike.
 All of his daughters - kè!
 At that time...
 I don't know most of their names.
- 50 Their ancestor Vamunyè went to Bakèdu.
 He went down to Kolodu.
 That is where your father was born.
 Ancestor Ba-Mammadi never came down.
 He sired you people there.
- 55 That is the way that it happened.
 That makes you a settler of Zomu.
 That is the way that it happened.
 That is the way. (spoke with a deep low voice for a few lines)
 Should I stop here,
- 60 Or should I tell you the rest,
 How your people came down?
Assistant: U-hum.
Seku: That is the way.
 Vafin Salifu, his father's name was Afaò.
 Your father is our grandfather.
Assistant: U-hum.
- 65 Seku: Do you hear?
 His grandfather's name is Vafin Salifu.
 Vafi Salifu, his son's name is Kaamòò - Kantòma Salifu.
 Kantòma Salifu, his son was ancestor Vafin.
 Do you hear?
Assistant: Hun.
- 70 Seku: They came down.
 When Va Kantòma came down,
 He sired Vafin Salifu in this land.
 The children of Vafin Salifu,
 The children who he sired...
- 75 His children were Kantòma and Bakali, Abdullahi, and the rest.
 I say that his grandfather came.
 It was Kantòma who went down.
 He went behind Gbo.

51 Kolodu: = Koodu, near Macenta and Kwadu.

53 Ba-Mammadi: = 'big (*ba*) Mammadi.'

54 'He born you people there': The speaker seemed to direct this statement to Holsoe's assistant.

67 Kantòma: Kan = abbreviation of *kaamòò* ('teacher'); *tòma* = 'namesake.'

- They stayed in Gbo.
- 80 He never went back up again.
The children that he had,
We all come from one father.
You, us, they, all of us...
The person we all come from,
- 85 His name is Nyangbè Mammadi Salifu.
He is the father of all of us.
Do you hear?
Nyangbè Mammadi Salifu's first son's name was Sia - Siakò Mammadi.
The next brother to follow was Ba-Mammadi.
- 90 Ba-Mammadi's children were Amara Sefu and Vamunyè Sefu.
You people are descendants of Vamunyè.
That is what makes you important.
It is because of Nyangbè Mammadi.
Assistant: [Question]
Seku: Eh-èh - Siafa Mammadi was the first son.
- 95 His sibling from the same mother...
His sibling from the same mother...
His sibling from the same mother was Vafin Salifu.
He born Kantòma Salifu. (children more prominent in the background)
Kantòma Salifu, he sired ancestor Vafin.
Assistant: [Question]
- 100 Seku: This is how the first group of Salifu came.
We have started talking about them one at time.
That was it. (short discussion with assistant, speaker and members of audience)
He is recording everything that I say.
Do you see?
- 105 After that, the Mammadi whose name we mentioned,

[Adam to Prophet Mohammed]

When we say that our grandfather is big Mammadi,
His father's name was Abdullahi.
Abdullah, his father's name was Basemòdu.
_____: His father's name was... Seku: Hassimu [Husain?]. (a bell rang eight times during the next five lines).

85 This is Siafa Mammadi or Ba-Mammadi Saò (l. 32, 36).
88 Siakò: = Siaka.
95 'sibling from the same mother' (*badèn*): = 'mother's (*ba*) child (*dèn*).'
106 'big Mammadi': = Prophet Muhammad. The identity and meaning of most of the names that follow may come from Arabic sources and need to be investigated further.
109 This begins a series of lines where an unidentified speaker said 'His father's name was,' and Seku responded with the person's name. This suggests that Seku narrated the epic in this way before.

- 110 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Munaki.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Kussadu.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Kalaju.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Malaka.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Kanbi.
 115 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Ruwande.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Kalibi.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Tia - Tiafèhali.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Maliki.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Malivu.
 120 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Kenamata.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Ruyèmata.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Ayaki.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Mulavi.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Muanleyu.
 125 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Alinju.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Konadi - Konadi.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Mokawani.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Nahoi - Nahoi.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Talilafo.
 130 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Jaalifu.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Tasihabu.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Sa - Sa - Sabitu.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Sunahayla.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Abrahama, *kaliluaham*.
 135 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Tahaybali.
Seku: He never mentioned his other father's name.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Salifu.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Gasumu.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Salamu.
 140 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Nuho.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Yèmati.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Mutamati, *silakin*.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Kanuka.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Ide Misa, *ayè kuju laheli*.
 145 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Bulajun.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Laheli.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Dalahi.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Nulosi.
 _____ : His father's name was... Seku: Seta.

117 Tiafèhali: Transcribed as Tahali.

130 Jaalifu: Transcribed as Juanlifu.

139 Salamu: Is this Solomon?

140 Nuho is a variant of Noah. Nahoi and Nulosi are similar, but the equivalence is less similar.

149 Seta: may be Adam's descendant Seth.

- 150 _____: His father's name was... Seku: Adama.
 They did not include the two generations who sired other children.
 We have listed our ancestors all the way to grandfather Adama.
 Our grandfather Adama is everyone's father.
 All black and white people came from him.
Assistant: He started from Adam and went to Muhammed. One sent... (difficult to hear)
Holsoe: I'd like to ask him a couple of questions, if I may.
Assistant: (unintelligible)
Holsoe: Um, how, um, has this history been passed on? Has - was it written down a long time ago, or, um, how did he obtain this information? Was it passed on from his father, or - what? I'd like to know a little more about the history of this history.
Assistant: (Maniyakā) The white man wants to know how you got this story. Was it written or what? Did you write this, or did your father give it to you? (Three or four interchanges between assistant and somebody else [Bliama?]).
- 155 Seku: My father wrote it.
Holsoe: His father wrote it. And what did his father write this from? From his memory, or from another document?
Assistant: From another document from his house. (He also said something about the old people keeping the document, but this part was very difficult to hear).
Holsoe: So then his father again had this document before him?
Assistant: He said that his father got the document before him.
Seku: Whoever was the head of the family during that period, They handed it over to him.
 Maybe after that person,
 The next person in line would connect his name.
- 160 That is what happened from our grandfather's time and has been passed down to us.

[TALATA SALIFU'S SONS]

I am explaining that now... (several sentences not translated)

Assistant: Everybody is supposed to be (unintelligible)... Okay, after this thing (unintelligible)... If they give to you, you take care of it, until sometime it reach to you, and then you (unintelligible)... leave and then (unintelligible)...

Holsoe: And this has been going on for a long time?

Assistant: (Short discussion with speaker).

Holsoe: You mentioned the names of many people, but we really don't know anything about those people. It is as if you get a picture of the skeleton of the person, but there is no meat on the person. By giving the names of

these people, you don't know whether these people were good people or bad people, whether they were religious men, whether they were warriors. We don't know what kind of people they are. Can he talk about any of these people?

Assistant: (Asked a long question in Kpelle that was difficult to hear).

Seku: The history about how we came to this land,
What our ancestors did before us....

Assistant: Talk about when they fought for the land.

Braima: Talk about how the land was defended,
If you know about that.

165 The person at your house will know how your [ancestors] defended the land.
That is what this is about.
That is what they are asking about.
Explain how they fought for the land.
Who are the people who fought for the land?

170 Talk about what you know.
Talk about your ancestors who fought for the land,
Even though they no longer live in the world today.
Talk until the talk is finished.
The people that you talked about,

175 What kind of work did they do?
Explain what you know about him.
Tell about the work that he did,
Including what he did in Misadu.
Those are the things you should speak about,

180 The way they defended the land,
How we became black people.
Talk about those things.
Show him those things.
Do you see?

185 Seku: Yes.
The three sons of ancestor Talata,
The activities they were involved in...
Braima: Didn't you already talk about that?
Seku: The first one's name was Sange Madi.
The second one was named after...

190 His name was Silemata.
He was named after him [Fèngama's son].
_____: The third one was also named after Fèngama's son, Fe Misa.
That was his name.

_____: The third. His name was Mammadi Fai (?).
195 Seku: Yes. His name was...
Fèngama's son, his name was Fanduma. (?)

188 Sange Mammadi: Sange = mother's name. Madi: = Mammadi.

He was named after him.
 _____: He was the last child, èh-èh, Sefu Jala. (short interchange for three lines)
 He became the warrior.
 200 He talked about fighting.
 If we talk about my namesake...
 Seku: Please excuse...

[FENGAMA IN MISADU]
 [Fèngama flees from Kilima]

The person who brought war was Fèngama.
 The Fèngama in this land...
 205 Fèngama came from the land of Kilima.
 Fèngama was an only child.
 He was the only son of his mother.
 His father was a warrior *masa*.
 The way that the story goes,
 210 But his brothers said, "Let's meet and see what he is going to be."
 He will shake the world.
 Let's find a way to stop him from prospering.
 Someone went and told his mother.
 His mother told him that he had to leave.
 215 [She said], "If you don't leave your brothers will kill you."
 Fèngama was a hunter.
 That is why Fèngama left.

[A cleric assists Fèngama]

After he left,
 He met a *moe* man.
 220 He asked that man to pray for him.
 [He said], "They have told me that God said that I will become a *masa*.
 Please check for me."
 He did some work and told him that he would become a *masa*.
 But he had to make a sacrifice.
 225 He placed a big red bowl upside-down over the head of a young bright woman.
 When the woman sat down,

199 'warrior' (*kèlè kè*): 'fighting/warring (*kèlè*) man (*kè*).'

205 Kilima: Kirina?

216 'hunter': *dunzo*.

219 *moe*: Muslim 'cleric,' sometimes also pronounced *moi* or *moli* in Maniyakā. The Maninka more often say *mori*.

225 'bright young woman' (*dèn muso gbè*): = 'bright/light skinned' (*gbè*) female (*muso*) child (*dèn*).⁹ Idea portrays a virgin, aged fifteen to twenty years old. The women placed the bowl upside-down over her head, covering her face. When she sat down, the bowl was big enough so that the edges of the bowl touched the ground and covered her.

- The [edges of the] red bowl touched the ground.
 [He said], “The thing that we talked about will happen.
 If you want that to happen,
 230 Get up and walk around the world.
 When you come across any *masa-masa* who is older than all his people,
 Put yourself in his care.
 That will be the place that God will give you.
 That is where the Fèngama business began.
 235 Do you hear?
Assistant: Yes.

[Fèngama fights for the Taawole chief in Misadu]

- Fèngama began to walk around the world - fulu-fulu!
 He went to old man Taawole in Misadu.
 He was the *masa*.
 He was older than everyone else at that time.
 240 He put himself in his care.
 He made him his father and put himself in his care.
 God did not make the child business right.
 Do you hear?
 He remained in his care.
 245 His [the Taawole man’s] war went to Kaagbè land.
 He [Fèngama] said, “Let me go.”
 He [Taawole] said, “You can not go.
 You the son of other people,
 You will die if you go fight.”
 250 He said, “Father, let me go.”
 He agreed.
 After he left,
 They say that they began to fight hard.
 If he had not been present they would have defeated them.
 255 This brought him a good name.
 God made him loved by the *masa*.

[Fèngama succeeds Taawole as chief of Misadu]

- After the war was over the chief said,
 “I have to bring him close to me.”
 He gave his daughter to him.
 260 He remained there with his group of warriors.

237 See l. 871-77. Did Salifu mistake Kromah for Taawole (Talawole) or Traoré in this instance (Ch. 5)?

245 Kaagbè: = Kalagba?

259 Fèngama married the *masa*’s daughter.

- He was victorious in war.
 As time went on he [Fèngama] told his fighters,
 “Let’s go capture the man [who was fighting the *masa*] and take him. (laughter in
 the background).
 He became the right-hand man of the chief, the old *masa*.
 265 He had strong bones in his body.
 He [the chief] called him.
 [He said], “I want to tell you something.
 I want to introduce you to the town people..
 The land...
 270 [I want you] to take care of the land.
 I have not told anyone.
 But tomorrow...
 None of my children have grown up yet.
 When any of my children grow up,
 275 Will you give them the chieftaincy?
 When any of my children grow up,
 Will you agree to pass the chieftaincy on them?”
 The old man made a very strong promise.
 He [Fèngama] said, “I hear.”
 280 He gathered the whole town together.
 He had reached the age of marriage.
 He said, “May God’s will be your will.”
 Since this young man has come,
 He has fought for this land.
 285 Let’s allow him to take charge of the fighting.”
 Everyone agreed to it.
 That is how it remained.
 The old man died.

[Fèngama makes a sacrifice to the Sware to have sons]

- After the old man died,
 290 It remained with God.
 He blessed him [Fèngama] with many daughters.

264 *masa (mansa)*: Can be translated ‘chief,’ ‘ruler’ or ‘leader.’ Here, and in other cases, the speaker said *masa-kè* (‘chief man’).

265 ‘He had strong bones in his body’: = ‘he had become strong and mature.’

270 ‘[I want you] to take care of the land’: Taawole wanted Fèngama to become the *mansa* of Musadu after he died, and then to pass the chieftaincy on to his (Taawole’s) sons after they grew up (see l. 275, 307).

275 ‘chieftaincy’ (*masaya*): = ‘the situation of [being] (*ya*) chief (*masa*).’

278 ‘a very strong promise’: He almost made an oath with Fèngama.

279 ‘hear’: This is a common expression of consent, ‘I agree.’

281 ‘age of marriage’: or, an ‘old person’ (l. 305).

- God blessed him with many daughters.
 He was blessed with many daughters.
 Old man Jabateh...
- 295 Some *yaka* came and stood at the entrance of his quarter:
 Praising him, praising him, praising him, praising him.
 They said, "What do you want God to do for you again?"
 You have already shaken your left hand.
 You have already shaken your right hand.
- 300 You have already shaken both of your feet.
 You have already touched your left hand.
 You have already shaken both of your feet.
 What are you worried about?"
 He said, "*Yaka*, I am worried about something.
- 305 I am an old person.
 I have come from a far away land.
 God has made me a chief.
 I have no sons.
 I only have daughters.
- 310 He rose and went to the ancestor of the Sware.
 He said [to Fèngama], "I have come so you will give me something.
 I am not asking you to give anything to me for God's sake,
 But I want you to give me something for my mouth's sake.
 He [Fèngama] said, "I can't do that."
- 315 He [Fèngama] said, "No."
 Layi Sayon.
 His wife said, "Do it."
 He gave it to him.
 He said, "I can make it possible for you to get a new thing here."
- 320 After Fèngama gave it,
 He said, "I know a *moe* [Sware].
 When he blesses a dead tree, it will grow.
 When he curses a living tree,
 It will die.
- 325 If you are serious about having children,
 Divide everything that you have as a *masa* and give one of your daughters,
 Then he will be able to bless you so you can have more sons.
 Fèngama said, "Okay."

292 God gave Fèngama many daughters and the chieftaincy of Musadu.

295 *yaka*: Derives from *jaka*, which is equivalent to *jèli* or 'bard.'

298-302 The bard was telling Fèngama that he (Fèngama) had already prospered, and that his power was unlimited

310 'he': Layi Sayon did not go and meet Sware until later (l. 321).

312-13 The bard wanted Fèngama to reward him for what he would say, not because of what he (the bard) would do to honor God.

313 'for my mouth's sake:' Probably a reference to his *jèli*'s (Jabateh's) speech.

317 Fèngama's wife (a Taawole?), speaking to Fèngama.

- Eh, that is what he did.
 330 He divided half of his property.
 He gave his beautiful daughter to him.
 He took one of his good and beautiful daughters,
 And they went and met Alhaji Sware.
 They went to his home.
 335 He had come from Makka.
 When he first went to the town,
 We went and met him there.
 He had lived for three hundred years.
 He went and met him and gave him the report.
 340 He blessed the Joma [Fèngama], èh - and said,
 “*Saalaho*.”
 “*Yaka, Yaka*, God has blessed you more than anyone else.
 Now he said...
 He had about three hundred students and a big *yaka*.
 345 The person who was called to ask the *yaka* to come...
 [They asked] the Dukuwe’s ancestor to come,
 And the Sware [as well] - the ancestor of the Sware.
 They took them now and Fèngama’s own child.
 His teacher was a Sware and a Dukule.
 350 They blessed Fèngama.
 After blessing Fèngama, he said,
 “We will settle with those *moe* and those other [people].
 They will not go again.”
 He and the *moe* man got up in the hot sun,
 355 And he gave them some bananas.
 He said he should give some [banana seeds] to them so he could leave and grow
 them at his teacher’s place.
 He [Fèngama] said, “Sit down and we will bring some to you some.”
 Then they then pointed their finger at a woman,
 The Sware and the Dukule...
 360 The reason why he [Fèngama] got this land was because of them.
 Do you hear?

330 ‘half of his property’: a reference to the *wakèlèn* sacrifice.

335 Makka: = Mecca.

344 ‘He had about three hundred students’: Sware had strong Muslim credentials: He was a powerful alhaji from Mecca who had his own Qur’anic school and *jèlilu*. This is Al-Hajj Salim Sware, the founder of the Suwarian tradition who might have lived in the fifteenth century (Sanneh 1989; see Ch. 7).

349-62 Others claim that this banana story explains how the town of Nionsamoridu was founded (Ch. 7).

351 ‘he said’: Fèngama speaking.

352 Fèngama did not want the *mori* who had blessed him to leave.

355 ‘He said he:’ Or, Sware and/or Dukule said Fèngama.

358 ‘Then they pointed their finger at a woman’: The *moe* selected a woman to marry after he realized he may have to wait a long time for the banana seed.

So Fèngama stayed there.

[THE SALIFU IN ORAL TRADITION]
[Talata Salifu called to destroy Zo Misa's *saafèlè*]

- The man who was the old-old citizen there was Zo Misa Kòma.
They are the land owners of Misadu.
365 He owned the *kòma*.
He owned *basi* and he owned *ju*.
He [Zo Misa] said, "Should a stranger [Fèngama] come from the outside and
shake our land?"
He used his *kooti* and spoiled things.
His *saafè* began to swallow things,
370 To swallow things.
It swallowed children.
It beat sheep.
It caused a lot of trouble in the town.
The Talata ancestor there was our own ancestor.
375 He married his daughter Mayāmoi.
They said, "We heard about a Sefu *moe*."
They say he is coming.
They say he has reached Jalakala.
They sent someone [Sayon] to call him [Talata] from Tumutu.
380 [They said,] "Let's go call him.
Let's pray to God about what this man is doing. (something being pounded)
Those Sayon there...
Kaamòò Sayon...
He went and said,
385 "You Kaamòò Sela Kanè, let me call him."
He [Kanè] was the big *masa*.
[Sayon said,] "I am worried for this reason.
If your house stays like this...
That is the reason why I am going there.

363 Zo Misa Kòma: Or, Zo Musa the Kòma. See l. 606-610 on town ownership and sorcery.
Salifu called Zo Musa a 'big warrior *masa*' (l. 842).

364 'land owners': *duuti*.

365 'owned the *kòma*' (*kòma ti*): The Kòma initiation association is the southern version of the
Manding Komo in Mali (McNaughton 1979:17).

368 '*kooti*': Also known as *kòlòti*. A powerful medicine that is associated with great evil which
often leads to murder.

369 *saafè*: = sheep horn that contained medicine. A *saafè* is always identified with Zo Musa in
this context.

375 Mayāmoi: = Magnambouy (Lelong 1949:24-25, App. 4.3) (see l. 18,431-439).

385 Kanè: Or, Kènda. Talata put his three sons in Kanè's care (l. 497). In this account, Tale Kanè
was supposedly the first imam and the first Muslim who went to Musadu before Talata Salifu (l. 903-904).

388 'If your house stays like this': = 'If your town remains under Zo Musa and gets destroyed.'

- 390 That is what I am concerned about.
 I am worrying because you sent me to the *moe*.”
 They sent him [Sayon] to call him [Talata].
 He went and met ancestor Talata.
 When he met ancestor Talata,
 395 He said, “I have come to see you.”
 I am worried about something at my home.
 He [Zo Misa] has killed all the important people.
 The *masa* [Kanè] said that he should send a messenger.
 [He said,] “I am asking you to come,
 400 To pray to God and ask for our ancestor’s blessing.
 This trouble has made my town fall on me.”
 Ancestor Talata said to him, “Let’s go to Misadu.

[The founding of Masaka]

- You should bring one deer.
 When he went to Misadu he caught one deer.
 405 They tied a talisman on its neck.
 They put it on its neck and followed the deer to where the deer laid down.
 [The *moe* said,] “Today or tomorrow, this is where the town should be built.”
 By God’s will...
 They and the *kaamòò* did not see each other at that time.
 410 He came and told the chief.
 They looked for the deer,
 And put the talisman on its neck.
 They left the deer.
 They freed it.
 415 They stayed behind and followed it.
 They lost the deer,
 But then found it again.
 They chased the deer into the night.
 They went to where the deer was,
 420 Where it was laying down.
 They lifted it up.
 They went to the low hill called Masaka.
 More people came and settled.
 That was the name.

392-402 Kanè gave Sayon (Sanoe) permission to go to Timbuktu and summon Talata to challenge Zo Musa.

403 ‘deer’ (*suòn*): Described by assistants as a small deer that is predominately white, with some black and brown.

421 ‘They lifted it up’: Suggests that the deer had died.

422 Masaka: = ‘on (*ka*) the chief (*masa*).’

- 425 After that happened,
 After they sent for Talata Salifu,
 [They said,] "The *moe* has come."
 [They said,] "The *moe* that you called has come."
 Kaamòò Talata Salifu's grandchild has come.
- 430 [He said], "I agree [to do the work]."
 [They said,] "If you want the *moe* to come down [to work],
 Give him a woman."
 Take Mayāmoi to be circumcised.
 She has reached the age of shame.
- 435 She is still sitting with her brother in the house.
 You should give her to the Sefu *moe* man.
 She was given to grandfather Talata Sefu.
 After she was given to grandfather Talata Sefu,
 The first child that she had was Sefu Jala.
- 440 They named him after Fèngama's first son.
 He said...
 Sefu's family was...
 His name was Fanyala.
 They called him Sefu Yala.
- 445 Of the second child who she born,
 He said, "This is my big brother's namesake.
 His name is Musa."
 His name was Fèn Musa.
 Fèngama's son whose name was Fèn Misa...
- 450 They named him Musa.
 His name was Musa.
 The first [third] person's name was Asumana.
 That Sefu...
 The three brothers from one mother...
- 455 When Fèngama's war started,
 He was the first son who fought.
 They all went to fight.

430 'I agree': literally, 'My hand is under it.'

433 'circumcision' (*kènè*): *Kènè* is sometimes associated with female initiation organizations such as the Sande.

434 'She has reached the age of shame': She was old enough that she would become ashamed if she was exposed to the public naked. Mayāmoi was older than most girls who were circumcised, but she could not get married until this was done.

435 'She is still sitting with her brother in the house': she was still mainly confined to her yard.

446 'big brother': Referring to his own big brother, or to Fèngama.

452 'first': Asumana was Talata's third son, not his first, according to l. 443-445.

455 For a more detailed version of this war against Zo Musa, see l. 602ff.

456 'first son': Presumably Jala or 'big Talata,' not Dòòmani the younger brother.

- They conspired against...
 As they were...
- 460 Our grandfather [Fèn Jala] became the *masa* warrior.
 That is how that happened.
 Since it is like this, [they said,] “We three brothers should not all be warriors.
 The Qur’an should not leave our grandfather -
 Our father’s house.”
- 465 He said “Yes” when they said that.
 You, Musa, go up and do that.
 Go farm.
 Asumana, take care of your children.
 Take care of your children.
- 470 You should be the *moe* among us.
 That made Musa angry.
 [He said], “Why? I am next to you,
 And you took my younger brother and made him the *moe*.
 He is the one who will become educated.”
- 475 He became angry and went to the land of Kunukuò.
 They are the Sefu of Kunukuò.
 They are the descendants of grandfather Musa.
 [They said to] Asumana who became educated, “You have become our *moe*.”
 They are in Kassakòlò and are the educated ones that you see.
- 480 They are our *moe*.
 Those are the three brothers.
 Our ancestor was a warrior.
 While that was happening,
 Ancestor Talata Salifu...
- 485 They continued to fight.
 Some of his children who were born went up.
 Some went up because...
 If you are talking,
 Do not say the one that is not true.
- 490 They were fighting.
 He went to his older brother.
 He went to his older brother now,
 To grandfather Talata Salifu.
 He only had three sons.

462 ‘We three brothers should not all be warriors.’ The three brothers evidently all went to fight, and Fèn Jala (Fanyala) was later chosen to be the warrior. Musa was the farmer and Ansu was the *mori*.

463 ‘Qur’an’ (*lèlè*): = the Qur’an that has been handwritten on separate sheets of paper (see l. 514).

475 Kunukuò: Konokòlò.

485 ‘They continued to fight’: Who? Fènjala the warrior? Other Sefu? This not a reference to Zo Musa (l. 610).

491 ‘He.’ Who? Dòòmani went to Jala?

495 They became many.

[Talata Salifu puts his sons in the care of the Kanè]

The Sayon were divided.
Eh, the nephew of the Sayon, the Kènda people...
[Talata said,] “Here are my three sons.
I have put them in God’s care,
500 In the Messenger’s care,
And in your care.
Tomorrow, on Judgment Day,
You should put my three sons back into my hand.
The rest of the family [who remains behind],
505 Before I sin against them...”
That is the business that is between the Kènda and us.
That is that.
Braima: Was our ancestor a white man?
Seku: Hun?
Braima: Ancestor Talata?
Seku: Yes, ancestor Talata was a white man.
510 He was a white man.
That is how those things happened.
Ancestor Talata then went.
We went and died at Gbèlèlakanò.
His Qur’an - he left his Qur’an in Konya.

[Jala Salifu becomes *masa*]

515 His son who remained there...
The one who became the leader now was Sefu Jala.
He became the leader.
Ancestor Sefu Jala who became *masa*...
That Sefu Jala now,
520 That Sefu Jala,
The child he sired was Asumana Sefu.
Asumana Sefu sired Alinju.
Alinju Sefu sired Nyangbè Mammadi.
We are [descendants of] Nyangbè Mammadi...

497 Kènda: Or, the Kanè (see l. 385, 862, 906).

498 Seku Salifu later gave his three children to the Kanè (l. 906).

498-504 Meaning, I am putting my sons in your care. If you do not take good care of them on earth, I will take them back on Judgment Day.

504 Talata took care of part of his family.

509 ‘white man’ (*falagbè*): ‘white (*gbè*) skin (*fala*).’

514 ‘His Qur’an (*jali/jalani*), he left his Qur’an (*Korana*): *Jali* is another name for ‘Qur’an.’

517 ‘leader’ (*kundi*): ‘head (*kun*) owner (*di/ti*).’

525 Nyangbè Mammadi's son was my grandfather.
His son is your grandfather.

[The Salifu defend the land]

Braima: Who among our ancestors really fought for the land?

Seku: That person...

From ancestor Safoba - èh, that person...

The person I am referring to from ancestor Safoba...

530 He came here nine times.

Nine times.

Do you hear?

Braima: The person who defended the land...

Seku: They were ancestor Sako Mammadi's people,

And ancestor Boakai Mammadi's people,

535 And ancestor Bamoe Sefu's people.

Braima: Who among all of them fought hardest for the land?

Seku: Ancestor Bamoe Sefu... (short interchange)

Ancestor Sakò Mammadi,

Ancestor Moe Mammadi,

Ancestor Vamunyè Salifu,

540 They fought for the land.

That is the way that it happened.

You have all.

Braima: No. Explain some more.

Tell us more about what happened.

Seku: Okay.

During *masa* Fèngama's time,

545 God wanted to make it possible... (short discussion)

Braima: This old man told me about the business of the Sefu,

About the business of the Sefu,

How they settled here,

How they fought for the land.

550 Seku: Ancestor Bamu Sefu,

Ancestor Vamunyan Salifu,

Ancestor Amara Salifu,

If you are doing now...

Braima: If you want to explain that,

555 If you want those things to be recorded,

Tell him to record it.

Assistant: He is recording.

526 'your grandfather': Seku Salifu was probably speaking to Holsoe's assistant.

528-29 The word Safoba is unclear.

530 'he': Sumaworo Kante, the *mansa* of Soso who conquered the Manden after Sunjata Keita went into exile. 'nine times': symbolizes power.

- Braima: He is recording everything.
Do you hear?
- Seku: Those are the ones who fought for the land.
- 560 They born us in Beru.
Our fathers and grandfathers fought for the land until their hand shook the land.
They captured the land.
That is the way that it happened.
The people who fought for the land,
- 565 They fought with *moe* business.
They protected the chief.
- Braima: He is finished.
- Holsoe: I am at a disadvantage, in that I don't understand what he said. I need to hear precisely, but, èh - I have a question which is not on the Sirleaf family, but maybe he can...
- [The Salifu own the land]
- Braima: Why is this talk being recorded?
- Question: (Holsoe asked a question that was not audible on the tape. Holsoe's assistant interpreted the question to Seku in Kpelle, but did not ask a clear question).
- Seku: What I have said about the land that I talked about...
Eh, I did not understand what he asked.
- Assistant: That was the question that he asked. What language did they speak?
- Holsoe: He did not hear.
- Seku: Let me talk.
- 570 The things that you are to talk about,
How our ancestors fought for the land...
The way they fought.
How ancestor Sefu Jala...
When they came to this land...
- 575 They way they fought up until the time that they got this land.
They were dressed for war.
- Braima: The Sefu, the Sefu...
- Braima and Seku: Ancestor Talata and ancestor Sefu Jala fought for the land.
- Braima: Those who fought,
- 580 And those who never fought.
Talk, even if they did not fight for the land.

560 Beru: Perhaps Beirut, Lebanon. Many Lebanese businessmen lived in Liberia, which might explain Salifu's familiarity with Beirut.

565 '*moe* business': They fought with *lisimu* (talismen), *nasi* or divination.

566 Is this a reference to the Salifu fighting for Fèngama? See l. 544. The audience can be heard discussing the interview in the background.

568 'Why is this talk being recorded?': Braima assumes that Holsoe is conducting research that will later be written, and wants to make sure that Salifu understand this.

Talk about it so he can know.
 [Talk about] our old ancestors so that their names can really stay with them.
 [Talk about] what our ancestors did before,
 585 So that their names will be written in their book.
 They have recorded more about the Vai.
 They have made recordings about some Vai people.
 They followed them and got their own grandfather's talk.
 They want to write history with it.
 590 Do you hear?
 If your ancestor's names are mentioned,
 Even if you don't mention all,
 If you know about some,
 This can be the reason why some things are explained,
 595 So they can make it known to everyone,
 To tell everyone that your people owned this land,
 Why this land is ours.
 We know about it,
 But it is better in the old man's mouth.
 600 Since that is the case,
 Explain why this land was ours at that time.
Seku: Misadu was part of this land.
 This land went as far as Misadu.
 It was our ancestor who first saw Misadu.
 605 His name was Salifu Jala.
 Those were the people who owned the town.
 It was that man,
 The man [who started] the *zo* business.
Braima: Yes. *Zo Misa Kòma*.
 610 Seku: *Zo Misa Kòma* was the man they fought.
 They drove him out of the land,
 To make Misadu our land at that time.
 It is the same land coming down to here.
 This land and Misadu were one at that time.

586 'They have recorded more about the Vai': The main focus of Holsoe's research was the Vai. This interview primarily dealt with the Maniyaka.

589 'history': Used the English word.

595 In these lines, Salifu seems to be claiming that the Salifu own Musadu, Konya-Mani and all of the land that to the coast that they conquered.

599 'It is better in the old man's mouth': The old man can explain the history better than us.

603 'this land': seems to be generally referring to Liberia.

614 'This land and Misadu were one at that time': This is probably a reference to the popular belief that Benjamin Anderson formalized a treaty with the chief of Musadu in 1868 or 1874, and that this treaty made Musadu part of Liberia (see l. 615-616). Although there is no evidence that such treaty was made, Liberians claimed as much when the French started their incursion into the area in the 1890s (see Fairhead et. al. 2003: ch. 2).

- 615 Even now the American's hand mark is there.
That is where they ended.
Do you understand?
That is this Misadu,
From that time to now.
- 620 As that happened now,
That land,
That land was for our ancestor.
Braima: After saying that...
You know the white man.
- 625 Your [ancestors] fought for the land.
Even if they [the white people] come here [to interview],
That is their work.
What I will say now,
Tell him to record it.
- 630 Say it so they can record it.
Assistant: So, he can tell you now. Because all what they talking is too much
now. He can't talk all.
Holsoe: Of course.
Assistant: That our grandfather then,
Who make the first fight in this country here,
That is [what] the old man talked to you [about].
Holsoe: Siaka Jala?
Assistant: Sefu Jala.
- 635 This Sefu Jala, his family...
This Talata here,
He was a white man.
He came to Misadu.
This Talata came to Misadu.
- 640 At that time, [the] so-so old people,
They not know nothing.
Then he come there.
When he stayed there,
One chief [Fèngama] who was there,
- 645 He take his daughter from the woman there...
From Talata.
This Talata, three children there, three boy.
First one, they called him Sefu Jala.
That this Sefu Jala now,
- 650 That him fight war like hell.

615 'the American's hand mark': There is a piece of cement about 12" in diameter on the northern outskirts of Musadu that is imbedded with the impression of a hand. Later interviews in Musadu suggest that the French placed this cement along the road (e.g., Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30). This would have happened at least twenty years after Benjamin Anderson visited Musadu for the second time in 1874.

624 'white man': *tubabu*.

He fight.
 This white man [Talata] who coming now,
 He get this pekin.
 He came.
 655 He say this here, "As soon I come here in this black country,
 I don't want I must stay here.
 But this my pekin them,
 I can not carry them to home again,
 Because my pekin them, they white.
 660 This people will die.
 I can't carry them."
 Then he leave the town to his pekin Sefu Jala.
 This Sefu Jala,
 He tried,
 665 He fight.
 He come around all this country now.
 He fight.
 He fight [all] over...
 In that time,
 670 From in this place to go Misadu,
 All that one country.
 We didn't have a boundary,
 To say this is Guinea,
 Or that is...
 675 That was - no, no.
 That was all one country.
 The people came and fought with the people them coming down here.
 They stayed behind the people and reached this Suakoko right here.
 _____: (English): Their heart was cold now.
 _____: (unintelligible).
 680 They catch all the people and come way to this Suakoko here.
Holsoe (English): To where?
 _____: (English): Suakoko. Right here near to... near Gbarnga, right here.
 They get the people and come there.
Holsoe: You mean, to Suakoko?
 _____: (English): Yes.
Holsoe: U-hun, u-hun.
 _____: (English): They killed the people and came to Suakoko here.

657 pekin: Liberian English term that generally refers to a boy, but is sometimes used to include girls.

661 Talata did not want to take his children back home because they were fighters. He knew that they would die.

662 Where was Fèngama? In Taawole's care? See l. 875-876.

679 'Their heart was cold now': They were angry when they started, but their hearts cooled down or became satisfied by the time they reached Suakoko in Liberia.

680 'They catch all the people:' An apparent reference to slavery.

- Before they returned back and go sit down and all the country now,
 685 They get it [the country] now,
 Then they...
 Sefu Jala's pekin here and his brother them,
 They coming down and then go up,
 And some of them go all around in this country.
 690 That the way they get this country.
 _____: (English): With grandfather them,
 They go to the Vai country now.
 We all, they... Sefu Jala.
 They name all this [these people], Salifu Jala.
Holsoe: A-han, a-han, a-han.
 695 Assistant: (English): Some people who came down here,
 They change with the Vai.
 Some of them change with the Kona.
 Some people to over there,
 They go see some people there.
 700 They change with Kona.
 Some people to over there go see people there.
 That is the way the people come.
Holsoe: Did the old man explain how they are related to Sefu Jala?
Assistant: I don't understand.
Seku: Our ancestor...
 Our ancestor...
 705 And Sefu Jala, ah - Talata,
 Were from the same people.
 They were brothers from the same root.
 Talata Sefu came down first.
 His younger brother also came down after him.
 710 When he reached Mau land,
 He settled there.
 That is the way that it happened.
 His name, his name was Talata Dòòmani,
 Talata Dòòmani.
 715 Braima (English): All two [were named] Talata, but this one is big.
 This one the small one.
Assistant: The way they call him Sefu Jala.
 They are not suppose to say "Pa Sefu Jala." (bell rings once)
 Eh-èh, Talata big...
 720 The Talata who come to Misadu,

696-697: Vai and Kona: An apparent reference to the Maniyaka who migrated from Konya-Mani (Musadu) and later became Vai and Kono (see Massing 1985:35-38; Ch. 8).

713 Talata Dòòmani: = 'small (*ni*) Talata.'

718 'They are not supposed to say "Pa Sefu Jala"': It is improper to call a son "Pa," especially in a case like this where Jala's father was so important.

- He stay there.
 Then his small brother here take his brother to Misadu now.
 All the country [was] for him.
 Then the small brother got us and follow him.
- 725 When he stay there...
 (Maniyakā) What child did he born?
Seku: The child who was born, his small brother, his small brother...
 The child who was born, his small brother, his small brother...
 His family line included people like Fèn Binyè.
 That was his family.
- 730 This man's father,
 They are the descendants of Fèn Binyè.
Assistant: His brother come now to his big brother.
 Then he stay there too,
 Then they take a woman and give her to the same brother again,
- 735 His part of the family again, to Bopolo now... Fèn Binyè.
 You understand?
 Dòòmani Talata, Dòòmani Talata.
 Now, his brother be Salifu Jala.
 That his part small brother from one family, from one pa.

[Samori and the Salifu]

- Holsoe: En, this... The question that I have now is not on the Sèlifu family, but it might be something that, especially, the gentleman who is old has heard, which is about, um... I am wondering what he knows about Samori.
 Samori, the warrior who was in Guinea. (chimes begin to play loudly in the background)
- Assistant: (English): Guinea. Samori?
- Holsoe: Samori. Does he know anything about this man? About where he came from? The wars he fought? The people who he lived with? Those people who came in contact with him?
- Assistant: (Maniyakā) The time of Samori. Did our ancestors [that we have been talking about] live before him?
- 740 Seku: Yes. Our ancestors came first.
 Our ancestors came first.
 When Samori was fighting,
 It was during ancestor Mamake Mammadi's time,
 My grandfather's father.
- 745 No.
 Ancestor Talata Sefu.
 That was him.
 He said, "Jaa."

734 'a woman': Mayāmoi?

748 "Jaa": Is Jaa a contraction of the older brother's first name "Jala?"

- He came from Tumutu and went to Misadu.
 750 He sired Wenka.
 His child was, ah...
 His child was Alinju.
 Alinju's son was Musa.
 Musa's son was Talata Sefu, Dòòmani.
 755 Do you hear me?
 There was an oath between them.
 _____: [Two people talking at the same time, unintelligible... several sentences].
Holsoe: His father should remember it... His grandfather.
Braima (?): His grandfather.
 Mamake Mammadi was the one who was his *moe*.
 He [Samori] had many *moe*.
 760 Our ancestors left and came here.
 Who was his *moe* man that day?
 Ancestor Mamake Mammadi.
Seku: He was the one who was doing his [Samori's] *mori* work.
 He had many *moe*.
 765 He knew many *moe*.
 But there was a good relationship between him and our ancestor.
Braima: Yes.
Seku: Our ancestor didn't start it [for Samori].
 He got up and continued on.
 Grandfather was one of his *mori*.
 770 That was our own grandfather.
 This man had many *mori*.
Assistant: His pa's grand-pa, he and Samori then,
 They were together.
 This other man were together [in] all [the] country. (discussion in the background)
 775 They sit down and grow up together...
 All of that country...
 This Samori,
 He go to we grand-pa and see one of their daughter.
 He [she] was [a] fine woman.
 780 Then he say, "Anyhow, I want to take [her] by force,
 Take that pekin [woman] by force from them.
 Then all [the] man get up again,
 Go take it from him by force and bring it [her]...
 This man part of country different...

[The speaker, Seku Salifu]

Holsoe: I think his grandfather was living in Guinea. Was it now today Guinea?
 Where was his grandfather living?

- 785 Assistant: Misadu. Misadu. Misadu.
Holsoe: And his father? Where was his father living?
Assistant: His pa?
Braima: Guinea. Misadu. Misadu.
Assistant: Now-now-now?
Holsoe: A-han.
Assistant: That time when I was in Guinea...
Holsoe: U-hun.
- 790 Assistant: That time, we take all that country from here,
And Misadu and this was one country.
This place from here to Misadu was one country.
Holsoe: Of course.
Assistant: A-han...
Holsoe: I know that. I know that.
- 795 Assistant: His pa then... His pa, his grandpa,
Eh, some of them coming here.
Some of them to Misadu.
That is how, a, è, we...
Some people are here, now-now-now.
Some people to Misadu.
Holsoe: Of course, of course. [The] family is divided already. Different parts...
Where was he born?
Assistant: (Maniyakā) Where were you born?
Seku: Me. I was born in Misadu.
Holsoe: U-hun, u-hun. How old does he think he is? How old is he?
Assistant: (Maniyakā) How many years old are you now?
Seku: Me?
I do now know the amount.
You know during our days,
- 800 The time we were born,
They were not doing that.
They were not writing then.
That came during the white man's day.
That came during the white man's day.
Braima (English): He say he not remember now. Before that time and this time is
not too good.
Holsoe: Of course. Maybe he can remember, ah, something that happened from
which we know the date. (three to four way discussion)
- 805 Braima (English): When this people move...
This people and this people are so-so (unintelligible)...
It look like they born here,
Before their family here...
Then one pa go all around down there.
- 810 Eh - two pa go,
All of them fight for us.
Then all people to Liberia now,

- When they want to come,
They come here one time.
- 815 Then they become Liberian man.
Seku: : This Mammadi who is standing up,
He is in the third group.
I am in the third group.
Assistant: (English): He say that three [of them were] born [from] one pa [Talata].
- 820 You [speaking to assistant] tell him [Holsoe].
(Braima [Assistant]): His grandfather, he have...
His father told him [that] he had more training.
He used to teach him old-old things.
He asked his father.
- 825 He said, "Father, when [did] they born me?"
He said, "Hey son, if you know it,
You could know it and write it."
His father said, "Aye, you boy,
The time they born you.
- 830 War was - all over.
People used to go up and down in the whole world."
He himself,
He gave [asked] the question to his father.
The old man people never had time for that kind of thing... (laughter)
Holsoe: Of course. This is the problem. The time or the date - people don't
remember them, and this is why I was talking to the other place, when he
tell the name.

[ANCIENT TOWNS]
[Kaaba, Misadu and Kankan]

- Holsoe: Is Misadu older than Kankan?
- 835 Seku: Misadu is older than Kankan.
Braima (English): They [are] all older.
Holsoe: Kankan is a newer city. It is the new one. It is not as old as Misadu?
Braima: Yes.
Seku: The town that is called Kaaba is older than Misadu.
Assistant: (English): That [to] him [is] old[er] than Misadu. That [is the] only one
town.
Holsoe: The Kaba family comes from Kankan, a-na ['isn't that'] so?
Assistant: The Kaba people...
Braima: Come to Misadu, ah - Kankan.
Some of them went there.

816 'This Mammadi': Holsoe's assistant?

821-834 Bliama spoke Maniyakā. What follows in these lines is Holsoe's line-by-line translation.

834 Holsoe's statement concluded Side A of the tape.

[The founding of Misadu]

- 840 _____ : But people from Kaaba, they came [went to] Kankan, but not from Kankan to come [to] Misadu.
Holsoe: Who were the people who began, who started Misadu? What people were they?
Assistant: What kind of people were in Misadu?
Braima: At that time, those who started Misadu were big warrior *masa*. Big warrior *masa*.
Seku: When you talk, say their names.
Braima: Make the ones that you know clear.
Seku: The Kaba people and the Kpelle people.
Braima (English): There were the Buse and the Kpelle people.
Holsoe: They were the ones that started it? Oh
845 _____ : Yes.
Assistant: This country was one.
Holsoe: Of course.

[THE COMING OF ISLAM TO MISADU]

- Seku: From the time that Misadu was formed until today,
The imams that have led the prayers there,
The eighty-seventh imam is there now.
850 Braima and Assistant (English): Since they build the Misadu church,
They change the imam.
The imam, how do they call it [him], the preaching head-man?
Holsoe: Or the priest?
Assistant: He is the one they call Isa.
Holsoe: Are you talking about the *malam* now? Are you talking about the...
855 Braima (English): The *malam*. That time they be [were] Muslim.
Assistant: There were eighty-seven persons.
Holsoe: Eighty-seven persons have been imams since then?
Assistant (English): Yes.
Holsoe: Ah, the date that he gave me, was 718 years ago?
Assistant: But 718 years ago,
At that time there was no...
Holsoe: There was no Muslim there?
860 Assistant: Yes.
Holsoe: What time... When did the first imam come to Misadu?
Braima: When did the first imam go to Misadu?
Seku: The first-first imam, his name was Tale Kanè.

841 'big warrior *masa*:' an apparent reference to Zo Musa (see l. 363,606-610).

844 Buse: Loma.

853 Isa: = Jesus Christ.

861 Tale: Also sounds like Fale.

- Holsoe: A-han, Kanè. That's a Mandingo name?
Braima: Yes.
Holsoe: Um, how long ago was that? They know the time.
Assistant: (asked the question in Maniyakã)
Seku: From the time Islam came to Misadu was a long time. (three people talking)
 That is the time that Islam started.
 865 Islam started at that time.
 As he settled right away,
 There were Muslims.
 The Muslims came because we said there were Loma there.
 The Loma left, they left.
 870 There were Muslims there.
 Even the Taawole old man referred to,
 He was a Muslim.
 He went and met the Loma there.
 They were all coming together.
 875 The Taawole old man was the big *masa*.
 Fèngama put himself into his care.
 He said, "Hoo..."
Assistant: At that time, different people they...
 There was one *moe* man there...
 880 They got up and his family they go [went and] sat down.
 Before them then they talk to the people easy.
 They talk with the people coming to him.
 One-by-one-by-one the people agreed to pray God.
 From that time to this time Muslim here.
Holsoe: But this is the same thing that the Sèlifu family did when they came to Cape Mount. They came as *mori* people to the Vai people.
Assistant (English): A-han. (Repeated what Holsoe said to the group)
 885 Braima: At that time that those Sefu people came...
Seku? (English): [It] was the same Sefu that make [the] Vai Muslim.
 Any Vai person that you see, it is our grandfather that make all Muslim.
 That was the same time.
 That was the same time.
 890 No, their descendants,
 Their old-old descendants,
 Their descendants came down.
 They themselves never came down.
 They themselves never came down.
 895 Assistant: This 718 years who go?
 No. That time, the Sefu people never came from Misadu.
 That time passed before,

868 Loma: The speaker said "Tòma."

- Until the town open small,
Then they come here.
- 900 [Their] grandpa them come from Misadu.
They settle to Misadu.
Before all the family them coming [to Misadu] there now before they start
Misadu with Muslim.
- Holsoe: But now the Kanè people came to Misadu before the Sèlifu people.
_____: They [the Kanè] were the first [Muslims].
_____: That is how it happened.
- 905 Braima (English): My grandpa [said] come they meet the Kanè people in town.
(very hard to decipher. Lots of a-han etc. till the end of this episode).
He take his three children [and] give [them] to the Kanè man['s] people.
Salifu Jala be[came] [a] man.
Now, nobody [was] fighting with him, but give to that other man.
He [Salifu Jala] stay with those Kanè people.
- 910 He get big power...

906 The Kanè Muslims were in Musadu first. The Salifu came later, and Talata entrusted his sons to the Kanè before he left (see l. 466-493).

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 5.2

SEKU SAIYON

Interviewed by: Svend E. Holsoe, on Bushrod Island in Monrovia, Liberia, on July 20, 1970; tape # 28/2/2 and 28/2/1 in the Svend E. Holsoe Collection at the Archives of Traditional Music at Indiana University.

Annotated by: Svend E. Holsoe. Geysbeek's annotations are in brackets.

Concurrent translation by: Mamadi Kroma, from Kpelle to English.

Speaker's Background: A Kpelle-Mandingo, from Kamata in Bopolu Chiefdom.

Background of translation: This document is a work-in-progress that Svend Holsoe gave to Tim Geysbeek on August 31, 1997. Holsoe completed his first draft on November 28, 1981. He returned to this tradition after Geysbeek and Kamara published their summary of the Musadu traditions in 1991. Holsoe printed a few drafts during the Fall of 1991, but did not pursue his work any further. His last draft is dated October 12, 1991. The original drafts are in the Svend E. Holsoe collection.

This text and the one that follows was retyped in the same format as Holsoe's, with the exception that Geysbeek added line numbers, inserted quotation marks in dialogues, deleted some spaces between lines, and identified the different sections of the text with brackets. Holsoe's orthography has been changed in three cases: /O/ to /ò/, /N/ to /ŋ/, and /E/ to /è/. Most of Holsoe's footnotes were already typed. Some notes are written in at the bottom of the page or in the text. These are easy to decipher, and are joined with those that are already typed. A few minor points have been added to the footnotes, and are enclosed in brackets. This translation needs to be checked.

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[THE TALAWATA SEFU GENEALOGY]

Saiyon: This [is] the beginning of the Talawata business.

Tawala['s] name was Musa Tawe.

His father['s] name was Momo Tawe.

Momo Tawe['s] father's name [was] Mòliba Tawe.

- 5 The way how they manage to come down here, it started from the Musadu business.

That [is] what his father told him, he, Seku [Saiyon].

What his teacher told him, who was old man Soko [Sirleaf].

[ZO MUSA IN MUSADU]

[Zo Musa and the hosts of Musadu]

1 Talawata: The speaker also said Tawala and Tawe. This is a Kpelle variant of Talata.

2 Note that this later name will be Mohammed Tawe.

7 Soko Sirleaf was the Liberian government recognized Paramount Chief of the Bopolu Chiefdom in western Liberia from 1925 to 1951 when he died. He had originally come to Liberia, with his father Filibeyan, as a member of the Sofa warriors who invaded from Guinea in 1891-92 (Beyan Kroma, July 29, 1965 and Seku Sayon, June 2, 1970) [see Holsoe 1976-77].

- Musadu, three men start Musadu business.
 The first name[d] Zo Musa, second, Kamò Sane, the third, Temalugenè.
 10 They were the one who joined together and built a town.

[Zo Musa's sheep horns]

- After they built Musadu, then Zo Musa, he was a big Zo man.
 He had two sheep horns.
 These two horns, when he was ready to go in the bush, he just take it and lay it on
 his door.
 Those sheep horn will be jumping and falling on top one another.
 15 So that's what he was involved in.

[FONINGAMA AND THE STRANGERS FIGHT ZO MUSA]
 [Fòningama and the strangers of Musadu]

The first man who was [a] stranger that came to their grandfather, Kamò Sane, he
 was Fòningama.
 The second stranger was Filibo Dòle.
 The third was Filalai Kanè.

[Zo Musa's sheep horn kills the stranger's livestock]

- After those strangers came, they brought many livestock.
 20 When Zo Musa[s'] sheep horn[s] jump[ed] and hit against any of those
 livestock that these strangers brought with them, the sheep or cow will
 die.

[Kamò Sane summons Seku Tawalata from Tuba to make medicine]

And after they built Musadu, they call Tawala's grandfather to come and make
 the medicine for the town.
 Since Zo Musa's sheep horn is just killing these stranger[s'] livestock, so this the

8 The sacred city of Konya and the reputed place of origin for many Manding in Liberia, at 8°46'N - 8°37'W (*Guinea Gazetteer* 1965:115).

9 His patronym is Kroma. In the traditions, this is Zo Musa's master and the person who helped Fòningama in Musadu (Geysbeek/Kamara 1991:66). [Kamò Sane is Sani Sayon (Sanoe) in another oral tradition. Temalungenè is Tumaningèmè].

11 This term can be used in a variety of ways to refer to an elder, but there is usually also the implication that the individual has some special spiritual medical powers.

12 ['Sheep horns': or *saafèlu* in Maniyakā].

18 [Filalai Kanè: Fila Layi Kanè in other oral traditions].

21 Tawala was the founder of a town in the current Bopolu Chiefdom of Lofa County, Liberia. His name is pronounced "Tawele" later in the account. The last phrase is a bit confusing as it is clear further on that Tawele was in fact Zo Musa's Muslim diviner and thus working for Zo Musa and not for the town as a whole.

- stranger[s] didn't like.
 So they told Kamò Sane...
 They told him, "We come to you, but what all we brought with us, they are dying,
 so we will be leaving."
 He ask them to stay.
 25 He say, "I will ask someone else to come and make medicine for this town."
 So, Kamò Sane left and went to Touba, Mau Tuba.
 Somebody came from Seheidu and came to Musadu... and came to Tuba.
 They went and called Seku Tawalata.
 So, Seku Tawalata came.

[Seku Talawata's talisman]

- 30 When he came, he made his *lizimò* where they made the medicine for the town.
 He went and struck the rock.
 What is under this rock, let it come out.
 Three small birds came from under the rock.
 He took his *lazimò* and put it under where the three birds came from.
 35 Then, he said, "After all this, another thing that is bothering us here is [that] Zo
 Musa's two sheep horn is killing cows and goats.
 He made another *lazimò*.
 He hand it under the frog's neck.

[Seku Tawalata's talisman disarms Zo Musa's sheep horn]

- The frog... after Zo Musa had put his sheep horn down again and go in the bush,
 the frog just went right to the rock where they put the *lazimò* under.
 After the small horn began to jump again, it jump until it reached by the frog, and
 the frog swallowed it.
 40 That's what my teacher told me.
 Then Zo Musa came.

[ZO MUSA TRAVELS TO ZOTA]

[Zo Musa prepares to leave Musadu]

After Zo Musa came and look for his sheep horn, he didn't see it.
 Then he told his Mole man, Vani Tawe, he say, "Let's move from here."
 When they were leaving Musadu, the rock that is in the middle of the town, they

26 The town of Tuba (Touba) in the Mau region and part of the present-day Touba "District" of western Ivory Coast, southwest from Musadu (c. 8°17'N - 7°43'W).

27 ? [It appears as though the speaker's last statement is what he meant, that the person went from Seheidu to Tuba and then to Musadu. Seheidu may be Sahel (l. 78)].

28 The name Tawalata seems to be a confusion with the name of the town in the Bopolu Chiefdom and should probably be "Tawele," see later in this account.

30 A magical charm made by Muslim diviners.

43 'his Mole man': His Muslim man. "Tawe": Farther on the name is pronounced "Tawele."

split the rock and took one piece of it. The cotton tree that there, they cut one branch of it.

[Zo Musa founds Zota, Guinea]

- 45 He and his Mole man came with those things, and they came and make [made] the town call[ed] Zota.

Question: Zota in Guinea?

Answer: Uhm-um, Zota in Guinea.

Question: That [is] Kpelle country or...?

Answer: That Kpelle.

Zo Musa was thinking that this Mole man was coming to leave soon.

The Mole man stayed there for four years.

- 50 Zo Musa was..., after they built the new town, which they call Zota, they stay there for four years.

The Mole man didn't go.

He say, "I came along with this Mole man, but he don't want to go."

If I stayed here, the same thing he did for me over there, he will do it to me here."

[Zo Musa goes to Zota, Liberia]

That was how he left from Zota in Guinea and established another Zota here in Liberia.

- 55 That's the place Vani Tawele born Musa Tawele.

Then Musa Tawele, he born Vani Tawele again.

Vani Tawele, he the one who born this Musa.

Zo Musa['s] son, they call Vani.

They together plan war and was crossing the river with it. After they crossed on this side...

Question: What river?

- 60 Answer: [Den]. The St. Paul River.

After they crossed from Zota, they cross the St. Paul River with their warriors.

46 Tim Geysbeek identifies this Zoeta with the town "Zoeta/Zogotta" presumably located on the Diani [St. Paul's] river in what is today the N'Zerekore district in the Republic of Guinea. Zogotta's location is 7°56'N - 9°08'W.

53 The implication here is that the diviner (Mole man) had worked against Zo Musa in Musadu, which is not clear from the testimony itself.

54 The reference here is obviously to that of the modern Kpelle speaking area of Zota Clan in the Zota Chiefdom, located in Zota District of northern Bong County of central Liberia. There is no specific town by the name of the Zota in the region of Liberia today.

55 It is not clear from the context of the testimony whether the place referred to is the "old" Zoeta in Guinea or the "new" Zoeta in Liberia, but it would seem to be the former.

56 This genealogy is quite different from the one given at the beginning of the account. [This may be a different Talawole lineage. The first was Seku who defeated Zo Musa's talisman. The second was Zo Musa's *mori* and his descendants. The speaker could have confused the two].

57 That is, the first Vani Tawele.

59 That is, Vani and Musa Tawele.

- If you see Kpelle come down this way, that's how they came.
 They carried their war to Bokomu.
 Zo Musa's son, Vani, went back.
- 65 Musa Tawele say, he couldn't go back, so he plan to stay.
 The Kpelle people that was there, they didn't know how to call his name, so they
 just call him Tawala.
 That's the beginning of the Tawala business.
 That's what his [Seku's] father told him...

[MUSADU'S HERITAGE IN KONYA AND LIBERIA]

- Question: You speak about Musadu - - about the founding of Musadu.
Answer: What is Musadu, an important town?
 Why is it that everybody talks about Musadu?
 They can't talk about any other town in Guinea.
 They all talk about Musadu.
 This [is] the reason.
- 70 The reason why anybody tell you the history, or people who all living around here
 tell you anything about history, they will involve four towns.
 They will put Musadu name - is there.
 Majority [of] their parent[s] came from Musadu, all of them, their grandfathers,
 their fathers.
- Question: They town of Beyla, which is not far from Musadugu today, that town
 existed in the last century, in the last hundred years? It was not an
 important town like it is today? That time it was a small town or big town?
Answer: He say, when they say Musadu - - he say, in Musadu, there were three
 strangers and three people who came there.
 After they built that Musadu, before these other towns, Beyla, Nièla, Beyla,
 Dukulela.

63 That is, in the Bokomu and Bopolu Chiefdoms which are in western Liberia and on the west side of the St. Paul's river.

64 That is to Zoeta, either in Liberia or Guinea, but probably the latter.

67 That is, the founding of the town of Tawalata, which, along with other villages that developed from it, eventually became designated as a clan of the Bopolu Chiefdom by the Liberian government.

68 Not literally his own father, but his honorific father, Soko Sirleaf, as indicated in an earlier footnote.

72 Beyla: Located at 8°41'N - 8°38'W (*Guinea Gazetteer* 1965:15). This is the present-day capital of Beyla province in the Republic of Guinea.

73 (question) 'strangers': That is, the residents.

74 Person (1968b:226, fn. 103) indicates that the villages of Nyala, Turéla, Dyakolidugu and Beyla - all Muslim towns, recognized the hegemony of the Dore [Dòle] of Musadu. According to Geysbeek's map of "Important Towns in the Konyan," "Nyèla" was located southwest of Musadu, "Dyakolidugu/Jo-kudu" south of Musadu, and Beyla more or less south of the Dyakolidugu (Geysbeek/Kamara 1991:67-69). The location of these towns are as follows: Nyala (Nièla, Niella): 8°44'N - 8°40'W (*Guinea Gazetteer* 1965:120); Turela (Tourella): 8°45'N - 8°42'W (*Guinea Gazetteer* 1965:166); Dukulela (Doukourella): 8°46'N - 8°40'W (*Guinea Gazetteer* 1965:42), and Diakolidougou (8°42'N - 8°39'W) (*Guinea Gazetteer* 1965:33). [The Konyaka call these the *Konya so luulu* or the 'five towns of

- 75 He say, forget about the other town, but - -
He say, those four towns, other four towns, they came from there, and they began there to...

[QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS]

Question: Was there another town not too far from Musadu named Madina? Not Madina that's in Arabia, but Madina to the Mandingo country, which was a big town also.

Answer: Maybe it was there, but according to what they told him, no one talk that one.

Question: The people who came to Musadu, to found Musadu, from what part did they come from?

Answer: What they told him they came from Mau.
They came from Sahel, say, but they were bright-skinned people.

Question: Sahel, that's a region, or that's a town?

80 Answer: That's a town where they came from.

He say, the town is also named after them.

Question: Where is Tuba? He called the name Tuba, where is Tuba, that Kamò Sane went to?

Answer: Tuba?

Mau Tuba.

Question: Mau Tuba? Mau is a name of a town or area?

Answer: He say, like the way what - - call the name again.

Question: Tuba.

Reply: He say, when they say Tuba, it's like the way they say Bopolu, and somebody else says - - Mau Tuba - - if somebody else asks what town in Bopolu, he say Madina.

Question: Bopolu, Madina?

85 Answer: Yes.

Question: Mau, that's a Mandingo name?

Answer: Yes.

Konya'].

75 The fifth town is traditionally given as Jakudu (Dyakolidugu), and does not indicate Tulela (Ford 1990:52).

76 [The four other towns were supposedly founded by people who came from Musadu].

76 (following question) "Madina:" The town of Madina is mentioned in Benjamin Anderson's 1868 trip to Musadu as being three day's walk northeast from Musadu (Anderson 1870:95).

77 See earlier footnote.

80 Clearly the meaning of the name is not clearly understood by Seku Saiyon.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPENDIX 5.3

JIGBÈ KAMARA

Interviewed by: Svend E. Holsoe, at Camp Johnson road in Monrovia, Liberia, in July 1970

Annotated by: Svend E. Holsoe. Geysbeek's annotations are in brackets.

Concurrent translation by: Jigbè Kamara's son, from Maniyakã to Liberian English

Speaker's Background: little is known

Background of the translation: Svend Holsoe gave a copy of this document to Tim Geysbeek on August 31, 1997. Holsoe might have periodically worked on this for several years, as in the case of the Seku Saiyon interview (Appendix 5.2). Holsoe updated this oral tradition in 1991 after Geysbeek and Djobba Kamara published their overview of the Musadu traditions. In 1991, Geysbeek also sent Holsoe a draft of Vase Kamara's oral narrative. Holsoe's references to lines in the Vase Kamara narrative are five less than what appeared in the version that was eventually published in 1994 because Geysbeek included five additional lines for the publication. The original drafts are in the Svend E. Holsoe collection at Indiana University (28/1/1).

Note about the text: The same as for Seku Saiyon (Appendix 5.2).

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[INTRODUCTION]

Jigbè Kamara: He says, I must tell you, this [sic., is] a talk that he does not past everybody.

What he knows that is what he is going to talk.

As you said that as they had told you in Mecca about him that cause you to come to him.

Most of the people from that area always come around him.

- 5 So, since you have come upon that, no man can tell you that I the only man who knows past everybody...

[MALI ORAL TRADITION]
[Mani Kamara Sumalo fights Mali]

Our grandparents came from Mali.

Man, what they mean by it?

The people who were the first chiefs, that was Mani Kamara Sumalo.

That particular man, he the one who call that particular name Mali.

- 10 Mali means 'hippopotamus.'

He grabbed the hippopotamus and slapped it two times.

He slapped it nine times.

[Dantuma Kamara captures Sumalo]

So their grandfather came.

When his grandfather came, he came and caught Mano Sumalò.

- 15 His grandfather came down.

1 That is, his testimony is not necessarily better than anyone elses.

3 In the Mecca Chiefdom, today in Bomi County, western Liberia.

6 That is, the ancient empire of Sundiata Keita.

8 See Geysbeek/Kamara 1994:63, line 98. (On the original Kamara, see Geysbeek/Kamara 1994:

53). Is Mani Kamara Sumalo is Sumaworo ? [Yes].

14 Is this a reference to the defeat of Sumawolo by Sundiata? [Yes].

15 This is a reference to Foningama's parents, from here to line 26.

His name was Dantuma.

[Dantuma Kamara marries Kaba Dama]

That Dantuma went back and looked for Kaba Dama.

That was a woman.

Her part of mother, her name was Suluŋ Koroma.

- 20 That Suluŋ Kromah, her [sic., she] used to cook 100 pans of rice a day and bring them [to] one place.

Her only daughter, she was the one they called Kaba Dama.

That is the one that Dantuma married.

[Kaba Dama's six sons]

She born six male children.

Those six boy child[ren], the three went against their father.

- 25 The three of them went against their father.

So their father swear, so since you did that, your work is only fishing now.

You will not do nothing for yourself again except fishing.

So the people go all around fishing, go around to Mali and that area and all.

That the fisher people there.

[THE KAMARA FROM MALI TO MUSADU]

[Faingama travels in a boat to Diemou]

- 30 So it went on.

A man came they call Kama.

They went in a canoe.

They got in a canoe, and this canoe is called *korokoro*, canoe.

That's what they got in it.

- 35 So they went it up.

It came from Diemou.

16 Is this is a reference to Fantuma-ille (Person 1968[b]:270,445 & 2267)? But see Geysbeek/Kamara [1994], page [60], line [16], whose name corresponds to Sumaka.

16-22 [Kaba Dama was a Kromah. The story about Suluŋ Kromah cooking 100 pans of rice seems to come from the account about Fakoli Kromah's wife Kèlèya Konkon who cooked 100 dishes (e.g., Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:42)].

17 Kamara calls her Makuladama Soba (Geysbeek/Kamara 1994:60, line 18).

19 Kamara (line 17) says that Sumaka married a Kromah (Geysbeek/Kamara 1994:60).

23 See: Vase Kamara original text, p. 13.

31 This is a reference to Faingama (l. 119). It would seem that Faingama is the same as Person's Fere-n Kama (Person 1968[b]:270).

36 This town is located in the Worodugu region (Kamara: p. 12- 13) to the northeast of Musadu. This agrees with Kamara, line 54 (Geysbeek/Kamara 1994:61).

[The people of Diemou capture Faingama]

When they got to Diemou, they caught him for forty days.
He was not a slave, and he was not free for himself.

[Faingama flees to Musadu]

The people said, they must kill him, but God so help[ed] him, he got free from it.
40 So he walked and came to Musadu.

[FAINGAMA DEFEATS ZO MUSA IN MUSADU]

[Faingama's companions in Musadu]

When he came, the person what he met in Musadu, that was Zo Musa.
He asked one Mamalakome man, he say, I want to stay here by my father.
So the three people came, the four people that came along,
Faingama, Tumingame, Filimò Dòle and Naramisa.
45 That are the four people that came to Musadu.

[Faingama forces Zo Musa to leave Musadu]

They came and met Zo Musa.
They went against Zo Musa in the line of juju.
Zo Musa escaped from the town.

[FAINGAMA'S SACRIFICE]

[Faingama becomes the chief of Musadu]

While they were there, their grandfather became a chief in that time.
50 He ruled them.
God helped all the people that they were against, they all died, left only one man.

[Flansan sacrificed]

So they asked the chief, they said, "Well[,] were you sitting down?
Your only sons, which one [do] you prefer?"

40 Also often pronounced Misadu, usually written as Musadugu, i.e. 'Musa's Town'; that is, Zo Musa.

41 The name is interpreted to mean that his name is Musa and that he was a man with magical or medicinal powers, a *zo*. Kamara gives his name as Zo Musa Kòma (Geysbeek/Kamara 1994:69, line 305).

42 Mamadi Kroma?

44 See Geysbeek/Kamara (1991:66). Tumaningèmè (Kromah) according to the tradition, was Zo Musa's master, and he helped Foningama in Musadu.

44 Filimò Dòle: References to him in Geysbeek/Kamara (1991:65) under Filimamudola, Fillimo Totte (Dole), Flaymò Dole, Kalamòò Flaymo Dole. [Garamisa is Ngana-Musa Kromah, Ch. 4-5].

49 'their grandfather': Faingama (l. 149).

- So he say, "What I want is the country.
 55 I don't need no child."
 So they dug a helleva hole for the only last son that remained.
 His name was Flansan.
Audience member: He [Jigbè Kamara] say, you [Holsoe] must put that name
 down there.
Jigbè Kamara: His name was Flansan.
 60 That Flansan, so that was the only one that remained of the boys.
 There was no other child, only he alone for the old man.

[Faingama's children]

- So, he prayed to God again.
 He born another more child again, a boy child.
 His name was Kònsala.
 65 That Kònsala there, say, when man, you want to force yourself to bluff,
 and God didn't give you anything to bluff.
 So anyway, he tried, tried, he married a woman.
 They born one boy child, they call Jala.
 They born another more child again, they call him Wusu.
 They born another girl child, they call Ngowe.
 70 So he was satisfied.
 So he swim around, dancing.

[Faingama enters Ngowe into a joint male-female initiation camp]

- Since that happened, I got to try hard for my children them and send them in the
 gregre bush.
 So he sent her to the gregre bush.
 They were hundred boys and hundred girls and put them all in one kitchen.
 75 They make four months there.

55 See line 233. It seems as though Faingama killed his last son Flansan so he could get the country (see l. 54, 233). [Kabine Kromah similarly claimed that he killed seven or nine of his sons for the same reason (App. 7.29; App. 7.34).

58 The narrator.

61 That is, Faingama.

66 Or, Faingama.

72 The institution to which children are sent to undergo the rite of passage transferring them from children to adults.

73 That is, Ngowe.

74 An enclosure near the town. [This is similar to the account that Humphrey Fisher recorded which claimed that Foningama got into trouble for sacrificing boys and girls together (1971:ix-x). In doing so, Faingama broke a law].

[The initiates get sores]

Within that four months time, none of them...,
within that four months everyone of them got sores.
No one could get better.

[Faingama told to make a 'sacrifice of one thousand']

- So, when that happened, so they told him, "Leave the chief, you did bad."
He said, "Who told you so?"
80 So Kalamusa said, "I said that."
So Walamusa [sic.?] went and told him, you did bad.
You got to make sacrifice."
He said, "How much you think I must make with sacrifice?"
He said, "you got to collect some things together to make to a hundred."
85 So he stood up there.
Filimò Dòle, he said, he said "No, he can't do it."
He said, "You got to bring 500."
So he did that sacrifice.
Konivi said, "That can't happen."
90 He said, "It got to be one thousand."
So that is the one thousand sacrifice which was made by Faingama.

[Faingama gives the sacrifice to Ga Musa]

- When he did that, he was satisfied.
He said, "This sacrifice, what will I do with it?"
He said, "You want to harm me."
95 He said, "What do you think?"
He said, "Well, I know a Muslim man.
If I see a Muslim man, and you got to work and give it to him, he will pray for
you.
Whatsoever, if you [see] a dry tree, you talk to him, he will do something for
you."
So he took it and gave it to Ga Musa.
100 He said, "Go and give it to the Muslim man what you want to give to."

[Ga Musa gives the sacrifice to Lai Swale in Jala]

So he took that and went as far as to Jala.

86 This is one of the people who came with Faingama to Musadu.

91 [This is the *wakèlèn salaka* or 'sacrifice of one thousand' spoken of so much in the Musadu traditions, Ch. 7].

101 Faingama's son or place? See Person (1968[b]:343, 3rd line from the bottom).

He went and give it to a man called Lai Swale.

[Lai Swale gives the sacrifice to the citizens]

So Lai Swale went, he put the whole country before everyone together.

He said, "Everybody, all you big people, it reached to you all."

105 He said, "That one chief make the sacrifice and sent it to me."

He say, "They gave me the sacrifice.

They say, it for me."

He said, "They bring the sacrifice to me, but I am not the only one who live in the country.

It not for me.

110 I only ruling."

He say, "Everybody who [is] a citizen of this country, you take it.

After they met the sacrifice, he said, "You go and thank the people."

Within that country, each man's first son, [they] put them together and send them.

Bukele Beyan, that where he came from.

115 Filimon Sila, that where he came from.

When they had put those people together, within that same group, there was Silifu Tata in front.

They all came to his grandfather.

[Faingama makes clerics wait for banana seeds]

When they got there, so [sic.] his grandfather brought plenty ripe banana.

He said, "Each one of you people should have this so you will be satisfied."

120 While they were eating those banana[s], he said, "What is this?"

He said, "This man bad in this country, that mean, bad like a tree.

He say, "You can take the seed and go plant it there."

Dukule, Sirleaf, Sila, Jalamo, all those groups, Swale.

So those people there now, those people they went together.

125 They sit down.

They said, we will wait for this seed there to come so we can go plant it.

So the seed, they waiting for it.

They haven't received it yet.

From that time to this present time, it is in the care of their grandfather there.

130 None of them go anywhere.

102 See Geysbeek/Kamara (1991:66). [Lai Swale is Vase Kamala's Valaye Swaray or the historical Al-Hajj Salim Sware, Ch. 7].

105 'one chief': Faingama.

114 [Bukele Beyan: Or, Beyan Duluke in other accounts, Ch. 7].

116 That is, Sirleaf Tata, a member of the Sherif family who claims descent from Mohammed. [Sirleaf Tata, or Talata Sherif].

117 That is, Faingama.

[SILIFU TATA AND HIS DESCENDANTS IN GUINEA AND LIBERIA]

[Silifu Tata and Ngowo Kamara's three sons]

The only girl child that is in the group, Silifu Tata took that one.

They born one boy child, that the one they call Silifu Jala.

They born another one again.

That one [is] called Musa.

135 The third one again, they all Laii.

That was their last child.

[Silifu Tata departs and leaves his sons with Mòlikòlò]

Silifu Tata, he way, he going to the country.

He going see.

He left the three persons with his grandfather.

They call him Mòlikòlò.

[Silifu Tata dies in Bilasana]

140 Since he left the people there, the time Silifu Tata went there, that the same day he died.

The town where he died, they call Bilasana.

That is in the center of the whole world.

Question: The town is in what part of the country?

Answer: In Guinea, that town in Guinea.

[The Sirleaf in Liberia: I]

After that, that was done.

145 So their grandfather left and went there and said, "We want [to] carry the dead body."

They say, "No."

After they carry it, their children them, remained in this country.

If you see any Sirleaf in this country, he grandfather['s] daughter, that her son there.

[QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS]

[Faingama Kamara of Musadu]

131 That is Ngowo, Faingama's daughter.

138 His three sons, Jala, Musa and Laii.

139 Presumably a reference to Moikolo, the *mori* who had helped to destroy Zo Musa's talisman (Geysbeek/Kamara 1991:66).

140 His sons.

141 Bilassana in the Worodugu area: 8°58'N - 8°14'W (*Guinea Gazetteer* 1965:15).

145 That is, Faingama.

148 That is, Faingama's daughter Ngowe.

Question: The grandfather, what was his name?

Answer: Faingama.

150 It means Kamara.

That where the Kamara name arrive from.

After that - -

Question: He was the chief in Musadu?

Answer: Yes, he was chief in Musadu.

[The four strangers of Musadu]

Question: Filimò Dòle was just living in the town?

Answer: They were just with the grandfather.

155 All the people there, they were just with his grandfather Faingama.

[The Sirleaf of Liberia: II]

After that, when that happened now, then their grandfather['s] children, that the one, some of them came this way.

Those are the Sirleafs in this place here.

[The Saiyèra Kamara]

Saiyèra, that is why the people call them Fanyèrasi.

That is the Kamara, that the Saiyèra part of people there.

Question: The what?

160 Answer: Saiyèra, that's what they call Fanyèrasi.

That is part of the Jòmani.

That's the one, when you hear them say, "Jòmani," they mean Mandingo, they mean Kamara.

The same with Faingama - Kamara.

That [is] the people that came this way.

[Sawusu Kamara travels to Soso]

165 Sawusu, Sawusu, he left from there and went.

Sawusu, he left from there and went as far as this part there, so that part of Soso.

That why you see the Soso people around that area there, and they Soso people.

158 Compare "Fandiarasi," about which Yves Person says, "Among their [the Kamara's] numerous lines, the Fandiarasi were centered on the upper Dyon" (Person 1968[b]:107). See also Person (1975:2267) where he states that they are a lineage of the Kamara of Konya.

159 Probably a lineage segment, see Person (1968[b]:263, fn. 49) for a similar example.

161 In French, written Diomandé (Person 1975:2264). See Geysbeek's comments regarding the name.

165 Same name as before? Same as Ga Musa, _____ (word indistinguishable). Wola Musa?

166 The people living in northwestern Guinea and northern Sierra Leone.

[The Sirleaf of Liberia: III]

So God make these part of people there.

When they did all those works, so they came to this way now [Liberia].

- 170 The place where they at now, they coming to [the] Liberian side now.
He said, you want to know about them coming into Liberia, that the one he
coming to know.

[ZO MUSA'S TRAVELS]
[Zo Musa driven from Musadu]

Question: Zo Musa who was living in Musadu, who was he?

Answer: He was a scientist.

Question: Sante [sic. scientist], that's a - - er - - Mandingo?

Answer: Yes, Mandingo.

Question: The people drove him from there?

[Zo Musa travels to Foma]

Answer: Yes, they drove him, so he left.

- 175 When he came, he hide himself until he came all the way to Foma.
So when the people saw him there, they were happy to receive him.
They went to work, they kill one cow for him as a present.
So he was there for that time, then he left and came down.

[Zo Musa's escape from Musadu]

When after he escape, the people, they tried hard, they caught him.

- 180 When they caught him, they kill his whole family, only he alone [survived].

[Zo Musa helps Zota's chief's daughter deliver her child]

When he pass to that place, he met a chief.

Question: What place? Pass to what place?

Answer: To Foma, [no] he came and met one chief to Zota.

Oh, so when he got there, he saw this..., the chief that he met in that town to Zo
Town.

Say, this man here daughter was in pain.

171 Jigbè Kamara, the narrator.

171 (answer): He was able to manipulate traditional medicines and serve as a diviner.

175 The town of Foma (8°29'N - 8°50'W) is located southwest of Beyla on the "Ntoffa" river, north west of Boola (see map in F. Bouet [1911], "Les Tomas," p. 198) (*Guinea Gazetteer* 1965:52). According to Benjamin Anderson, who passed through the town in 1868, this was the Mandingo name for the town. The Loma name was Vukkah (Anderson 1870:85).

182 (answer): See the earlier footnote concerning the location of this town.

- Question: What's the name of the chief?
 Gbolo[s'] daughter was in pain, you know, about delivering.
- 185 She was in pain.
 So at the time he arrived in town, so he came and sat [at the] side [of] the house.
 They say, "He spoil [the] law."
 So the chief [say], "Your [you all] leave the man."
 So, what he did?
- 190 They say, we had your daughter in the house in pain for four days now.
 She can't deliver.
 So he left his bed.
 He went [to the] side [of] the road, cut some leaf and brought it.
 When he brought it, he say, "Chief, can you permit me, let me enter in this girl['s]
 room?"
- 195 They chiefs say, "Enter."
 So, your [you all] bring small little *kabar*.
Question: *Kabar*?
Answer: *Kabar*, yes.
 So he rubbed the leaf.
 He took it.
- 200 He gave to the girl, say, "Drink it."
 So after when the girl drank, then he carry his hand down like this.
 He didn't even left the room, the woman deliver.
 When that happened, say, the old man say, "Well"..., the chief say, "Well, thank
 you."
 "You welcome."

[Zo Musa marries in Zota]

- 205 He say, "Well," he say, "Chief, I want to go."
 The chief say, "You can't go."
 He say, "You got to spend the night here."
 The daughter that he got fine past all the other daughters, he call the girl.
 He say, "Well, this your husband."
- 210 So right away they prepare [a] house for them.
 They put everything there that they need.
 So the man say, "Well, this your wife, and this is your house."

[Zo Musa's three sons]

- The women stay with that man until they born three children, so-so boys.
 Those two [sic.] children that they born, they born, any scientist in the country that
 they can go together, they beat their time.
- 215 So, within that time now, all those children there now, all the scientists now, they

197 Calabash?

214 That is, surpass them.

beat their time now.

[Zo Musa founds Zota]

So anyway, the people what they call, so he went to work, and he built a town.

This town now, so he name it Zota.

So that say "Zota."

When he left from Zota, he came from Fokwèle.

220 So within that Zo town there now, all those people there who is a scientist there,
that his family.

So God so happened too, he stay right in that country there and died there.

It was Zota people.

[Zo Musa travels to Zota, Liberia]

Zo Musa, he left from Zota and came and sat down over there.

Question: Zota is in what country?

Answer: Is in Liberia.

225 That have two Zo town, one in Guinea and one in Liberia.

Question: What kind of people living there?

Answer: Kpelle, the one that in Liberia now.

[Foma]

Question: Fòma, where is Goama [sic., Fòma]?

Answer: That town is in Guinea.

It's in the boundary, half of the town is Kpelle and half of it is Mandingo.

Question: It's in the Guinea country, Guinea today?

Answer: Guinea, yeah.

[FLANSAN'S EXECUTION]

Question: All right, he called another name, man's name named Flansan. What
[is] his family name? Where [is] he from?

230 Answer: Flansan, his family is the Kamara family.

Cause he the one, he the one born this Zo Musa, but the way this, I mean this,
yeah, this, this Zo - -

Question: Zo Musa?

219 A town in Panta Chiefdom in the current Panta-Kpai District of Bong County. This discussion is clearly a telescoping of history and ties the tradition to the Zota area of Zota district, also in Bong county, thus making the connection with an area in Liberia.

227 From Benjamin Anderson's description in 1868 the town was on the boundary between the Loma and Mandingo country, not Kpelle (Anderson 1870:85).

231 [Zo Musa: The speaker made a mistake and should have said Faingama. See lines 56-57 for an early account of this story].

Answer: Yes, the scientist man.
So they went to work and killed him because of this man.
Question: They killed Flansan?

Answer: Yeah, that how it happened.

[MANDING INITIATION]

- Question: You say that they sent children to the gregre bush. What you mean by gregre bush?
- 235 Answer: Gregre bush sometime is something like you know as the way the *jen* [?] is, the men to in the camp.
They be in a camp to be circumcise.
And you know now?
Uhm-m.
Uhm-m, that's it.
- 240 Where they can go and learn about what man can do.
The same way the women, they go and learn about what woman can do.
Question: The gregre bush is for women or for men?
Answer: The men got some, the women got some.
Question: What you call it for the men in Mandingo?
Answer: How we call it?
Question: What's the name for it in Mandingo?
Answer: *Kènè*.
Question: *Kènè? Kènè?*
- 245 Answer: Yeah.
Question: And for the women?
Answer: The same way, *kènè*.
Question: The name for - - er-r, there's no society called Biri or Bili?
Answer: We have a society, and we have the gregre bush.
Let me come, ask the old man.
Oh, old man - -

[SILIFU TATA AND HIS DESCENDANTS IN GUINEA AND LIBERIA (II)]
[Silifu Tata dies in Bilasana]

- 250 Question: Ok. He said that Silifu Tata went to a country. He didn't call the country name.
Answer: Who?
Question: Silifu Tata.
Answer: Silifu Tata.

234 This conflicts with earlier testimony in which it appears that Flansan is Faiggama's son.
235 [*gen*: or *jina*].
246 (question): The name among the Vai.
247 [Biri or Bili: The Vai name for the Poro society].

He say, he went to Bilasana.

Question: Bilasana is where?

Answer: Guinea.

[The Sirleaf of Guinea and Liberia]

Question: Who is this Silifu Tata related to this Sirleaf family here in Liberia?

255 Answer: Who family?

Question: Silifu Tata, how is he related to the Silifu family here in Liberia?

Answer: Say, the children, that he born the children, two boy -- er-r, three boy children.

Question: Where the boy children? What name?

Answer: One name Silifu Jala, the other one name Musa, the last one name Laii. Then he call them.

Question: And where did these three men go?

Answer: Jala came as far as Konokòlò.

260 Musa came and settled at Bunde.

Laii, he went as far to Vai country, Cape Mount.

Question: What part of Cape Mount?

Answer: He say, the whole of Cape Mount.

He can't estimate the main place where the man stationed for.

You ask any Vai people, they will tell you about it.

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254 This is the Bilasana in Worodugu region (see the earlier footnote).

259 It is a region to the west of the Konya area in upper Guinea.

260 An area located today in the Voinjama District of Lofa County in northern Liberia.

261 Refers to the area on the coast. The Vai today consists of four chiefdoms, Tewò, Tombe, Gawula and Vai Konè in the present-day county of Grand Cape Mount in western Liberia.

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SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 6

TWO MANDING ACCOUNTS FROM MARTIN FORD'S FIELDWORK

Translation Note: Martin Ford's assistant Faliku Sanoe made a free translation of the interview that Sumawolo narrated in Konyakã. Sanoe translated the interview into Liberian English, and the translation remains in this form. A few punctuation marks are added to the typed translation that Martin Ford sent to me. Many thanks for Martin Ford for sending me a copy of this and the next interview.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 6.1

SUMAWOLO

Location and date of interview: Bahn, Liberia, 1984.

Speaker: Sumaworo moved from Musadu to Liberia in 1962

Summary of Contents:

1. Misa's talisman
2. A 'big *mori* man' destroys Misa's talisman
3. Foningama and Karamò Sayon
4. Foningama and Karamo Sayon travel from Kalala to Misadu
5. The Sherif follow Foningama and Sayon to Misadu
6. Sumaworo *mori* asks the Sherif *mori* to help Sayon sire children
7. Sayon's first son builds his own settlement
8. Sherif marries Sumaroro's daughter and has many children
9. Sherif heads back to his homeland (Tina) and entrusts his children to Foningama and Sumaroro
10. Sacrifice and Division - Foningama's children leave (Misadu) after the great sacrifice

[1. Misa's talisman]

Sumaworo: Way first time Musadu town, it was for the Kpelle people, and they were having a devil. They devil, the juju it were having, it used to eat only young baby. Yea, young baby, that's the food for the juju. During the time the thing used to eat baby, that is the time the Mandingo people, the *mori* people, came in Musadu. When the Mandingo

people went here to live, they were living there until the Kpelle (Gbèse) man they call him Misa, his juju start to eat their baby, so they were afraid too much.

[2. A 'big *mori* man' destroy's Misa's talisman]

One time a big *mori* man came there. He was too strong. So, they complain this Kpelle man to him. He said, "The man that were living within here, the medicine he got, it can eat our baby, and he is actually disturbing us. We want for you to put stop to it. He say... Then the *mori* man went, he wrote the Holy Koran like this. He put it... He wrote it on paper and he put it in the throat of a bullfrog... a bullfrog. Then, the man... when the man put the thing inside the bullfrog throat, the bullfrog start to jump towards the medicine. Then the medicine saw the bullfrog coming, it jump up and swallow the bullfrog. Then the juju fly into the air. Then when it went in... , flew up in the sky, it came back again, it fall down on the rock and buss. Nuh.

Ford: Does he know the name of this *mori* man?

Faliku: He say he can't know his name. He say their grandfather was the head of everything in Misadu at that time.

Ford: But Musadu, the name comes from this Kpelle man, Musa? (S has been saying Misa and Misadu, although the difference is hardly distinguishable).

Sumawolo: Eh-hehn.

[3. Foningama and Karamò Sayon]

Ford: His saying that, it reminds me of a question. What is the difference between Maninnka and Maninka-mori?

Faliku/Sumaworo: He say, the differences he know, that is the one he trying to explain. He say, a man call, they call him Foningama (Foninkama). He's a Kamara, but they used to call him Foninkama. And the grandfather of the Sanoe, They call him Karamo, Sayon (S. pronounces Karamò Sani). When they were living in Gbè, the first child that Foninkama born, that's the one the Gbèka(n) people call Saba. The Gbèka(n), they have Gbèka in Ivory Coast. That's different type of Mandingo people, too, but we speak the same thing. Their own is deep Maninka. It's something deep Maninka, yea, it's something different from Maninka.

Ford: Are they Konyaka?

Assistant: No, they are not Konyaka. They call them Gbèka.

[4. Foningama and Karamo Sayon travel from Kalala to Misadu]

Sumaworo: So, Foninkama left the first town he were living in, He came all the way to Kalala, there where he were living. The oldest town, the oldest town in Guinea, that's one of the oldest towns he called it name so, When they left Kalala, the both of them, the two men, Karamo Sayon and Foninkama, when they left Kalala, they came to Misadu.

[5. The Sherif follow Foningama and Sayon to Misadu]

When they were coming to Misadu, they were having a group of people that could fight for them. The other man have twelve group, the other man have twelve group of people, that can fight for them. When they came in Misadu. During that time, Karamo Sani never born any child yet. He was suffering to born (Faliku changes the pronunciation to Sani). The Sherif people own little grandfather, they saw he was a whiteman. That's the time he came to in Misadu. He follow Dã people, he came in Misadu, too, this Sherif.

[6. Sumaworo *mori* asks the Sherif *mori* to help Sayon sire children]

Then Foningama went to, uh, the *mori*, Sumaworo, the *mori* man that were living in Musadu. [Foningama said to Sumawolo] "This my friend [Sayon] here, he suffering to get baby. He don't got baby. I want for you to do something for him to get baby, for him to get child." Then the *mori* man who were there, he said, "No, the ting that you people told me so, I will tell the Arabic man." Dat [That] the white man they were talking about. I think he was an Arabian (Faliku's interpolation) - He say, "I will tell the Arabic man about this same problem you people told me about. Then the Arabic man told them to go in the bush and get a animal, some kind of a animal that call it *soŋ*. He say, "You people should catch it when it is living. Y'all shouldn't break any part of it. Let it stay like that. Y'all bring it to me." Then the Arabic man wrote the same Holy Koran like this (Faliku points to Sumaworo's). He wrote it on paper. He tie it and put it on Dã animal neck. He say, "When I put this Koran on this animal neck, when I leave the animal, when it go and lie down anywhere, dere [there] where you will build your whole house, your yard. Den [Then] when you live in that yard, that is the time you will get a child. Then the Arabic man left the animal, the animal start to run in the bush. Den the man [Sayon] follow that animal.¹ Then he follow the animal, they pass to Wani; it's a town. Then they pass to Tawila. Then they pass to Kabadu. Then behind Kabadu, on the hill, the animal went and lie down there. Then the Karamo Sanoe went. He start to brush (clear) the place. He fix the place fine, he build his house there. When he build his house there, den the man start to born plenty children. When he got plenty children like that...

[7. Sayon's first son builds his own settlement]

Then when the man have plenty children like that, the first son... One day, his [Sayon's] first son told him that, "Pa, let me go and look for small food for your grandchild then. Then we went down the hill, he went. He start to brush his own little area. He build his own little house. And that particular time, too, there were [is where] most of the Sanoe people came from. Then he said Fonikama own little generation (lineage). That's what the Maninka people came from. The Maninka people came from the generation of Foninkama (Eeehh!). That what all he know about that area.

[8. Sherif marries Sumaroro's daughter and has many children]

¹Sherif told Sayon to follow the *soŋ* into the forest.

Ford: He said the Arabic man who put the Koran on the small animal neck, his brother came from Saudi Arabia. He came behind in Guinea.

Sumaworo: So, when they [Sherif's family or friends] sent a message to the man, the Arabic man in Misadu, dat your brother have come for you, den your grandfather take... Den their own little grandfather, Sumaworo, Sumaworo grandfa - his grandfather - took his daughter and gave it to the Arabic man as his wife. Then he say... When he give his daughter to that Arabic man, the Arabic man and Sumaworo grandfather daughter start to born plenty children.

[9. Sherif heads back to his homeland (Tina) and entrusts his children to Foningama and Sumaworo]

But when the message came that his [Sherif's] brother came for him, they should go back. While going he told Funikama and Sumaworo dat, "I am going but I am not going to carry these children with me. Let the children stay with you people here. You people should take care of them. Maybe I will come back for them, but I am going. Y'all take care of my children. Yea, he left them there, he went. When the man was going, he told the people that "my brother send message for me to go, but it is not because my brother send message for me to go, but it is time for me to die. I don't think I will even reach to my brother. I might die on the road. The man told the people. So while he were going...

Question: He came to what town?

Sumaroro: Then when he reached to Tina - He didn't reach to his brother - when he reached to Tine he died right there.

[10. Sacrifice and Division - Foningama's children leave Misadu after the great sacrifice]

He say, the way how they start to divide Maninka, Konyaka (the man also says Buninka), when Foninkama born lot of children like that, he make a big sacrifice. He make sacrifice. He make sacrifice with everything, food or different things, one hundred, one hundred, one hundred put them together and make sacrifice. Then after he make sacrifice, then his son start to go away from him. Some went they start, they call themselves, they are Maninka. Some say they are Boninka. Some say they are Konyaka (S. laughs). They divided, but everybody from one.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 6.2

MAMMADI DOLE

Location of interview: Gban, Liberia, 28 June 1985

Speaker: Dole was originally from Musadu, and was a kola trader who lived in Zontuo at the time of the interview.

Summary of Contents:

1. Mandingo migrations from Mali to the forest
2. Misa leaves Foningama in the 'old village' to found Misadu
3. Foningama and his wife join Misa and build Misadu
4. Foningama's sheep horn-talisman
5. Misa flees from Misadu
6. Misa transplants water from Misadu to Zontia
7. Benjamin J.K. Anderson
8. The modern mosque of Misadu

[1. Mandingo migrations from Mali to the forest]

Faliku Sanoe/Mammadi Dole: He said they used to have important towns around Misadu. One is Beyla, Jakudu, but Misadu was the most important town.

Martin Ford: That name, is it Misadu or Musadu? Is that name after a Mandingo man or a Kpelle man?

Sanoe/Dole: Yes. He said he is trying to explain about that. That his grandfather den told him that. He said during that time they were not born. The Misa they are talking about... There is one Mandingo town behind Bamako. They call the town name Yah behind Bamako. There where all the Mandingo people came from. He said they were living in Yah for long time, the Mandingo people. Later on they spread... all over. All over Africa. Some people went to Guinea. Some went to Ivory Coast. Some people sent to Sierra Leone. And some came in Liberia. And one leader, the leader that was ruling that town, they call him Foningama. He was the chief.

[2. Misa leaves Foningama in the 'old village' to found Misadu]

Misa, he was a fisherman. Misa was a fisherman. They have one big river in that town. They call it Jòn (nasalized). He went in that river to go catch fish. Then the chief of that town, they call him Foninkama, came. He went behind this man. There was an old village behind there. He went. He [Misa] pass by the man [Foningama]. He went. He sat down in

that old village, but nobody was living in that village again. He said plenty stranger used to go in that town, but they used to be afraid of the chief in the town, and Misa own little house was built nearby the river. So, each time the stranger den come in the town, they will say, "This chief that live there, he's bad, so let's try to go and live with Misa, the fisherman." During that time, Misa never built a complete house yet. He was having a round thatch house. People used to come to him plenty. They used to sleep on the floor all over. Then later on he knew that people are coming to him plenty to visit him, he built a house.

[3. Foningama and his wife join Misa and build Misadu]

Then the chief told... the chief's wife told him that "Why is it that whenever the stranger den comes in the town (old village), they can pass by us and go live with old man Misa in the village? So, it will be better for every one of us to go and live with old man Misa. Then that place will be a town for us." Then the chief and his wife, they start to build the town. The build the place. It was a big town. Then they were still calling the town Misa, Misadu. Let's say - Misadu.

[4. Foningama's sheep horn-talisman]

The Misa man, he was living there. He said the chief, he was a big medicine man, a juju man. He used to take off the sheep horn and fix it with medicine. When he drop that sheep horn, the thing used to swallow the sheep den. The sheep horn used to swallow the sheep. It used to swallow the goad den in the town. Until the thing start to collect the children in the town. Then the people were surprised in the town. They say, "This thing is giving us hard time." Then the people work. Then the people work on the bullfrog. A bullfrog. The people work on that with medicine.¹

Ford: What do you mean, work on the bullfrog?

Sanoe/Dole: He say it was a devil work. The people used to have prayer with them, and each of the big-big people that know about medicine business, they used to come together. They put words together and tie it. They tie that prayer. Than they put the frog down. Then the sheep, the sheep horn that used to swallow those sheep, went and swallow the bullfrog. Then the thing bust, the horn bust (burst).

[5. Misa flees from Misadu]

Then Misa ran away from the town. He went out of the town. He say, "If I stay here, the chief will kill me, because I was the cause for us to spoil the man's medicine." He left his town. He went on the road when you are going to Kankan. He went on the road there. There is one town on the road there, that call Kanikokwe. When he reach there, then he say, "Kani-ko-kweyy! God have save me from the devil. The people will not get me again." That big hill today, they name it after that. They say Kanikokwe. When you reach in Beyla today, you ask about that mountain, you tell them, say, "Where is Kanikokwe?,"

¹This was Musa's sheep horn, not Foningama's according to the other oral traditions (Ch. 5).

they will show you the place. The man left the place and he start to come this way. One big mountain is behind Boola (pronounced Bola). They call it Jiiu. When he reach there, then he say, “*Ka jili wuu!* (or wulo), *ka jili wulu!*” He never said that in Mandingo. He said that in Kpelle. The meaning of that means “Good bye. Good bye.” (*Mwa sio. Mwa sio*).

[6. Misa transplants water from Misadu to Zontia]

While coming, the big water that in Misadu, they call it Jòn. He took some of that water. One big river, there, too, they call it Yakò (Yahcaw). He took some of that water. One (place) they have (a) small stream, small water in Misadu. That’s the one, the people that living in Misadu, they can drink the water. They call it Kabakone. He took some of that other water. He came. He start to live in one town call Zontia. All that water, he went, he carry it, he waste it in one water. Then he name that water Jòn. Then he put some of the water in different water. He name that Jiakò. The other water, the remaining of the water, he went and put it in a small stream. So he name that stream Kabakoro. When you reach in Zontia (Zotia), they will show you Jiako, a water that they call Jiakò. They will show you Jòn river. Then they will show you the small stream they call Kabakoro. All that came from Misadu.

[7. Benjamin J.K. Anderson]

The negroes from America you are talking about (I had explained to him that Benjamin Anderson was a Congo, who had come to Liberia from America).... [More on Anderson]

[8. The modern mosque of Misadu]

Sanoe/Dole: He said the same new mosque we are building (in Bahn), the mosque that they built in Misadu, you can’t find it in Liberia... When they started to build that mosque, their father called everyone of them. When they call everyone there, there was no stranger among them. All the children from Misadu, that were living in different-different country... That the people from Misadu that went there to settle about building the mosque. All those people from Misadu. He say some people from Misadu, they came out of country, they married and they born their own little children. They are big-big men. When they call for the meeting, that’s the time they can go there to go and see how Misadu is looking like.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7

FIELDWORK TRANSLATIONS FROM GUINEA

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.1

TRANSLATION PROCESS

Excerpts from the traditions that are used as source material for this dissertation are provided below. I was tempted to not present this material until some of the translations could be rechecked and most of them could be published. Nonetheless, given the uncertainties of the future and the length of time that it has taken just to write this dissertation, it is best to present these materials with all of their shortcomings rather than wait for the traditions to hopefully be published. The materials in the supplemental appendix are more important than the commentary in Chapters 1-8 to the extent that they represent most of this work's primary sources. Although it is necessary and valuable for researchers to present their findings, many of the sources that they use are generally more valuable for those who desire to examine the conclusions of the scholars who have gone before them and study the region from a fresh perspective.

The translations for the oral traditions that were recorded and purchased were done during several stages from July 1992 to the summer of 1995. The first eight stages were conducted in Macenta or Monrovia; the last was done in Grand Rapids. Information about where and when the oral traditions were transcribed, translated and checked is provided in the introduction of each translation.¹ Most of the interviews were translated

¹The original transcripts/translations are presently in my personal possession. The original tapes have been deposited at the Archives for Traditional Music at Indiana University (Accession Number 98-379-F).

from Maniyakā. Some have a few words or phrases in Loma, Kpelle, French or Arabic.

Stage One: Each of the interviews were transcribed by one person. Two or more people were usually available to help transcribe and translate in the first three stages.

Stage Two: One or two persons listened to the tape, followed the transcript, and translated the tape. Sometimes, the assistants made their translations from the transcript, not the tape.

Stage Three: Somebody else checked the work of the transcribers and translators in the first two stages, and made corrections when appropriate. We were not able to do this in all cases, but did as many as possible.

Stage Four: I went over the transcript and translation with the person who translated the interviews, and asked questions to clarify what was said.

Stage Five: I typed all of the translations.

Stage Six: I edited each translation to make the sentences read more smoothly, and divided the interview into episodes. I stopped at this stage with the interview that was conducted with Alafā Konè (Appendix 7.31), so the translation of his interview suffers as a result.

Stage Seven: I went over the typed translation with the translator and made more changes. We determined that a couple of the original transcripts were done too poorly to be of much use at this stage (Appendix 7.8, 7.29), so we listened to the whole tape to check the translation. (In these instances, I only worked with the typed translation and did not refer back to the transcript).

Stage Eight: I went back to the translator for a third time with any outstanding questions, and made more changes.

Stage Nine: Later, in Michigan, I listened to all of the tapes and revised each translation.

I was unable to work directly with the translator(s) at Stage Two and be actively involved in the initial translation process because of Monrovia's dusk-to-daws curfew and other time constraints. As translating goes, it would be ideal to check all of the transcripts and translations to get more accurate translations.

Each of the assistants gradually learned what was needed to make a good translation. If I have to operate under such time constraints again on the field, I will probably only work with a couple of assistants and translate directly into English as with what we did with two interviews when we ran out of time in Monrovia in 1994 (Appendices 7.16, 7.20). Words that are **bolded** mean that they need to be double checked.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.2

MATENE LANSE MOLIGBE KROMAH

Place and date of interview: Macenta, Guinea, August 27, 1984

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek and Makula Mammadi Kromah

Context of interview: When I first visited Macenta in August 1984, my ‘stranger father’ and the *kabila kundi* of the Kromah, Fata Bakari Kromah, said that Lanse Kromah should be the one to narrate the history. Lanse Kromah had been the *kabila kundi* before Fata Bakari Kromah, and was of the oldest Kromah in Macenta. Fata Bakari said that Lanse was the clan historian, though not a *jèli*. Lanse Kromah said that he only gave the interview because his “brother” Makula Mammadi Kromah accompanied me. Lanse Kromah was old, at least in his eighties, and he died in the late-1980's. Mammadi and I interviewed Kromah in a small narrow room in the house where he lived in Macenta. I took a picture of the interview situation (Figure 19). The room was not very big, but a couple of adults sat in on parts of the interview.

Transcribed by: Kèlèti Fofana (Monrovia, 1993)

Translated by: Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Boakai Yamah and Tim Geysbeek (Monrovia, 1993) - transcript/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

Translation process: Mammadi Kromah made the first translation of this interview in August 1985. With two tape recorders in our living room in Sinkor, Monrovia, he played the original with the first recorder and taped his “translation” on the second. The second recorder taped the original and his translation. Unfortunately, I did not send the original

tapes to the States, so it was looted with the rest of our goods when ELWA was pillaged sometime between August and October 1990 during the early part of the ongoing Liberian civil war. I have the second tape that included the original and Mammadi's translation.

The problem with the second tape is that Mammadi did not record a few small segments of Lanse's interview when he made his translation. Thus, there are times when Mammadi translated something that we can not hear in Maniyakã. We are thus forced to depend either on what Mammadi Kromah said, or disregard what Mammadi said because we do not have Lanse Kromah's complete interview. We opt for the latter in most cases, and enter Mammadi Kromah's words in the line notes. Kromah's translation represented my first foray into the translation work, so I did not impress upon Mammadi the importance of trying to reproduce a word-for-word translation. The present translation is much better than Mammadi's, but it can be improved upon if it is carefully checked by a Maniyakã speaker one more time.

Only a short portion of the interview that relates to the Musadu epic is included below. Kromah spoke about a range of issues that began with the early migrations of the Kromah from the Manden to the forest, to nineteenth and early-twentieth oral traditions about Samori Turé, Sonindènè Bakari Kromah's founding of Macenta, and the French conquest of the region. Kromah section about the Gola appears in Appendix 2.2.

[The Kpelle: from Koniya to Zota]

The Kpelle were the ones who were in Koniya.

Do you hear?

The Kpelle...

1295 The Kpelle were in Diakolidu and Misadu.

1295 Diakolidu: Kromah said Jakolodu.

- Do you hear?
 In Kpelle they say, "I am living on the rock.
 I am living on the rock."
 They say, "I am living here on the rock."
- 1300 It is Kpelle.
 Aye, we now say "Koniya."
 Eh-èh, they say that the name of the creek that flows between Jakolodu and
 Misadu is Bèmbeya.
 Do you know what Bèmbeya means?
 When the vine grows on a tree,
- 1305 It become like a rope.
 The people can pick it.
 That is what they call *bèmbeya* in Kpelle.
 It is named after the creek that used to join the houses.
 That is the one that they call Bèmbeya.
- 1310 Do you hear?
 Bèmbeya creek.
 You might think that is it Maniyakā,
 But it is not Maniyakā.
 It is Kpelle.
- 1315 Do you hear?
 Those Kpelle are the ones who left and went to Zota.
 That is where they came from.
 They were in Misadu,
 But they [the Maniya] drove them and they went to Zota.
- 1320 Most of the people of Koniya that you see,
 Their ancestors are the children of Kpelle women.
 Eh-èh, Madina, which is behind Gbo...
 That is Madina.
 It is not far from there to Gbokoma.
- 1325 Do you hear?

1316 Speaking of Musa who allegedly founded Musadu and was later forced to move south (Ch. 4,6).

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.3

ANONYMOUS SPEAKER AND KROMAH

Location and date of interview: Boola, Guinea, 21 March 1985

Interviewed by: Jomah Kamara

Context of interview: This interview was made when SIM missionaries and staff Jerry Swank, Mark Wilson, John Tamba and Jomah Kamara visited Guinea in 1985. Swank and Wilson seem to have been present when Jomah conducted the interview (l. 193). From comments and laughter heard in the background, it seems as though at least a half-dozen other men were present when the interview was conducted. An unidentified speaker spoke most of the time (l. 1-217), but a Kromah who he looked for earlier (l. 25-31) entered during the course of the interview and concluded the discussion (l. 218-274).

After these men returned from Guinea, Djjobba K. Kamara roughly translated the tape. Using two tape recorders, he played and recorded the original onto the second tape. He then paused the original and made a translation onto the second tape that continued to record. This was more of a paraphrase than a translation, so we had the second tape later retranslated in Monrovia.

Transcribed by: Ansu Cissé (Monrovia, 1993)

Translated by: Faliku Sayon (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Faliku Sayon and Tim Geysbeek (Monrovia, 1993) - text only

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape and translation.

[The Kpelle-Mènya in Koyya]

Kromah: The people of Gbè came from the town of Kaaba.

All of the ancestors of the Mènya and the Kpelle who are here came from Kaaba.

Jomah: In what land is Kaaba located?

Kromah: Kaaba is in the Sudan.

Our [Kromah] ancestors even came from Kaaba.

5 Our ancestors came from Kaaba and settled here.

We are the oldest Mènya who live here.

They call us the Kpelle-Mènya.

The people of Koyya met us here.

Jomah: Are you saying that all of the people of Koniya are Kpelle-Mènya?

Kromah: All of them are Kpelle-Mènya.

Jomah: Who are the real Kpelle-Mènya?

10 Kromah: The people who are the Kpelle-Mènya are...

We are the Kpelle-Mènya.

We are from here.

Our ancestor who came here was called Mèyemuu.

He came here a long time ago.

15 He came here a long time ago.

The other people of Koyya came after him.

This is the background of the people of Koyya in Koyya.

The background of all of them is here.

The source of their trade and all of their old things came from here...

* * *

[Jialò and the founding of Boola]

This town is not even called Bòòla.

This is a Kromah town.

220 Our ancestor came from Makka.

Our ancestor came from ancestor.

Their age-mates were involved.

His friend told him [the Kromah ancestor] to stop the zo business.

He said, "No."

225 He went and settled in Misadu after he left there.

1 Kaaba: Kangaba.

10 The real people (first Mènya or Maniyaka settlers?) of Boola were the Sayon or Sanoe (l. 41-42). The speaker seems to indicate that the Sanoe migrated to Boola with a Kromah (see l. 219,271).

13 Mèyemuu: According to Faliku Sanoe his name is not Maniyaka, but probably Kpelle.

18 'The background of all of them is here': The speaker was saying that all of the people of Koyya or Konya-Mani came from Boola.

223 The Kromah refused to leave sorcery or the zo business after they left Makka or Mecca and went to Musadu. This is consistent with some Maninka traditions which claim that Fakoli went to Mecca to get the Komo, and that he became the most powerful sorcerer and blacksmith in the Manden (Farias 1989; Conrad 1992).

- Then he left Misadu.
 He said that he was going to look for another place [to live].
 He went and settled in Beyla.
 He went and settled on a yam farm.
 230 He told his people, "There is no food here [in Beyla]."
 He told them they should make a yam farm.
 [He said,] "I am going to look for a place to settle.
 I will come and get you when I find a place.
 That is the time that their ancestor came to the town here [Boola].
 235 He had a gun that he used for hunting when he came.
 The place that he found was good for him.
 He said, "I will not leave the savanna land that I saw."
 After that he said, "Your land...
 They told me to establish a market here since this is a good land.
 240 They said, "What is the sacrifice for?"
 The name of the only son that your wife born was Jialò.
 Many of them here do not know that I am the one who can make the sacrifice.
 They think they are the ones who made this sacrifice.
 I will make the sacrifice after the town prospers.
 245 Their ancestor came when they said Boola.

237 'savanna': Or, *fua*.

240 "'What is the sacrifice for?'" The land.

241 Jialò was the one who made the sacrifice for the land. The speaker is saying that he is the one who is supposed to make the sacrifice for the land because he is a descendant of Jialò. The Kromah are the owners of Boola because they founded the town (l. 21-24), but the Sanoe seem to have become more powerful and emerged as chiefs (l. 39).

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.4

BANGALI KOESIA, ALHAJI KALIFA SANYO, SUMAKA KROMAH, UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER AND LAYI YAYA DOLE

Place and date of interview: Musadu, Guinea, 23 March 1985

Interviewer: Jomah Kamara

Context of interview: Jomah Kamara conducted this interview in Musadu on March 23, 1985. Kamara accompanied John Tamba and SIM missionaries Jerry Swank and Mark Wilson to Guinea. I asked Kamara to collect some oral traditions if they went to Musadu. After they reached Musadu, Kamara began a recording session with several people in attendance. Kamara recorded some personal messages from the chief and other people, and five older men talked about the early history of Musadu. The tape that we possess only has the history portion of the interview. It is almost eighteen minutes long, and represents the first oral traditions that are known to have been recorded in Musadu. Jomah Kamara, along with Djobba Kamara, was one of the men who hosted Radio ELWA's program that was aired in Mandingo, so those who granted interviews to Kamara would have assumed that some of the things they said would be aired over the radio. I do not know if Kamara broadcast this interview, but assume that he aired at least part of it.

Because the chief of Musadu was present when Jomah Kamara conducted this interview, and because the visit of these broadcasters and missionaries was such a high-profile event, it is likely that the men who granted the interview had some respectable standing in the community. The speakers were probably also careful about what they said because they spoke in the company of the chief and their peers.

One of the informants who we do know something about was Yaya Dole. Yaya Dole said that he was the chief of Musadu from 1958-1962. I met Dole in 1986 and interviewed him at that time (Appendix 7.8). It is instructive to compare Dole's 1985 group interview here (l. 230-68) with the interview that he granted a year later. My interview with Dole was much longer (58 minutes) than the relatively few lines that he narrated for Jomah Kamara in this instance (3 minutes). The obvious pressures of being interviewed in a group setting accounts for one reason why Dole's interview with Kamara was so short. Another reason why Dole give me a much more substantial interview was because I was introduced by Mustafa Kromah, one of Dole's long-time friends. I also interviewed Dole in his round one-room house, and far fewer people were in attendance than in his 1985 meeting.

Transcript and translation: Djobba Kamara first translated this interview within months after Jomah returned from Guinea. Using two tape recorders, Djobba paused the original tape after he played small portions of what the speakers said, and then gave a very free English translation with the second machine recording everything that was said. The second tape is interspersed with Konyakā and English. Djobba erased some of Kamara's questions, and he accidentally deleted a portion of what one of the speakers said between lines 91 and 92. We only have the second tape that Djobba made because the original was destroyed in 1990 in the war.

Boakai Yahah and Amara Cissé transcribed and retranslated this interview in Monrovia in 1993. Geysbeek completed the most critical stages of the translation with these men, and made a few changes after he returned to the States and listened to the tape.

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SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.4A

BANGALI KOESIA

[The Kromah founders of Misadu]

Jomah Kamara: What is your name?

Bangali Koesia: My name is Bangali Koesia, from Misadu.

1-47 Bangali Koesia's portion of the interview lasted about three minutes.

1 Koesia: Very close to Koeshia; is also spelled Krosia.

Kamara: Please tell us what you know about how Misadu was founded.

Koesia: The old people told me that the Kromah are the founders.

Kamara: The Kromah?

Koesia: Yes, the Kromah.

Kamara: Where did they come from before they came here?

Koesia: I don't know what town they came from.

5 I do know where they settled.

They settled near Nèlèkòlò Creek where the ruins are located.

They went to where the ruins are.

[The Kromah allow Misa to fish along the Dion River]

They had a slave when they were there.

His name was Misa.

10 Misa used to go fishing on the Dion River.

He used to catch fish.

After a while he told his father, "Please let me build a shelter there."

His father said, "I agree."

Kamara: To fish?

Bangali: [He said], "I want to go so I can build a shelter.

15 The road is far from here.

After I stay there for a week,

I will return and give you the fish that I catch."

The name of his slave was Misa.

That is what Misa did.

[Misa founds Misadu]

20 The Fula used to come.

[They would say], "I am going to sleep in Misa's town."

Kamara: Where did the Fula come from?

Bangali: They came from Jiasò.

They went to Jakudu.

When they were on their way to the Jakudu market they would say,

6 Nèlèkòlò creek (*Nèlèkòlòkòni*): = 'small (*ni*) creek/water (*kò*) [where] *nèlè* seeds are washed (*kòlò*). ' *Nèlè* derives from a tree that has a yellowish seed pod. This creek is about a mile north of Musadu (see Fig. 31).

8 'slave': *jòn*.

12 'shelter' (*toda*): for a discussion, see Vase Kamala (App. 7.6, ln. 1396).

24 'When they were on their way to the Jakudu market...': Jakudu (Jakodu, Diakolidu) has only been the major market center in the region for the last one hundred years. If Diakolidu was not founded until after Musadu as many oral traditions suggest (Kalifa Sanyo 1985, App. 7.4, l. 48-53; Yaya Dole 1986, 7.8, ll. 242-43; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36, l. 104), then this is a descending anachronism where the speaker transferred information from the present into a past situation. Although the Fulbe did not seem to have started to migrate to Konya-Mani in any significant numbers until the eighteenth century (Person 1986b:244), Fulbe from Wasolon or anywhere else in the region could have gone south to trade with

25 "I am going to sleep in Misa's town."

[Tumaningèmè Kromah joins Misa in Misadu]

As he did that the *kaamòò*, the *kaamòò*, the Kromah...

What was his name?

Audience: [unintelligible]...

Bangali: Hèn?

Audience: Tumaningèmè.

30 Bangali: Eh, Tumaningèmè. Tumaningèmè.

His wife said, "Husband."

He said, "Yes."

"Misa has become well-known.

He is our person,

35 And he will become greater than all of us.

We must move closer to that place."

That is why they moved closer to that place.

The man there was Misa.

He was called Misa.

40 He was called Misa.

Misadu was named after him.

When they came...

The town was named after Misa.

They said Misa, Misadu.

45 Misadu.

The town of Misadu was named after him.

That is what I know about the story.

Kamara: We are very happy with what you said because you told us what you know.

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.4B

ALHAJI KALIFA SANYO

Jomah Kamara: Alhaji Kalifa Sanyo, we also want you to talk today, because we have heard that Misadu is an old town. Those listening to this conversation have seen how this town was founded. But we want to know how Beyla came from here, how Nyèla came from here, and how Dukulela came from here. So, please tell us a little about these stories. Which was the first town that was founded after Misadu, before other towns were founded?

Misadu and other entrepôts that were situated along the savannah-forest zone.

[The establishment of Koniya]

- Kalifa Sanyo: The first town that came from Misadu was Nyèla.
Nyèla was the first one that left from Misadu.
50 Tululela was the next town.
Diakolidu followed.
Of the five towns of Koniya,
Beyla is the youngest.
The settling of the five towns...
55 From here to the ocean,
All of the towns came from here.

[The Koloma of Misadu]

- The American people originated from Misadu.
Those Liberians that call themselves Koloma...
The ancestor of those Koloma come from a quarter in this town.
60 They come from here.
Is that Koloma man here?
Audience: [unintelligible]...
Kalifa: He has not come yet.
I am calling for one of their family members.
65 Another speaker: They have not come yet.
Kalifa: Any people in Liberia who are called Koloma come from Misadu,
From this Misadu.

[Misadu - the ancient residence of the Kpelle and Loma]

- This town...
The people told us that the division was done here.
70 The Kpelle and Loma were also part of this town.
They all came from here,
From here in Misadu.
That is what our fathers told us.
We are children in these things.
75 When we became young men,
That is what they told us.
Those are the things.

48-77 Kalifa Sanyo's portion of the interview lasted almost two minutes.

51 Diakolidu: The speaker said Jakudu.

55-66 Koloma: Or, Kromah. Boakai Yamah and Amara Cissé transcribed this as Coleman, although I changed it to Koloma after I listened to the tape. Both, however, may be correct. Liberians often called President William D. Coleman (1896-1900) a Kromah (Koloma/Kroma) (Holsoe 1976-77:8).

57 'The American people originated from Misadu': Could this refer to slaves who were taken from Musadu and sent overseas?

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.4C1

SAMUKA KROMAH

["Koniya"]

Jomah Kamara: Another person wants to say some words about Misadu. His name is Old Man Samuka Kromah. Old Man Sumaka, I have heard people talk about this land of Koniya. The land of Koniya. I want to know how Koniya came about. From where did Koniya originate?

Samuka Kromah: If that is what I am supposed to talk about, That will not be hard.

80 That happened a long time ago.

Look at the hill.

The Kpelle were the people who were here.

They used to call that hill "Goniya."

Our ancestors drove them from there and came here.

85 That is what is called "Koniya."

Kamara: Can you tell us what *koniya* means?

Samuka: That is what it means, *koniya*.

The name of the hill is Koniya,

Kabatini..

The name of the hill is Kabatini.

90 Since we are Mandingo we call it Koniya.

[Early Kromah, Konè, Kpelle and Loma settlements]

Kamara: Some people have told us that Koniya came from the Kpelle. Is that true?

Samuka: That is not true.

We drove the Kpelle.

There was no town from here to Samatiya.

There was no town from here to Kala.

95 The town was here.

When they came,

They left Mande and came.

78-160 This first portion of Samuka Kromah's interview lasted almost five and one-half minutes.

79 'That will not be hard': Literally, 'that is nothing.'

83 Goniya (Gòniya): Goniya is a Kpelle word that means 'rock' (*goni*) and 'water' (*ya*).'

84 'drove' (*ghèn-na*): or 'chased.'

87 Koniya: The speaker said Koinya or Koynya.

88 Kabatini (Kavatini): = 'rock/rocky' (*kaba/kava*) 'hill' (*tini*).

91 'That is not true:...': An undetermined length of the tape was erased between line 91 and line

- The Konè settled in - èh-èh, Chèwa.
 The Konè settled in Chèwa.
 100 The Kpelle came and settled in Gbè-Sèsingòlò.
 They settled in Gbè-Sèsingòlò.
 They did not have a name then,
 But now they are called Gbèlèsè (Kpelle).
 Some people [the Kpelle] went on one side here,
 105 And the Loma went on the other side.
 They settled there.
 The person who settled now was Tumaningèmè.
 The person who came after him was Diannagbèjan.
 Tumaningèmè was there.
 110 He came and settled near Nèlèkòlò Creek,
 A small creek.
 Misadu was first established at that creek.
 He came and met him there.
 Even today,
 115 Tumaningèmè's grave is located near Nèlèkòlò Creek.
 That is what my father told me.
 Koniya is there.
 The people of Javèlèdu were there.
 They were at Nèlèkòlò Creek.

[Vaba Nyèn founds Nyèla]

- Kamara: How did Dukulela, Nyèla and Beyla come from Dukulela [Misadu].
 120 Samuka: That is the main thing that we are talking about.
 Vaba Nyèn left from here [Misadu],
 And went to make a shelter on the farm.
 His name was Vaba Nyèn.

[Four Béété *molilu* found Beyla]

- Beyla was founded by four brothers who came from this town [Misadu].
 125 They left and founded Beyla.
 They said that the sound of the *kòma* horn was too strong for them.

98 Konè: Or, Kèmu. This portion of the tape is difficult to hear. The name was originally translated Konè. Chèwa: = Kèwa.

103-104 The speaker may have pointed when he indicated the ways in which these two peoples went.

115 The speaker said Nèlèkòninu instead of Nèlèkòlòkòni here and in line 119.

118 Javèlèdu: 'edo town.'

121 Nyèn: Nyèn is equivalent to Fofana and Donzo in this area.

126 *kòma* 'horn': This is a horn that is made from an animal such as a cow. When the horn is blown and a dancer representing the Kòma dances, all of the Kòma members come outside. 'too much for them': The Kòma were so influential in Musadu that the Béété *mori* (*moli*) had to leave.

- They left and settled in Beyla.
 They did some work for the people of Jakudu.
 The work that they did was called *mòlinani*.
 130 The Béété brothers were four *mòri* men.
 They had the *mòlinani*.

[The Béété help Yanu Dukule found Dukulela]

- The Dukule are the strangers.
 They came after everyone else.
 They were just following the river and they came.
 135 They followed the river and they came.
 Va Mamadi Béété offered them a place to settle.
 He said, "You settled in my wife's okra garden."
 He was their stranger father.
 The people of Beyla...
 140 The ancestor of the Dukule met the Béété people in Beyla.
 His name was Yanu.
 Their ancestor's name was Yanu.
 However, they did not know their ancestor's name.
 The name of the child of the Dukule who was given to Yanu was
 Bolikolokòniyama,
 145 But they forgot their ancestor's name.

[Mammadi Béété founds Beyla]

- Kamara: How did the name for Beyla come about? Explain the reason.
Samuka: What is the meaning of Beyla?
 It is a Kpelle name.
 The Kpelle called the thing 'yam.'
 They said, "Bee."
 150 The person who went and settled there was Bee...
 Mammadi Béété, Mammadi Béété.
 That is how the name of Beyla came about.
Kamara: So we can say that Beyla is for the Biliti people, right?
Samuka: The place belongs to the Béété.

129 *mòlinani*: 'four (*nani*) cleric (*moli*).¹ *Mòlinani* refers to the four Béété brothers. This name was given to the work that the brothers did.

140-141 Yanu was a Dukule.

144 Bolikolokòniyama: = 'creek (*yama*) running (*boli*) under (*kòlò*) the rock (*kòni*).²

148-150 'Yam' is *gbè* in Kpelle and *kuu* in Konyakā. Kromah is saying that the Kpelle named the Beyla (Beela) after 'yams.' The interview indicates that Mammadi Béété farmed yams.

[Sumandu and Koniya]

Kamara: I have another question. I have heard that the land of Beyla is divided into two parts. There are the Sumandu people, and there are Koniya people. Please tell us about these two clans, the Sumandu people and the Koniya people.

Samuka: Sumandu is a region by itself.

155 All of the areas around Koniya came from Misadu.

Kamara: What makes them different, Sumandu and Koniya?

Samuka: When the countries were settled,
Those were the names that the people used.
That is it.

That is it.

160 Gbana is included and Jiila is included.

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.4D

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER

[“Koniya”]

Jomah Kamara: We are talking about how the Koniya people got their name.

There is a place that has rock and water. Water runs down the hill. What is the origin of the name Koniya, and what does Koniya mean?

Speaker: Our people came and met the Kpelle people here.

They asked, “What is this?”

They replied, “This is a rock.”

“What about this?”

165 They answered, “water.”

Its name is Kabalòji (‘water in the rock’).

They call it Kabakòni (‘small rocky creek’).

154 Sumandu: This is the next major sub-region north of Konya-Mani, with its current capital at Damaro. Sumandu is often considered part of Greater Konya-Mani as Jomah Kamara suggested in his question. Note that Samuka Kromah and Jomah Kamara said Béété and Bility respectively, reflecting dialect differences.

161-188 This person talked for about one and one-half minutes.

167 Kabakòni (Kawakòni, Kavakòni): ‘Small (*ní*) rocky (*kava*) creek (*kò*).’ This is the small river that is located on the western side of Musadu (Fig. 36). Water seeps out of a rocky portion of Kabakònitini (‘small rocky creek mountain’) and forms a pool at the base of the mountain (see ll. 179-185). This pool is the origin of Kabakòni creek that runs into Baba Dole’s farming area at the edge of Musadu. Baba Dole said that when the French were given some water from this creek to drink, they asked where this creek was located because the water was so clear. The Musadu people showed the French where the Kabakòni springs originated (see Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30, #12).

- The person who left here [Misadu] was Kpelle.
 He went to Zota.
 170 He did not stay here.
 Everyone used this Koniya name.
 Zo Misa Kòma left.
 That is why many Kpelle do not live here.
 Everyone said Kabakòlò ('rock in the creek').
Kamara: So "Koniya" in Kpelle is Kabakòlò, right?
 175 Speaker: Yes, Kabalòji.
Kamara: A-han, Kabalòji.
Speaker: In Kpelle they call it "Koniye."
Kamara: "Gòniya?"
Speaker: Yes.
Kamara: Did the Mandingo change it to "Koniya?"
Speaker: Yes, Kabalòji.
 The water falls into the hole.
 180 God dug this hole in the rock,
 And the water comes out.
 God dug it,
 Not man.
 We ourselves can see it now.
 185 That is it.
Kamara: What can you tell us about this water?
Speaker: (laughed).
Kamara: We are very happy because you answered all of our questions.
Speaker: You have already seen it.
 It will be however you explain it.

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.4C2

SAMUKA KROMAH

[Zo Misa founds Misadu]

- Jomah Kamara: Let us talk about that.
Samuka: This is what someone told us about Tumaningèmè.
 190 Tumaningèmè gave Zo Misa permission to build the shelter there.

173 'That is why so many Kpelle do not live here': The Maniyaka forced most of the Kpelle and Loma to leave Konya-Mani (ll. 68-85).

188 'however you explain it': meaning, 'however you explain it [on the radio].'

189-228 This second portion of Samuka Kromah's interview was about two minutes and fifteen seconds long.

He went and built the shelter.
 Other people went and made a major road there.
 The road to Samana and the road to Sinko passes through there.
 Zo Misa said, "Father, come close to the town."
 195 So Tumaningèmè went and settled on the hill.
 That is why the Koniya people settled on the hill.
 That is where the ruins of Misadu are located.

[Zo Misa and Jò]

Kamara: The place where the mosque is located?
Samuka: The place where the mosque is located.
 That is Zo Misa's quarter.
 200 His son's quarter is where the Donzo live.
Kamara: What was the clan of that *zo*?
Samuka: He was Kpelle.
 He was a slave.
 Zo Misa Kòma.
 Zo Misa Kòma.
 205 Zo's son's name was Misa.
 Misa's son's name was Kòma.
 Kòma's son was the one who was driven from here.
 They named the town after the creek.
 The creek at that time did not have a name.
 210 The land was called Jò.
 To say "Dion,"
 They did not know that name.
 It was called Jò.
 They called it Jò.
 215 They said, "Jò did not come.
 Jò did not come."
 Later they called it Dion.
 That is how it happened.

199-200 For another oral tradition about Zo Musa's residence in Donzola, see Mammadi Donzo, App. 7.36, ln. 7.

201-207 Unlike what Vase Kamala and others said, Samuka Kromah claimed that one of Zo Musa's descendants (Kòma) left Musadu, not Zo Musa (see Mammadi Donzo, App. 7.36, ll. 71-73).

207 'Kòma's son was the one who was driven from here': Most oral traditions say that the Maniyaka chased Zo Musa from Musadu. The speaker said that Zo Musa's great-grandson was the one who fled. The speaker's underlying idea that many of the non-Maniyaka and older Maniyaka left over a period of one or more generations is probably more correct than the immediate fight-and-run or fight-and-conquer scenario that most of the oral traditions tend to portray.

211 Dion: The speaker said Jòn.

212 'They did not know that name': of the river known today as Dion.

215 'Jò did not come' (*Jò ma na*): The speaker said *jò*, not *jòn* ('slave') as in line 211. Some say that Zo Musa's wife Jò is a reference to 'slave' - *jòn*.

- The Kpelle call the creek Dion today.
 220 If not that, the Kpelle...
 Zo Misa Kòma's wife was called Jò.
 That was the name of the creek.
Kamara: What was Misa's clan name? Was he a Sanyo or a Dukule or a Kamara?
 What was his clan?
Samuka: I don't know what kind of person Misa was.
 I say that Misa was Kpelle.
 225 If you are a slave,
 Don't you take the name of the person whose hand you are in? (pause)
 He was a Kromah.
Audience: (Everybody laughed).
Samuka: What happened?

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.4E

LAYI YAYA DOLE

[Zo Misa: the founding of Misadu]

- Kamara: What was his clan? So, Layi Yaya Dole, you know that we have heard many things about Misadu today. We want to know about the Misa who came and settled here and went fishing. I want to know if you know his clan name.
Yaya Dole: His clan?
 230 This is what I know about his clan.
 My father told me in my presence that he was a Sanyo.
Kamara: A Sanyo?
Yaya: Sanyo.
Kamara: You yourself, what do you know about Misa?
Yaya: What do I know about Misa?
 Misa settled in Bayòla.

225 'name': = *si*. 'whose hand you are in': or, 'who owns you.'

228 'What happened?' Sumaka Kromah was essentially asking, 'Why are you laughing?'
 Everyone laughed because Kromah associated his clan, the Kromah, with a slave, by saying that Zo Musa's slave owner was a Kromah.

229-66 Yaya Dole's interview was about three minutes long.

231-239 Yaya Dole's statement that Zo Musa was a Sanyo is compares to Vase Kamala's claim that he came from Sanyola (App. 7.6, l. 1385). Sanyola means 'Sanyo town (*la*).'

234 'Misa settled in Baayòla': Baayòla: means 'Baayò town (*la*).' Yaya Dole said that the three citizens (l. 235) moved from Baayòla to Musadu (App. 7.8, ll. 16-28). According to Ibrahim Béété, the three strangers moved from Baayòla to Musadu after the three citizens were already in Musadu (App. 7.35, ll. 28-44).

- 235 There were three of them: him, Jufa Kòni, and Zo Jala.
 They were in Bayòla.
 It is only about four kilometers from here.
 That is it.
 When they left and came here,
- 240 They caught fish that remained on the land after the water flowed over the
 riverbank.
 They caught most of the fish.
 They said, “Father, please allow us to move to the big river so we can catch the
 fish when the river floods.”
 He agreed.
Kamara: Is the father who you are talking about his own father or his slave father?
Yaya: He came to Misadu.
- 245 Three of them came and settled here.
 That is how Misadu was founded.
 People slept in Misadu when they came.
Kamara: Were his two friends also slaves? What kind of people were they?
Yaya: One person’s name was Jufa Kòni.
 The other person’s name was Zo Jala.
- 250 They were the three persons.
Kamara: Who are the descendants of Misa today in this town?
Yaya: His descendants are the old men.
 He is a Sanyo.
Kamara: So you want to tell me that all of the Sanyo are slave children?
Yaya: They are not slaves.
Audience: (Everybody laughed).
Yaya: He was Kpelle and the other one was Kpelle.
Kamara: Misa was a slave?
- 255 Yaya: He was the ancestor of the Sanyo.
 He was a slave.
 Slaves do not have clan names.
 That is how they came to Misadu.
 They were catching fish.
- 260 Fuemuò Dole, Tumaningèmè and Foningama.
 They were the three strangers,
 And there were three citizens.
 They came and met them.
Kamara: All of you who have come and talked to me have said that Misa was

235 ‘him [Zo Musa], Jufa Kòni, and Zo Jala’: See Vase Kamala (App. 7.5, ln. 1462) and Yaya Dole (App. 7.8, ll. 2-17) for more information. Zo Jala was the same person as Jala Musa or Ngana Musa (Ibrahim Béété, App. 7.35). This was probably Zo Jala Musa the *ngana* (‘master’) (Ch. 4).

251 ‘His descendants are the old man’: Dole might have been directing his comment to Kalifa Sanyo, who spoke earlier in the interview.

254 Dole identified either Zo Musa or Jufa Kòni as Loma in his longer interview (App. 7.8, ll. 4-5). Since Yaya states that Zo Musa was Kpelle in this line, then Dole probably meant to say that Jufa was Loma. Jufa’s last name, Kòni or Konè, is Manding.

Kpelle. He was Kpelle. So, who are his descendants?

265 Yaya: His descendants are the Sanyo.

Kamara: Are they Kpelle or Loma or Mandingo?

Yaya: His descendants are Sanyo.

Kamara: The Sanyo are the citizens of this place?

Yaya: All three of them were slaves.

Kamara: Thank you for coming and talking to us. The person who founded this town was Old Man Misa. We thank you, because you talked to us today. We are going to close our program. This program has been about Misadu. Our chief is also the imam of the town. He is with us at the microphone. What can you tell your children about this town, about how the town is today?

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.5

KÈWULÈN KAMARA AND JALA KAMARA

Location and date of interview: Kuankan (Kwanga), Guinea, 12 December 1985

Interviewed by: Djobba Kamara

Context of interview: Djobba Kamara recorded this interview when he went on a Radio ELWA sponsored broadcasting trip to Guinea. The first side of the tape consists of an hour of short discussions with three to four dozen people who sent greetings to family and friends in Liberia and other parts of Guinea. Kuankan chief Ngamoi Kamã Kamara introduced Djobba to Jala Kamara. The chief and a half-dozen other men were present for this interview, and were often asked to confirm what he said. It is not clear whether the recording of this oral tradition was conducted in the same place and setting as those who sent messages.

Transcribed by: Ansumana Cissé

Translated by: Boakai Yahah (Monrovia, 1992)

Checked by: Ali Kromah (tape, transcript, and translation) (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek & Boakai Yahah (transcript/translation) (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

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[Oral and written transmission of history]

Kèwulèn Kamara: May God make it a blessing. (children talking in the background)

Djobba Kamara: Amin.

Kèwulèn: I am doing this because of my uncle.

The way that the talk will be, our ancestors...

It did not happen in our presence.

5 What we were told is what I am going to say.

We don't have a book.

An educated person will put this talk down in writing.

[Faingama migrates from Sibi to Gbè]

Our ancestor Faingama,

He came from Sibi, near Bamako.

10 That is that town that you pass when you go to Bamako

The mountain there is open.

That is the hill that our ancestor went to.

Djobba: What was his name?

Kèwulèn: They said Sibi.

Djobba: But our ancestor who went there, what was his name?

Kèwulèn: Faingama.

Djobba: Foningama, right?

15 Kèwulèn: Yes.

Djobba: You are talking about how Buse was settled, the way Buse was settled,
all the way to Kwanga.

Kèwulèn: That was going down.

You have to come from somewhere before you go home.

When he [Faingama] left from there [Sibi],

He went to Gbè.

21 'elephant taboo': *sama tama*.

[Kònsaba in Gbè; elephant taboo]

- 20 His first son was born there.
They had the elephant taboo.
They are the Kònsaba people.
Those were his first children.
Djobba: Kònsaba.
Kèwulèn: Ooh.
Djobba: That was his first son.

[Faingama's *wulukili* sacrifice and his leopard taboo]

- 25 Kèwulèn: Yes.
It happened that God made it hard for him [Faingama] to have children.
They told him to sacrifice one hundred-hundred of each item.
The people before us call this *wulukili* sacrifice.
He made that *wulukili* sacrifice.
- 30 But at the time that the sacrifice was made,
The *jèli* came and said, "I want you to put it in my mouth."
If you put it in my mouth,
It will be good."
He said, "Okay, I agree."
- 35 He said, "They told you about the sacrifice.
I am not saying that you should give the sacrifice to me.
The *mori* man that you will give it to...
I know where he is.
When he blesses a dry tree,
40 Its leaves turn green.
When he curses a living tree,
Its leaves turn dry.
I know where that *mori* is.
But you should put some in my mouth.
Djobba: The *jèli* was the one who talked to...
- 45 Kèwulèn: The *jèli* was the one who told him that.
Djobba: To Foningama?
Kèwulèn: Yes, Faingama, it was the *jèli* who talked to him.
Then he [Faingama] said, "I agree."
As they say, "Faingama's *wulukili* sacrifice."
Anyone who says, "I should eat leopard," is included.
- 50 That was the sacrifice that he made. (commotion in the background)

22 Kònsaba: Usually identified as Foningama's older brother.

31 'I want you to put it in my mouth:' Kamara seems to have been saying that if Faingama or Foningama gave some of the sacrifice to him, that he (the *jèli*) would say something good about Faingama (from his mouth).

37 'the *mori* man': Vali Swèlè, or Al-Hajj Salim Sware (Ch. 7).

Another person: Who...

Djobba: No, no, it's the children.

Kèwulèn: He then took the horse and placed it in the *jèli*'s hand.

The *jèli* said, "I know a *mori*,

And I will give this horse to him.

I told you to put it in my mouth.

[The *jèli* contacts Vali Swèlè]

55 He then went and met Father Swèlè.

He said, "Give me the horse sacrifice.

Let me give it to him."

He went and met him.

Faingama's sacrifice was made and given to him.

60 That sacrifice was given to him.

At that time, his friend, the ancestor of the Dukuwe...

He was across the river,

And the river was flooded.

Since the river was flooded he said, "I will not go get him."

65 He [Dukule] said, "Since he [Swèlè] has come to give something to me...

Ancestor Dole is here."

He [Swèlè] said, "To say that I am going to get the Dukuwe ancestor,

I am going to do that.

The Dukuwe ancestor should come."

Djobba: Please excuse me. The sacrifice was given to the Dukuwe Binyè, right?

70 Kèwulèn: No, Vali Swèlè.

Djobba: Who?

Kèwulèn: Vali Swèlè. (louder)

Djobba: Valai Sièlè?

Kèwulèn & audience: Swèlè.

Djobba: Sware.

Kèwulèn: Ooh.

Djobba: Vali Sware.

Kèwulèn: The *mori* man went and gave...

75 When he [Vali Swèlè] curses a tree its leaves dry up.

Anything that he said - happened.

Djobba: That was the *mori* that he went and gave [the sacrifice] to, right?

Kèwulèn: Right, his name was Vali Swèlè.

Djobba: Which town did he live in? (laughter in the background)

Kèwulèn: Eh, that was a long time ago.

55 Vali Swèlè (Sware), l. 70.

61 'friend': the term 'walking mate' implies someone of the same age, peer group, and/or occupation.

71 The speaker's pronunciation of Sware is not clear on the tape.

Most of the work that we have mentioned came from Makka.
 80 All of these, from here down...
 Everyone came down up to the time that they came down.
 Whenever one person settled,
 When that person got power...
 His generation,
 85 Where they would go settle...
 God would give them the power,
 And they would settle there.
 That was what was happening when they reached here.

[Vali Swèlè summons the Dukuwe and Dole ancestors]

When that sacrifice was given to him,
 90 He [Swèlè] got up and went to his friend,
 The Dukuwe ancestor on the other side of the river.
 The river was flooded.
 He [Swèlè] wrote a letter and tied it on the wing of a *sokònòni*.
 It flew away and sat down [on the riverbank].
 95 The crawfish lifted its head and its arm.
 It [the *sokònòni*] thought that it [the *gbaya*] was a stick and sat on it.
 The crawfish grabbed it and dragged it under the water.
 After that happened,
 The fish came and swallowed it.
 100 It remained in the stomach,
 And then a crocodile swallowed it.
 That is what the *mori* man said, "My messenger was detained while coming.
 We have to go there."
 When they went by the river,
 105 By the bank of the river,
 The crocodile was laying there.
 They killed the crocodile.
 After they killed the crocodile,
 He took the *lisimu* out of its stomach.
 110 He took the letter out and said, "Oooh."
 He said, "Vali Swèlè is calling us.
 He said, "We should go."
Djobba: Vali Sware sent the message to...
Kèwulèn: Aye, to Dukuwe Bina.

79 A reference to *baraka* and sorcery that Fajigi, Fakoli and others are said to have brought from Mecca (Moraes Farias 1989; Conrad 1992).

93 *sokònòni*: Faliku Sanoë said that this is a small black bird with a white chest.

95 'crawfish': = *gbaya*. Also called 'crabfish.' The crawfish ate the letter, the fish ate the crawfish, and the crocodile ate the fish.

102 'the *mori* man': Dukule.

Djobba: Dukule Binyè. He was across the river, right?
Kèwulèn: He was across the river.
Djobba: So that particular town is not known, right?
 115 Kèwulèn: No, because that did not happen at this time.
 At the time that our ancestor came from Sibi to come down here,
 That did not happen at that time.
 As the *mori* came from there,
 From the place where the sun rises.
 120 If we mind...
 When they came...
 Then he took his prayer skin.
 The river was flooded.
 He said, "My friend has called me."
 125 He lay his prayer skin over the river.
 He and his friend got on the prayer skin and crossed the river.
 He then came and met our ancestor.

[The *molilu* bless Faingama's *wulukili* sacrifice]

Djobba: Our ancestor?
Kèwulèn: Foningama.
 He came and met Foningama.
 130 He said, "The sacrifice that you sent,
 I have come to bless it."
 He said, "I agree."
 The Swèlè now, Dòlè, Dukuwe Bina,
 The three of them...
 135 The fourth one slipped from my mind.
 Four of them remained there now.
 The blessing that they offered...

[The Swèlè and Dukuwe wait for banana seeds]

When the sun comes up,
 Like it is coming on this porch or my house...
 140 When they [Faingama] brought some short bananas,
 They shared some with them [the *mori*].
 Then they [the *mori*] said, "We are leaving."
 He [Faingama] said, "You are leaving?"
 But this thing is sweet.
 145 They are bringing the seed.
 Can't you sit down?

115 It happened so long ago that he does not know the date.

125 'his friend': Dole?

137 'blessing': *duwawu*.

When the seeds come,
 Then you can take some of them back with you.”
 So they sat and waited for the banana seeds.
 150 From that day until today,
 They are still waiting for those banana seeds.
Djobba: Where did they settle?
Kèwulèn: The Dukuwe who were there and the Swèlè,
 They are not in the same land.
Djobba: Are they in every part?
Kèwulèn: Yes.
 155 They are in every part.
 Whenever you see Dukuwe,
 They are waiting for the banana seeds.
 If you talk to the Swèlè,
 They will say, “We are waiting for the banana seeds.”
 160 Even those who are in this town [Kwanga],
 That is what they all say.
 They say, “We are waiting for the banana seeds.”
 While that was happening,
 Our ancestor remained in Misadu.

[Faingama]

Djobba: He [Faingama] left Sibi and settled in Misadu?
 165 Kèwulèn: Ah -
Djobba: He came from Sibi?
Kèwulèn: He came from Gbè.
 When he left Sibi,
 He went to Gbè.
 That is where he came from before he settled in Misadu.
 170 A-hoo, there are many of them (children in the room),
 But I just grabbed one on the neck.
 If you are not clever,
 Something that is written...
 The one that is not written cannot be understood easily.
 175 The one you know is the one that you talk.
 Even up to these places,
 We have known about all of those.
Djobba: According to what you are saying, when they left Sibi, they sent to Gbai,
 right?

149 ‘waited for the banana seeds’: They waited for the banana seeds for such a long time that they stayed and built a town which some say was Nionsamoridu (see Ch. 7).

153 The Dukuwe and Swèlè are not confined to one area.

170-71 ‘there are many of them, but I just grabbed one on the neck’: Speaking of the children who were interrupting the interview.

Kèwulèn: Haa.

Djobba: Gbai land. He came from -

Kèwulèn: He came to Misadu.

[Zo Misa's sacrifices and sorcery]

180 Before they reached,
Zo Misa was already there.

Djobba: Zo Misa was the one who was in Misadu?

Kèwulèn: A-oooh, to say Kòniya, Kòniya - 'the rock' is there.

The name of the rock where he made his offerings was "Goni."

That is the rock that is called "Gòni."

Djobba: Zo Misa was the one who made offerings at that rock?

185 Kèwulèn: Yes.

Zo Misa, the leaf medicine that he had,

The day it came out,

It took things from the edge [of town].

When it saw dogs and children walking,

190 It caught them.

[The *mori* destroy Zo Misa's medicine]

The *mori* came and wrote a *lisimu* and put it on a frog.

When it [Zo Misa's *fila*] grabbed the frog, it exploded - kpo.

[Zo Misa curse]

Zo Misa said, "Eh!

Faingama, you have come to settle with me,

195 But because of your attitude,

We will not come to any understanding.

I must go down."

[Zo Misa travels to Zota]

He left and settled in this town of Zota,

Which is close to Zalikoli.

Djobba: Zota?

200 Kèwulèn: He went and founded this town called Zota.

Audience member: About Zèbèla?

Kèwulèn: It is not close to Zèbèla.

It is close to Zalikoli.

182 *kòniya*: means 'on the rock' in Kpelle. This normally refers to Koniya Mountain.

186 'leaf medicine' (*fila*): medicine made from leaves and other ingredients.

199 Zalikoli: = N'Zerekore.

- It is in the region of Zalikoli.
In fact, his towns are three.
205 There is no paramount chief over them.
They are not part of other [towns],
And other [towns] can't be added to theirs.

[The division of Faingama's children in Misadu]

- Ahoo - after that, our ancestor had children.
The division took place in Misadu.
210 Faingama's children...
All of the Jomani went into the forest area because of his power, big power.
Djobba: Faingama was the one who did that?
Kèwulèn: He did that.
Djobba: He is the ancestor of all the Jomani from Sibi?
Kèwulèn: He is our Jomani ancestor who came from Sibi.
Djobba: A-han.
Kèwulèn: He is our ancestor.
215 He did the division.
His first son was the one who stayed in Gbai.
They are called the descendants of Kònsaba.
He was the first son.
Djobba: Kònsaba?
Kèwulèn: Yes, the descendants of Kònsaba.
220 He was the first son.
As that was happening,
In Jila, in Gbana, in Simanu, in Gbeladu, in Kun - Buse, in Kunukòlò...
The Buse land,
To say Buse...
225 It started a long time ago.
The boundary [of Buse] and Kòniya is Gbolo Fasa, near Nyusumudu.
It goes from Gboisani hill and across to Gbordü.
Djobba: I do not understand if Foningama's descendants are in Buse.
Kèwulèn: Any part of the world that you go,
If anybody says "*Ni sòli don*,"
230 They are his descendants,
They are the ancestor (?) of the Jomani.
Djobba: You said that he made a division. What did he divide?

221 'as that was happening': perhaps refers to the 'division' and the place where Foningama's sons went.

229 "*Ni sòli don*": = "I (*ní*) eat (*do*) leopard (*sòli*)."
Leopard is the taboo of Foningama's descendants. The taboo of Foningama's ancestors was the elephant (l. 21-24). According to this and several other accounts, the Kamara say that they will do anything that they want to do. So, when they are in a situation where they are prohibited from doing something as in this case, they say 'I eat leopard.' This is a play on words, for they will not eat their own taboo.

Kèwulèn: His children.
Djobba: He divided children?
Kèwulèn: He divided the children among many regions.
 [He said], "You, you go live there.
 235 You, you go settle there."
 That was the division.
 Simanu was part of it.
 Koningo was part of it.
 Manu was part of it.
 240 Konokua was part of it.
 Koligblama was part of it.
 Kwadu was part of it.
 That Kwadu,
 It is the Jomani youth who are in Gbaiyalò.
 245 Borgòlidu, we are of the same...
 We are all the people of Yaka Kamanu.
 That Jaka Kamara,
 His father...
 His father was Masèni Kèkula.
 250 His son was Yaka Kama.
 Jaka Kama, his generation are the people of old man Gbekile [of] Bòngòdu.
 Old man Gbekile and all his descendants,
 Anyone who is indigenous to Kwadu is a Jomani.
 In Kwadu [and] Koligblama,
 255 We are one with them.
 They are the Sosodu people.
 That happened.
 They went there.
 That was caused by war...

* * *

[Kamara genealogy]

Jala Kamara: ...Your generation was this Kèsèli Kaman,
 Kèsèli Kaman, his son's name was Masèni Kèkula.
 His son was Jèkè.
 280 His son was oldman Gbekule.
Djobba: Those are all children of Kèsèli Kaman?
Jala: They are the children of Kèsèli Kaman.
Djobba: Who was the father of Kèsèli Kaman.
Jala: Kèsèli Kaman.
Kèwulèn and Jala: His father's name was added,

251 Bòngòdu: The transcript reads Boingoedu.

- And he was called Kèsèli Kaman.
 285 His father's name was Sosowala.
Kèwulèn: Sosowala's father's name was Vaseyan.
Djobba: Who was Vasejan's father?
Jala: Èèh...
Djobba: Foningama?
Kèwulèn: Aan.
Djobba: Foningama.
Jala: This Foningama,
 290 His ancestor's name was Faran Gamara.
 He was the one who left.
 Falan Kamara, his first son was Vaselejan.
 Vasejan - Vasejan's son was Sosowala.
 Sosowala's son was Kèsèli.
 295 Kèsèli's son was Kèsèli Kaman.
Kèwulèn: Kèsèli Kaman's son was...
Jala: Masèni Kèkula.
 And Jèkè and, èh - Gbekuwe.
 Gbèkuwe went towards Koedu, èh - Kwadu,
 300 And you people are his descendants.
 Good.
 Jaka Kaman was the son of Masèni Chèkula.
 We are the ones here...

* * *

[Jaka Kaman's ancestors]

- Djobba: We thank you. But do remember how many generations removed you are
 from the settling of Kwanga?
Kèwulèn: Generations or clan?
Djobba: Can you remember, since this town was established, since this town was
 established, how many generations Kwanga was settled before you came?
Kèwulèn: Since this town was founded,
 We don't remember the years,
 But we remember the number of generations.
 630 The person who uprooted the trees of this town was Jaka Kaman.
 Jaka Kaman, his first son was Kamani Kuya.
 Kamani Kèkula, his first child was Main Gama.
 Mani Kaman, his first son was Manga Moliba.
 Manga Moiba, his first son was Konu Kaman.
 635 He killed so much that he never lived.
 Konu Kaman's younger brother was Dokòwulèn.

293 Vaselejan: also Fasuejan or Va-sudyan.

301 *bon*: 'good. Throughout the text, the speaker used the French words *bon* or *voilà* ('there').

Dokòwulèn's child is living today,
And that person - Nyanawulèni...

Djobba: Where is oldman Nyanawulèni?

Kèwulèn: He is here,

640 And he is a young man.

Djobba: But you did not mention your name?

Kèwulèn and Jala: No, no. It is not like that.

Kèwulèn: The reason why I am not included is because the counting goes from the
first sons,

Because we are many children, many children.

We can't name all of them one by one.

645 The first son, the first son, the first son,

Or Faingama's son.

Eh-han, that is it.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.6

VASE KAMALA

Place and date of interview: Fombadu, Guinea, 12 December 1985

Context: Vase Kamala was a retired school teacher and World War II veteran. He was from Fombadu, but people said that he also lived in Côte d'Ivoire for a while. This might explain why he is so familiar with the Kònsaba portions of the epic that took place in present-day Côte d'Ivoire (l. 1031-1381). I first learned about Vase Kamala after a friend of mine, Makula Mammadi Kromah, purchased one of Vase's oral traditions on cassette from a Lebanese merchant nicknamed "Sam" in Monrovia in 1985. Djobba Kamara roughly translated the tape at that time. The next time that Djobba Kamara went to Guinea, he went to Fombadu and interviewed Vase Kamala.

Djobba Kamara traveled east after he interviewed Kèwulèn Kamara and Jala Kamara in Kuankan, and went to Fombadu on December 21. Djobba's brother Ansumana Kamara took Djobba to Fombadu on his motorcycle. The chief of Fombadu introduced Djobba to Vase Kamala. Vase Kamala knew Djobba's father and was familiar with Djobba as a broadcaster. Djobba conducted the interview in Vase Kamala's round mud house with front and back doors open. It was very hot, and nobody interrupted him. Many more people came as the interview progressed. Some women were present, but most of the audience was children. Djobba changed batteries several times during the interview, and people talked between battery changes. Djobba interrupted a few times to ask questions. When Vase gave answers which provided information that he may not have otherwise given, Djobba's questions and Vase's answers are retained in the text. Some of

Vase's responses to Djobba's questions, however, repeat what he already said, so they have been omitted. In many instances after Djobba asked a question, Vase summarized what he had been saying before he continued with his narrative. This material is also not included. Djobba also carried his translation of the tape that Makula Mohammed purchased earlier that year, and read the translation while Vase talked. Djobba asked a question at one point from this translation while Vase was talking. This question and Vase's response have been retained.

Vase Kamala's oral tradition is important because his is one of the most systematic and detailed in southeastern Guinea, and because his narratives are the most widespread in the region. Vase spoke for about two hours and forty-five minutes, and his text is 3,147 lines long. The Sunjata, Musadu and Samori sections are 1030, 662, and 1463 lines long respectively. This whole interview was published in Dutch.¹

Translation: Djobba Kamara transcribed Vase's interview at one of Fata Bakari Kromah's houses in Macenta in June 1992. Muhammed Chèjan Kromah then translated the tape into English with Tim Geysbeek, with the exception of lines 359-482 of the Sunjata epic which Djobba Kamara and David Conrad translated together. Djobba was working with David Conrad in another room when Chèjan and Geysbeek were translating the tape. We consulted Kamara, Conrad and others when we had questions about how to translate a word or phrase. Geysbeek typed the handwritten translation after he returned to Monrovia. In Monrovia, Boakai Yamah listened to Vase's interview and checked the transcript and translation for accuracy. Geysbeek then read the translation and consulted Yamah when he had questions. In the summer of 1995, Geysbeek listened to the

¹Geysbeek et. al. 1998.

interview and made final changes.

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[THE KAMARA FROM MANDE TO WOLODU]

Kaman Kamala returned to Sibi,

To his father's land.

Sibi Kamanjan's son's name was Fè.

Fè's son name was Kaman.

1035 Kaman's son was Kòngèjan.

Kòngèjan traveled through the country and passed the land of Wasolon.
He passed Toron and stayed in Kèwa.
He went and settled in Diemou which is in Wolodu.

[CONSPIRACY AGAINST FONINGAMA IN DIEMOU]
[Fòningama and his family]

- He sired Sumaka there.
- 1040 Sumaka married a Koloma woman from Misadu, Makula Dama Soba.
She was Tumaningèmè and Yiabolo's younger sister.
Her sons were Kònsaba, Fanyala, Fòningama, Kònsama, and Kònsaku.
But Fòningama was very good looking and had a good character.
Men loved him and women loved him.
- 1045 He fell in love with a Talawole woman,
And she became pregnant.
She had a son named Fèn Jala.
He became the ancestor of our brothers from Simandu.

[The conspiracy against Fòningama]

- They conspired against Fòningama.
- 1050 They said, "There is a reason for his popularity.
There is a reason why he is popular.
If we do not end his popularity,
He will throw our country into a state of chaos."
They dug a hole in a house and laid a sheepskin over the hole.

[Fòningama summoned to a meeting]

- 1055 They summoned Fòningama to the elder's house.
His father did not know what was being planned,
And his brothers did not know what was being planned.
All of the people were seated before he entered the house.

1038 'He went and settled in Diemou which is in Wolodu': In his version that has been published (Geysbeek/Kamara 1994), Vase said that Kòngèjan met the Kromah and Konè when they moved to Diemou. (The speaker said Jèmu). The Konè followed the Kromah to Diemou (l. 8-14). The Kromah and Konè apparently immigrated from Sankaran (Person 1964:325,332; Niane 1975:100; Arntson 1994).

1042 Our assistants gave the following translations of these names. Kònsaba: 'hunger (*kòn*) off (*sa*) doer (*ba*)' - 'person who stops hunger'; or 'kòn big (*ba*) snake (*sa*).' Fa Yala (Jala): 'Father (*fa*) lion (*yala/jala*)'; Kònsama: 'hunger (*kòn*) elephant (*sama*),' or 'hunger (*kòn*) [during] rainy season (*sama*).'
Kòn, the word for 'hunger,' is present in three of Sumaka's sons names - Kònsaba, Kònsama, and Kònsaku. Could these names be faint memories of a dry spell?

1043 Fòningama: Some sources imply that Kama is equivalent to Kamara. Others say that Kama is separate and does not mean Kamara, and that his full name was Foni Kama Kamara or Fòningama Kamara.

1049 They: the people of Wolodu (l. 1106).

But the place over the hole was unoccupied.

[The Hole: I]

- 1060 They said, “Diomandé, please sit down!”
He said, “Oh! All of my elders are sitting on the ground,
And you want me, a child, to sit on the skin over you?”
They replied, “Yes, you can sit there because of the respect of your grandfather.”
He approached the skin.
1065 He placed one of his feet on the skin,
And the skin fell into the hole.
When he jumped away from the hole,

[Fòningama’s inheritance: the gold bracelet and Dioma hat]

- The gold bracelet that he was wearing...
His father had given the bracelet and Dioma hat to Fòningama,
1070 And his father had hid them from his brothers.

[The Hole: II]

- The bracelet fell into the hole.
Fòningama ran to the door and said, “What are you after?
What do you want to do with me?
Anyone of you who have confidence in yourselves can pursue me.
1075 I am leaving.”

[Fòningama’s instructions and departure from Diemou]

He went and entered the house of the Talawole woman.
He took the Dioma hat and gave it to her.
He said, “When my son grows up,
Give this hat to him and let him follow me.”

[FONINGAMA AND THE KWIYATE]
[Fòningama meets the Kwiyaṭè jèlì]

- 1080 After Fòningama left,
He met the Kwiyaṭè man on the road.

1069 ‘Dioma (Joma) hat’: For a discussion of occult-laden hats, see McNaughton (1988:125) and Appendix I. The Kamara in Kuankan talk about a similar hat that the mid-nineteenth century chief, Jaka Kaman Kamara, possessed. The Kamara say that this hat was passed down from chief to chief, and that it still exists today. Wata Mammadi Kamara said this hat was designed with different size threads and affixed with *lisimu*, and claimed that people could not look inside the hat (l. 1207-15; see Prussin 1986:80-81). The Konè supposedly possessed a similar hat (l. 573-76).

He wanted to explain the situation to him,
But the man said, “Fòningama, a plot has been directed against you.
Let’s go to my home town.”

[Kwiyatè escorts Fòningama to his home]

- 1085 They went to his town.
He had six sons.
He said, “God has put me and my six sons in the blessing of your grandfather.
We must not remain here.
We must go to Mau.

[Fòningama and Kwiyatè’s sons form a blood pact in Mau]

- 1090 That is how they reached Mau.
That is why Fòningama went to Mau.
Djobba: Who was Nakumala?
Vase: Nakumala was Nari Manga’s *jèli*.
He was the *jèli* called Falakòlò Mange.
His son was Bala Fasseke, Manin Sunjata’s *jèli*.
1095 The Kwiyatè who met him in Diemou was not the same person.
When they reached Mau,
The Kwiyatè man scratched the skin of his children and Fòningama,
And mixed the blood.
That is why our brothers,
1100 The Diomani in Mau,
Are the descendants of the Kwiyatè.
Otherwise, Fòningama never married in Mau or had any children there.

[THE KAMARA IN GBÈ]
[The prophecy of Fòningama]

Their father Sumaka said [to the people Diemou], “I love my son very much.
People told me that he would rule the four corners of the country,

1092 Nakumala is a variant of Nyanuman (Jankuma) Duga, Sunjata’s father’s bard.

1096-97 One assistant suggested that Kwiyatè (Kuyateh) may have followed the custom of rubbing skin on skin, mixing blood in the process (Ch. 3).

1098 Sumaka: This may be a variant Silamaka, one of the alleged *funé* ancestors (Conrad 1995:100-101).

1104 Four is a significant number in the occult (Conrad 1990:44, ln. 21). In ancient Manden, there are said to have been four principles by which the world was made (Zahan 1974:1-6), four casts (Dieterlen 1954:40; Kamissoko/Cissé 1977:413) and four archery clans (Kamissoko/Cissé 1977:413). There are several examples in the Musadu epic where narrators use the number four: Béété brothers moved from Musadu and founded Beyla (Samuka Kromah 1985, App. 7.4c, l. 124-131); it was predicted that Fòningama would rule the four corners of the world (Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1104, 1289); Fòningama married four women (Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37, l. 662-665); the four men of Jan

- 1105 And that we would benefit.
The people of Wolodu plotted against him and drove him away.”

[Divination for Sumaka]

- People had told Sumaka,
“The day you are ready to leave,
When you see the two mountain peaks,
1110 God will make you prosperous when you settle there.”

[Sumaka travels to Mt. Gbèsisèn in Solona, Gbè]

- After he left Wolodu,
He saw the mountain of Gbèsisèn.
It had two heads.
He moved to the base of the mountain.
1115 The name of the town there was Solona.
Those who made sacrifices at the mountain lived there.

[Kpelle areas]

- The Kpelle people lived there at that time.
They lived in Kèwa, Beela-Farana, Jila, Wolodu, Gbè, Gbana, and Kòniya.
All of the people who lived there were Kpelle.
1120 Those were Kpelle areas.

[Loma areas]

The Loma lived in all of these areas:
Kèwa, Simandu, Gbaladu, the region of Linko, Kelawani, Buse, Konakuò,
Kolibliama, Kwanga and Fòòma.

[Kònsaba threatens the Kpelle]

- They went to Solona and lived with the people.
When they reached at night,
1125 Kònsaba sent people around saying,

made the *wakèlèn salaka* for Foningama (Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d, App. 7.37, l. 679), four of Fòningama’s sons attacked a market (Wata Mammadi Kamara n.d., App. 7.37, l. 824-836), and four of Fòningama’s sons were executed for breaking Musadu’s laws (Ch. 8).

1115 Solona: modern Sinko. Solona was in Gbè (l. 1144).

1122 Kelawani: = Kerouane. Konakuò: = Konokòlò. Kwanga: = Kuankan. Fòòma = Vukkah.

“The *jamana-ti* has come.
Anyone who is here one week from now will be killed.”
They made the people afraid by what they said.

[The Kpelle move to the forest: I]

That is why the Kpelle moved to the wilderness.

Djobba: You said that the people settled at a mountain that had two heads.

1130 Vase: Yes, that mountain was Gbèsinsèn.

The people who lived around that mountain were the Gbèlèsè.

That is what they were called because they lived around Gbèsinsèn mountain.

That is where the Kpelle came from.

[Kòniya]

Kòniya was the country of the Kpelle.

1135 *Kòniya* in Kpelle means ‘rock.’

Ya means ‘water.’

Kòni means *falakòlò* (‘in the rocky creek’).

They say Kòniya Bamakòlò, Kòniya Falakòlò.

If you don’t die in water infested with crocodiles - Bamakòlò (‘in the crocodiles’),

1140 You will die in water filled with rocks - Falakòlò.

The Kpelle named all these things.

Our discussion will soon reach to that point.

[Sumaka and the Kamara in Gbè]

Fòningama remained in Mau for some time.

His father settled in the region of Gbè with his older brothers and younger brothers.

1126 ‘ruler of the region’ (*jamanatì*): Literally, ‘region (*jamana*) owner (*tì*).’ Kònsaba was speaking about himself. Kònsaba’s father Sumaka is not present in the episodes that describe Kònsaba’s dealings with the Kpelle or Fòningama. Read literally, Sumaka may have died in Diemou or shortly after they reached Solona.

1131 Gbèlèsè: Kpelle.

1134 Kòniya: Vase said Koniye this time. Vase’s other pronunciations are Koniya, Koniye, Koiye, Koinya, and Koinye. Ibrahim Béété said Konye, and Yves Person wrote Konyan (see App. C). Other combined translations of Konya in Kpelle and Maniyakā are ‘hilly/rocky’ (Kp. *koni*) place (Ma. *ya*)’ (Beavogui 1973-74), ‘rocky (Kp. *koni*) mountain (Ma. *ya*)’ (Ibrahim Béété 19923, App. 7.35), ‘in the rock’ for Gòni’ (Kèwulèn Kamara 1985, App. 7.5, l. 182-189; Layi Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16, l. 66-69), and ‘on top of (*ya/nyèn*) the rock (*koni*)’ for Koninyèn (Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8). Translated in Kpelle, Vase Kamala said that Konya means ‘rocky (*koni*) water/creek (*ya*)’ (App. 7.6). Maniyakā equivalents of Konya are Kabatini - ‘rocky (*kaba*) hill (*tini*)’ (Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35), Kabakòlò - ‘rock (*kaba*) in the (*lò*) water/creek’ (*kò*),’ Kabalòji - ‘rock (*kaba*) in the (*lò*) water (*ji*),’ and “Kabakòni” - ‘Kaba creek (*kòni*)’ or possibly ‘small (*ni*) rocky (*kaba*) creek (*kò*)’ (Anonymous 1985, App. 7.4d).

1138 Bamakòlò: = ‘in (*lò*) the creek (*kò*) [with] crocodiles (*bama*).’ Falakòlò = ‘in (*lò*) the rocky (*fala*) creek (*kòò*).’

[The Kpelle make a sacrifice for the Kamara]

- 1145 The Kpelle in Solona said, “You can do whatever you want to do to us here,
But we will not leave because we give offerings at the base of the mountain.
If you want to prosper here,
Bring one cow,
And we will make an offering at the mountain.
Djobba: What was the name of the country?
1150 Vase: Solona.
Solona was the name of the town near Gbèsinsèn mountain.
The name of the *jina* there was Tonba.
They used to make offerings there.

[Sumaka sacrifices a cow to Tonba]

- After that, Sumaka gave one cow to the Kpelle.
1155 When they gave the cow to them,
They offered it to the *jina*.

[KAAMÒÒ MUE KANATE AND VA MUSA BAAYO HELP KONSABA]
[Kònsaba befriends a Donzo cleric]

- But Kònsaba was not happy.
One Friday morning,
A Donzo man passed who was a *kaamòò*.
1160 Kònsaba gave his only daughter to the *kaamòò*.
He gave the girl to the *kaamòò* and asked him to settle there.

[Donzo divines for Kònsaba]

- He said, “Kaamòò, I want you to do some work for me that will make me and
my descendants prosper in Gbè.”
He said, “Go and catch a catfish.”
He caught a catfish and brought it.
1165 The *kaamòò* wrote a *lisimu* and put it in the mouth of the fish.
He said, “Put the fish in the water.”

[A fish takes Donzo’s message to Tumutu]

1152 Tonba: ‘big termite mound’ (personal communication, James Fairhead and Melissa Leach, 28 July 1995).

1159-62 Vase did not tell the story about Donzo and Kònsaba’s daughter in his published version (see App. 7.37, l. 60).

1165 See Conrad (1990:117, ln. 1865).

The fish went to Tumutu behind Segu in Mali.
The fish went to Kaamòò Mue Kanatè who was the grandfather of the Sumawolo.

[Kaamòò Mue Kanatè's dream]

- Before that happened,
1170 Kaamòò Mue Kanatè had dreamed and told the women who fished with nets,
"When you catch any fish,
It will have a message in its mouth."

[The message]

- They caught the fish and brought it to him.
He opened its mouth and removed the *lisimu*.
1175 He read the *lisimu* and said, "They have called us to go to Gbè."
He took Va Misa Baayo with him.
He was the grandfather of the Baayò.

[Kaamòò Mue Kanatè and Va Misa Baayò travel from Tumutu to Gbè]

They traveled nine months before they reached Kònsaba in Gbè.

[Kaamòò Mue Kanatè meets Kònsaba]

- He said, "Diomani, you sent for us,
1180 And we have come."
He said, "You are welcome, you are welcome.
I sent for you.
I want you to do some work so my descendants and I will prosper in Gbè."
Djobba: Who was Kaamòò Mue Kanatè?
Vase: He was the grandfather of the Sumawolo from Tumutu,
1185 Who lived behind Segu in Mali.
He did the *mue* work for Kònsaba and his father Sumaka,
So that God would make them prosper in Gbè.
When he came and Kònsaba explained everything,

[Kònsaba's sacrifice]

He said, "Bring an albino girl with a red pan full of gold."

1167 Tumutu: Vase also said Tumotu. This is Timbuktu (see Innes 1974:235).

1170 Kaamòò Mue Kanatè: Vase identified him as a Sumawolo in lines 678 and 1184 (see l. 1171-74).

1187: 'the *mue* work': or, *kalawa* (Conrad 1990:173).

1189 'albino girl (*mòòlingbè singbìlì*): 'white (*gbè*) person (*mòò*) girl (*singbìlì*).⁹ Offering an albino virgin is the ultimate sacrifice to obtain the favor of the spirits or to escape danger (de Heusch

1190 Kònsaba looked for these items and gave them to the *kaamòò*.

[Kaamòò Kanatè makes the sacrifice for Kònsaba]

He went to the corner of the house where he could work by himself.

He prayed to God.

The earth opened and swallowed the girl, the pan, and the gold.

Then the *kaamòò* came out and went to the fence.

1195 He said, “Kònsaba, tell your people that your work is finished.”

Kònsaba told the people that the work was finished.

[The people of Gbè complain that Kaamòò Kanatè’s sacrifice does not work]

When this was explained to our brothers in Gbè,

They became angry.

They said, “Kònsaba, we are not satisfied.

1200 The *kaamòò* has come and fooled us and carried all our riches.

What has the work done for us?”

[The people of Gbè threaten to kill Kaamòò Kanatè]

They looked at themselves to see if there were any changes.

Then they grabbed the *kaamòò* by his foot,

And dragged him into the middle of crowd in the hot sun.

1205 They told him that if he did not bring back the riches,

They would kill him.

[Kaamòò Kanatè resurrects the sacrifice]

While the *kaamòò* was in the crowd,

He took out his prayer beads.

He prayed to God,

1210 And the girl came back up out of the earth with the gold and the pan.

The people went one-by-one to look in the pan,

And they saw the gold.

[Kaamòò Kuyateh’s blessing and curse]

Then they said, “Oh! The *kaamòò* did not lie.”

Kònsaba said, “Kaamòò, please do the work that I called you to do.”

1215 He replied, “I will do the work,

But you people from Gbè,

1985:165; Conrad 1990:132,180).

1203-06 Vase Kamala made the crowd’s reaction seem more violent in this story than in version that was published in English (Geysbeek/Kamara 1994, l. 131).

Because you did not trust my work,
You will always have enough food,
But you will never become rich.”

[The result of Kaamòò Kanatè’s work]

- 1220 From that time up to 1979,
Till six years ago,
Gbè remained in that condition.
From that time till now,
No man from Gbè has ever become rich,
1225 Either from those who stayed there or those who moved to another place.
This is because of the *kaamòò*’s curse.

[Kònsaba promises to reward Kaamòò Kanatè]

Then Kònsaba said to the *kaamòò*, “You are at home.
In the morning,
I will pay you for your work.”

[Kònsaba’s sacrifice]

- 1230 After they slept,
In the morning,
They went to Gbèsoba for their market day.
When the market was completely full,
When people were not able to shake hands,
1235 When people were just standing,
He called the young men and told them to surround the town.
Then he said to Kaamòò Mue Kanatè and Vamisa Baayò,
“You can have this market and everything that is inside it for the work you have
done.
Human beings are inside.
1240 Horses are inside.
Cows are inside.
Food is inside.
You can have everything in the market.”

1217 ‘you people from Gbè’: specifically, the Kamara.

1220 1979: Vase also cited 1979 on another tape in this context. He did not explain what happened in 1979.

1232 Gbèsoba: = ‘big (*ba*) town (*so*) of Gbè.’

1234 That is, the market was apparently so full that the people did not have enough room to shake hands.

1243 ‘everything in the market’: This is very similar to Fòningama’s *wakèlèn salaka* (l. 1566-1585).

He gave everything that was in the market to the *kaamòò* and left.

[Kaamòò Mue Kanatè and the palm seeds]

- 1245 When they reached the road,
Kònsaba escorted him half-way.
The *kaamòò* put his hand in his pocket and took out one palm seed.
He gave it to Kònsaba and said, “This is so you will remember me.”
He planted the seed and a tree grew.
- 1250 Then Kònsaba sent some of the trees to Fòningama in Misadu.
Wanwaguma birds in our country...
That is the bird that swallowed the seeds and scattered them.
That is where the palm trees come from that are located between here and the
ocean.
There were no palm trees in this land before this time.

[Kaamòò Mue Kanatè divides his gift with Va Misa Baayò]

- 1255 When Kaamòò Mue Kanatè went down the road,
He divided the gifts that he got from the market between himself and Va Misa
Baayò.
He said, “The cane in your hand...
You should settle in the place where it strikes.”

[Va Misa Baayò founds a town]

- His cane struck a *kuokuosun* tree.
- 1260 When his cane stick struck the *kuokuosun* tree,
He sent a message to Kaamòò Mue Kanatè saying,
“My cane struck a tree where you want me to settle,
But there is no river here.”
Kaamòò Mue Kanatè prayed to God,
- 1265 And it rained all night.
Before daybreak,
A big river was created behind the town.
They call it Koloba.
That is how the Koloba River came.

1247 ‘palm seed’: This palm tree (*gbèè*) has a more bushy trunk and bigger branches than the palm trees that have smoother trunks. Both types bear clusters of palm nuts.

1252 ‘the bird that swallowed the seeds and spread them’: The area where the birds dropped the seeds represents much of the land that the Kamara claimed as they migrated from Konya-Mani to today’s northwest Liberia and down to the coast during and after the sixteenth century (Person 1987:259-261).

1268 Koloba: ‘big Kolo.’ Other traditions say that Baayo founded Koro (Kolo) (Ch. 3).

[Kaamòò Mue Kanatè founds Fèlesula]

- 1270 The town that Kaamòò Mue Kanatè created was Fèlesula in Mau.
All the Sumawolo in our land come from Fèlesula.
Those in Fèndeya, Waninò and Kòniya also come from Fèlesula.
The Bama, the Fula, the Dòle, the Kanè, and Kande...
All these people who are Sumawolo originated from Fèlesula,
1275 Fèlesula in Mau.

[THE KOLOMA TAKE FONINGAMA FROM MAU TO GBÈ]

[Fakoli Koloma in Dagbano]

- While that was happening,
Fòningama was in Mau.
Kònsaba had become prosperous in the land of Gbè.
Misadu had become prosperous.
1280 Fakoli Koloma was the first stranger father in Misadu.
Fakoli lived between Misadu and Yakuòdu.
He came from Yakuòdu which is located at the slope of the mountain where the
sun rises.
This place is called Dagbanò.

[Fakoli's six sons in Dagbano]

That is where he lived and where he sired Tumaningèmè, Yiabòò, Kanagbè
Sina, Yakòòjan, Vayabò and Fènyabu.

[Fènyabu takes Fòningama and Kuyateh from Mau to Kònsaba in Gbè]

- 1285 Tumaningèmè called his little brother Fènyabu.

1270 Fèlesula: = Ferentèla.

1271-74 See line 670.

1274 Except for the Fulbe, other sources indicate that the rest of these clans are related or are equivalent. The Bama are Bamagana, not Bamba or Bamana (Conrad 1984:45,51).

1280 Fakoli Koloma: "This reference to Fakoli could be a later hero enjoying an honorific recall back to the warrior Fakoli who left Sumaworo's army to join Sunjata. At the same time, in a culture where the distant past can be regarded as one block of time in which heroes who lived centuries apart can intermingle, the traditional view may be that it was the original Fakoli of Sunjata's time who was performing these tasks" (personal communication, David Conrad). Kamala's statement that Fakoli 'was the first stranger father in Misadu' supports other claims that the Kromah were the first Manding to become influential in Musadu, and signals an early Kromah presence given Kamala's use of the name "Fakoli." One or more generations could have lapsed between "Fakoli's" (the Kromah's) migration to the Konya-Mani and the birth of his "sons" Tumaningèmè and Fènyabu (l 1042, 1281-84).

1285-86 Kamala presents Tumaningèmè as urging Fènyabu to search for Fòningama in this version. In another version, Kamala said that Tumaningèmè did not support Fènyabu's idea to get Fòningama because he feared the confrontation that might develop if Zo Musa and Fòningama came in

He sold his horse and gave the money to him so that he could travel.
He said, "We had a dream that Fòningama, our nephew, has been conspired
against in Mau.

You must go get him.

He is the one who was predicted to come rule the four corners of the land so
that all of us can become prosperous in Kòniya.

1290 You must get him."

That is why Fènyabu went and met Fòningama and his *jèli* in Mau.

He thanked his host.

He left with Fòningama and his *jèli*,

And they went to Kònsaba in the Gbè region.

[KONSABA PLOTS AGAINST FONINGAMA IN GBÈ]

[Fènyala introduces Fòningama to Kònsaba]

1295 When they arrived, Fènyabu said,
"Diomani, I brought your brother."

He said, "You are welcome.

Thank God.

I am happy."

[Kònsaba conspires to send Fòningama to Koniya]

1300 But Kònsaba did not want him to stay.
Two hippos can not fit in a deep river.
Kònsaba had someone dig a hole before daybreak.
After the hole was dug,
He put a drummer in the hole early in the morning.

1305 He said, "A stranger will come and talk.
I will ask, 'Will it be good for Fòningama to come live here?'
If you beat the drum,
I will cut your head off and lay it beside your feet.

When I ask, 'Will it not be good for Fòningama to stay here,
1310 Because he will do better if he goes to the land of Kòniya where the sun sets,'
Then beat the drum."

contact with each other (Geysbeek/Kamara 1994, l. 185-191).

1287 He: Tumaningè is speaking here. Fènyabu is the speaker elsewhere (Geysbeek/Kamara 1994, l. 195).

1293 'his *jèli*:' Kwiyatè (l. 1374).

1300 'But Kònsaba did not want him to stay': Many sources claim that Kònsaba conspired to kill Fòningama. Although Kamala claimed that Kònsaba and Fòningama were maternal brothers, it is more likely, as most informants claim, that they were half-brothers if such a fine distinction can be made in oral traditions like this (Ch. 3). Brothers from the same father but different mothers (*fadènya*) are more likely to fight than brothers from the same father and mother (*badènya*) (Bird/Kendall 1980:14-15).

[The ground tells Fòningama to go to Koniya]

- The crowd assembled after they set up all the seats.
The Koloma began to talk.
He said, "I have brought your brother."
1315 The *jèli* spoke for him.
Kònsaba said, "You are welcome, you are welcome.
My people, did you hear what my uncle said?
Thank God.
I am not lonely anymore.
1320 My little brother has come.
But one can not settle in Gbè unless we ask the hole."
He said to the hole,
"You hole, my uncle has gone and brought him here.
Do you think Fòningama should live here?
1325 Hole, talk."
The hole did not talk.
He called one time, two times, three times.
The hole did not talk.
"But if my little brother goes to the place where the sun sets in Kòniya,
1330 Will he become prosperous?
Will I, Kònsaba, benefit from him?
Then hole, talk."
"Ting-ting-ting, ting-ting-ting."
The drummer beat the drum.
1335 The Koloma man said, "Thank you, thank you, thank you Diomani.
We would like to go on the road this afternoon."
He said, "You must sleep here tonight and go early in the morning.
Kòniya is far from here.
When day breaks, you can go."

[Kònsaba plots to kill Fòningama, Fènyabu and Kwiyaatè]

- 1340 After they left the meeting place,
Kònsaba and his people had another meeting.
He said, "If we let these people go like this,
These things will not remain secret.
Tomorrow, if our descendants learn about the lie,
1345 They will be ashamed.
What will be good to do since they are going tomorrow morning will be to put the
kòma outside this evening.
We should kill Fòningama, his uncle, and his *jèli*,

1346 *kòma*: The Maniyaka popularly identify the *kòma* as masked Manding dancers. These masked dancers reportedly only represent the *kòma*. The real *kòma* is associated with spiritual power, instruments and music that the instruments make.

And then everything will be done.

[An old woman warns Fòningama about Kònsaba's conspiracy]

- There was an old woman laying down under the veranda of the house.
1350 She went to the Koloma man and said,
“Koloma, after you finish eating, you should not stay.”
You should go because the *kòma* is coming out tonight to harm you.

[Fènyabu helps Fòningama and Kwiya-tè jump over the wall]

- In the evening,
After they ate,
1355 Koloma took Fòningama and helped him jump over the wall.
Then Fòningama said, “Uncle, I can’t go because I forgot my *jèli* in the house.
He is sleeping.”
Koloma said, “Oh, then wait for me and let me go and get him.”
Koloma went and saw the *jèli* in the house still sleeping.
1360 At the same time the *kòma* was outside.
He rolled the *jèli* in an old mat and carried him on his head.
He met the *kòma* and his followers.
They asked him, “Uncle, where are you going with that mat on your head?”
He replied, “Our room is jammed,
1365 So I am going to my lodging place.”
They said, “Ok. We will see you later.”
After they passed each other,
He lifted the *jèli* over the wall.

[The Diomanu-Kwiya-tè *sanangu*]

- After the *jèli* got out of the mat, he told Fòningama,
1370 “Oh Fòningama, you are foolish!
Did you run away and leave me with the enemy?
Fòningama responded, “But didn’t you meet me in an old mat?”
Then they laughed and shook hands.
That is how the *sanangu* started between the Kwiya-tè and the Diomanu.

[Fènyabu takes Fòningama to Misadu]

- 1375 They went to Misadu and explained everything to his uncle, Tumaningèmè.
Then he took the matter to the *muwuwu*:
The Dòle, the Dukuwe, the Sware, the Kònè, the Turé, and the Sefu.
He introduced them to the people and said,

1355 Thus, according to this oral tradition, the town was fortified.

- “These people are our strangers.
1380 You should give a place to our nephew.
You should do whatever you have to do to make him prosper.

[ZO MUSA FOUNDS MISADU]
[Questions]

But how did Fòningama get a place in town and become prosperous when the
founder of the town, Zo Musa Kòma, was there?
How was Musadu founded?
How did Zo Musa Kòma found Misadu before the Kpelle left?

[Zo Musa in Sanyola]

- 1385 He came from Gbana, in the western part of Jalagbèlèla, in Sanyola.
That is where his grandfather was staying when he came and met Kaamòò Mue
Kuò,
Eh, near Waani.
That is where he was staying,
And where he began to work for him.

[Zo Musa goes fishing for Kaamòò Sware at the Dion]

- 1390 What kind of work was he doing?
He was a fisherman.
He caught fish in the Dion and carried the fish to Kaamòò Mue Kuò.

1383 ‘Misadu founded’: Literally, ‘the trees of Musadu were uprooted.’ After trees are cut down and the stumps are uprooted, the land can be cleared to build houses and make farms.

1384 Zo Musa Kòma: Or, Zo Musa the Kòma.

1385 ‘He came from Gbana, in the western part of Jalagbelela, in Sanyola’: The Sanoe claim that their oldest families in southern Guinea settled in Gbana. There may be a Sanyola in Gbana, but we only know of one that is located about four kilometers west of Musadu - in the opposite direction of Gbana.

1386 Kaamòò Mue Kuò: Vase said that Kaamòò Mue Kuò was a Sware in line 1460. Mue Kuò is a contraction of Mori Kòla (l. 1457) or Mori Kolo. Kaamòò Mue Kuò can be translated ‘old (*kuò/kolo*) cleric (*mue/morì*) teacher (*kaamòò*).’ Most other oral sources say that Zo Musa’s slave owner was a Kromah (ln. 1460). According to Yaya Dole, a Mori Kolo from Ferentela helped Fuomuo Dole destroy Zo Musa’s *saafèlè* in Musadu (App. 7.8, l. 79).

1386 Kaamòò Mue Kuò: Kaamòò Mue means ‘scholar cleric.’ In this version, he was a Sware (l. 1460). Musa was from Gbana. He met Sware near Waani (Wanino).

1391 ‘fisherman’: One wonders if these descriptions that tell how Musa fished reflect modern modes of fishing that have been projected into the distant past, or if they are ancient oral artifacts. For instance, among the Manding’s closely related Kuranko neighbors, women fish with nets in creeks and pools during dry season. Women mostly fish the same way in Kissi areas, and men fish trap (Fairhead/Leach 1996:132-133,164-165). Further north along the Middle and Upper Niger, there is an occupational Manding group called the Somomo who are fisher people. Somono men and women fish (Conrad 2002).

1392 Dion: or, Jòn.

[Sware permits Musa to build a shelter at the Dion]

- One day Musa said to his slave master,
“Kaamòò, I get tired when I walk back and forth from the river every day.
1395 If you agree,
I would like to build one shelter along the river bank.
If I build a shelter there,
I will dry all the fish that I catch and bring them to you.”
The *kaamòò* agreed.

[A town emerges at “Misadu”]

- 1400 He built one shelter by the side of the river and began to take the fish to him every
week.
Then he built two shelters.
Many people began to join him.
The area became a town,
And the town became prosperous.
1405 Those going to the market said, “We slept in Misadu.”
Those coming from the market said, “We slept in Misadu.”

[Sware and his wife move to Misadu]

- Kaamòò Mue Kò’s wife said,
“We own Musa,
And now we have become bystanders.
1410 We still live here in the forest.”
So Kaamòò Mue Kò moved to Misadu,

[Musa’s relations with Sware]

But he did not name the town.
Musa did not become proud.

1393 ‘slave master’ (*jònva/jònfa*): Literally, ‘slave (*jòn*) father (*fa/va*)’: Some assistants said that Kamala’s use of the word *jònva* only means loyalty, devotion, and submission, and that *jònva* did not necessarily imply that Zo Musa was an actual *jòn* (‘slave’). Yet, Kamala’s use of the word *jònva* and his claim that Moe Kuò ‘owned’ Musa (l. 1408) is similar to other statements that some type of servitude was involved (Bangali Koesia 1985, App. 7.4, l. 8-9; S. Kromah 1985, App. 7.4, l. 202-03; Yaya Dole 1985 App. 7.4, l. 252-58; Ch. 4).

1393 ‘slave master’: Kamara later identified him as a Sware (l. 1460).

1396 ‘shelter’ (*toda*): This is a temporary structure with a thatch roof. Palm leaves are sometimes also placed around the frame at the bottom. Such structures (“cook kitchens” in Liberia) are built on farms. These are places where food is cooked and a persons can rest or sleep over night. *Toda* can also be translated ‘small village’ (Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8, l. 243).

1402 ‘Many people’: Ibrahim Béété said that the people who joined Zo Musa were traders (App. 7.35, l. 45-49, 83-90).

He continued to work for him,
1415 And they continued to lived together.

[ZO MUSA'S LISIMU AND THE SHEEP HORN]
[Zo Musa asks for a talisman]

Musa told the *kaamòò*,
“I don't know how long I will stay here,
But I will leave some day because I am Kpelle.
I want you to make a *lisimu* that I can depend on,
1420 That my children can depend on,
And that my grandchildren can depend on.”

[Sware makes a *saafèlè* for Musa]

He took the *lisimu* that the *kaamòò* fixed for him,
And put it in the horn of a sheep.
They called it “*saafèlè*.”

[Zo Musa's *saafèlè* swallows babies and sheep]

1425 He did all of the great things with that *saafèlè*.
When the *saafèlè* saw a baby that could walk,
It swallowed it.
When the *saafèlè* saw a person's sheep,
It swallowed it.
1430 The first people used to bathe their babies,
And lay them on a white cloth under the sun as it rose.
The *saafèlè* swallowed those babies when it saw them.

[THE MUEWU DESTROY ZO MUSA'S SHEEP HORN]
[The Musaduka summon Fuemo Dole from Kèwa]

Everyone, including his slave father, became confused, frightened and bewildered.
Fòningama arrived at that time.
1435 They said, “The work that the *muewu* did,
If we want to overcome this man,

1423 ‘horn of a sheep’ (*saakèlè*): See Yaya Dole (App. 7.8, ln. 63).

1424 *saafèlè*: A *saafèlè* is a hollowed out sheep horn that is usually filled with “medicine” and a *lisimu* or talisman (Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35, l. 135-37; Appendix M). For *saphies*, see McNaughton (1988:62). According to Vase Kamala and others, Zo Musa used his *lisimu* and *saafè* to establish a *nyana* (l. 1487) and *doo* (l. 1472-85) based society which the English-speaking Manding claim was the Poro (ln. 1478). Zo Musa seems to have had a link to the *kòma* (*komo*) as the “Kòma” in his name suggests, as his last name Kromah implies, and as some traditionalists claim (Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35, l. 91-95, 262-69; see App. 7.4, l. 124-31).

1430 ‘first people’: Yaya Dole identified these people as the *daan* (App. 7.8, l. 73).

We have to destroy the thing that is doing all of this bad work.”
 That was the *saafèlè*.
 They said, “There is a *kaamòò* in Kèwa, Kaamòò Fuemò Dòle.”
 1440 He was from the Dòle branch that they call Mayèn Kanasi.
 Others call them the descendants of Famoesia.
 “If he comes and does a good work for us,
 God will make Zo Musa lose his power.”

[Fuemo Dole and Musadu’s *mue* tie a *lisimu* around the frog’s neck]

That is why they went to Kèwa and called Kaamòò Fuemò Dòle.
 1445 When Kaamòò Fuemò Dòle came,
 Kaamòò Fuemò Dòle and the *muewu* worked together,
 And fixed a *lisimu* that they put around the neck of a frog.
 Then they tied the frog on the path that the *saafèlè* passed.

[Zo Musa’s sheep horn swallow’s the *lisimu* and explodes]

The *saafèlè* used to go around the town early in the morning and bark like a dog.
 1450 When it swallowed the frog,
 The *saafèlè* sounded like thunder.
 After it sounded like thunder,
 It exploded.

[ZO MUSA’S CURSE AND THE NYANA] [Zo Musa’s curse]

Zo Musa Kòma came running out of the house and said,
 1455 “Ah, Kòniya.
Djobba: What was the name of the *mue* who Zo Musa Kòma worked for?
Vase: Kaamòò Mue Kò.
Djobba: Kaamòò...
Vase: Mue Kò.
 Mori Kòla.
Djobba: Mori Kòla, right?
Vase: Yes.
 1460 He was a Sware.
 He said, “Ah, Kòniya.

1439 Kaamòò Fuemò Dòle: Yaya Dole described a similar scene, although he said that Fila Layi Kènè was the person who was summoned from the outside (App. 7.8, l. 78-79, 89-94; Ch. 5).

1446 ‘worked together’: Literally, ‘joined hands.’

1460 Sware: Kamala is the only person who claimed that Zo Musa’s alleged slave master was a Sware. Others said that he was a Kromah (e.g., Bangali Koesia 1985, App. 7.4, l. 2-9, 26-29, 237, 262-63; Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8, l. 22-23, 80-86; Ch. 4).

So you consider the stranger to be more important than the citizens here?
 I finished all the work.
 Are you driving me out of town because of Fòningama who just came yesterday?
 1465 Okay.
 You will live together,
 But God will never honor the citizens.
 He will only honor the strangers.”

[Sware makes another *lisimu* for Zo Musa]

Then he went and met Kaamòò Mue Kò.
 1470 He said, “The first work that you did,
 You friends spoiled it.”
 The *kaamòò* fixed the same *lisimu* and gave it to him.
 He put it in a sheep’s horn like the first one,
 And it was just as strong.

[Zo Musa marks people’s backs at Doofatini and forms the Nyana society]

1475 He stood up in Misadu.
 He looked towards the Famoela road on his left and the Sinko road on his right.
 There was a small mountain between both roads that was in a wooded area.
 They call that wooded area - Doofatini.
 That was at the base of the small mountain.
 1480 Zo Musa Kòma fixed that place.
 That is where he used to mark the children.
 He said, “I see the Mani people.
 The time will come when they will become too powerful,
 And they might make my descendants die out.
 1485 I must mark my people.”
 That is why they started to mark the backs of the people. (pause)
 They made the *nyana* from that *saafèlè*.
 There was no *nyana* before that time.
 There was no *nyana* in all the time that they spent in the land of Gbè.

1462 ‘stranger’: The ‘strangers’ are generally identified as those who went to Musadu with Fòningama. ‘citizens’ (*du dèn*): or, ‘land (*du*) children (*dèn*).’ These were the hosts who were present during an earlier period with Musa.

1477 ‘wilderness’ (*tunu*): See Yaya Dole (Appendix 7.8, ln. 8-15).

1478 Doofatini: For a note, see Yaya Dole (1986, App. 7.8, ln. 13). The Koniya use other names to describe this area: Doofatu - ‘wilderness (*du*) of the *fa* (?) secret (*doo*); Doofakòni - ‘small river/creek (*kòni*) of the *fa* (?) secret (*doo*);’ *dokò* - ‘secret (*doo*) business/spot (*kò*);’ and *doolò* - ‘in (*lò*) the secret (*doo*).’ The initiation process which involves circumcision and scarification is implied when the term *doo* is used. *Tuni* means ‘small (*ni*) wilderness/wooded area (*tu*)’ (l. 1473-89; Yaya Dole 1986, 7.8, l. 8-15; Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35, l. 254-60; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a, l. 87).

1481 ‘children’: Anyone who was initiated into the society was a ‘child,’ whether young or old.

[ZO MUSA'S SOUTHERN JOURNEY]
[Zo Musa takes branches, water and a rock from Musadu]

- 1490 He got ready to leave.
He cut a branch from a *dubalen* tree and a cotton tree.
He took a piece of the Nyamoi rock that was in front of the mosque,
And he put all of those things in his load.
He took some water from Nèlèkolomako Creek.
1495 He took some water from the Nyawulani River.
He took some water from the Dion River.
He took some water from the Yakò River.
He put water from each of the rivers in separate calabashes and left with his people.

[Zo Musa waits for his wife at the creek]

- 1500 They stood and waited for his wife near the Dion.
Musa said, "Has this women not come so we can go?"
She met him there and they began to walk.
They named the river Dion.
The Dion was named after Zo Musa's wife Jòò.
1505 That is the Dion River near Misadu.

[Zo Musa travels to Zota]

- They passed Nyanzamolidu and climbed the mountain.
At the top of the mountain he cried, "Kanikoke."
In Kpelle, "Kanikoke" means, 'We are happy.'
"I have left Fòningama and the bad *mue* today!"
1510 Then they went by Ndèdèmòyadu.
They passed Kangòlò, Koesi Banangòlò, Wawakò, Manakò,
And rested near a large river.
He took some tobacco dust from his snuff can and put the snuff in his mouth.
After they left he said in Kpelle, "I left my snuff can behind."
1515 I left my snuff can behind."
They returned to get the can,
And they called the place Gbolò.

1498 In his earlier version, Vase Kamala said that some Maniyaka Dole and Sanoe left Musadu with Zo Musa (Geysbeek/Kamara 1994:73, l. 425-428). According to Yaya Dole, the Sanoe were Kpelle (App. 7.4d, l. 251-59). The Maniyaka Dole who migrated south into the forest eventually became a Kornor people related to the Kpelle (Germain 1984:105).

1504 Some assistants said that Zo Musa's wife's name was Jòò (with a long open-ended "òò"), and that she was not a 'slave' (*jòn*). The river, however, that was reportedly named after Zo Musa's wife, is Dion or Jòn. Other assistants said that her name was *jòn* or 'slave.'

- Gbolò is between Mafeledu and Ndwadu.
 This is the boundary between Gbana and Maana.
 1520 It goes down to Ngolima and up to Feleduba.
 That is the Gbo river that I am talking about.
 They went to the mountain that overlooks Boola.
 When they reached the mountain he said in Kpelle, "It is night.
 Let us sleep here."
 1525 At daybreak they began to leave,
 And they called the mountain Yewula.
 They passed Boola and Gbòma.
 They went along the eastern side of Kule and the western side of Zalikwèlè,
 And settled in Zota.

[Zo Musa plants Musadu's branches, water and rock in Zota]

- 1530 In Zota, the water that he carried...
 He poured the water in separate ditches,
 And rivers started flowing that look like those in Misadu:
 Nèlèkolomako Creek, Nyawulani River, Jiakò River, and Dion River.
 He planted the branches of the cotton tree and the *dubalen* tree,
 1535 And placed the Nyamoi rock there.
 They all looked like the ones in Misadu.
 When you go to Zota and Misadu, they look alike.

[Zo Musa's Nyana dancer]

- The *nyana* that was made from the *saafèlè*...
 Whenever there is a big feast in Zalikwèlè,
 1540 This *nyana* dances better than the other *nyana* in Zalikwèlè.
 Who fixed that *nyana*?
 The *muewu* in Misadu did that for Zo Musa Kòma.

[THE KAMALA IN MUSADU]
 [Fòningama's wives and sons]

- That was when Fòningama settled in Misadu.
 He married four women and had sixteen sons.
 1545 He named his first son Fasujan.
 They are the Fasusi.
 Fòningama's first son Fasujan...
 His son was Fanya.
 They are the Fanyasi.

1546 Fasusi: 'si' is a lineage marker, so this means 'escendants (*si*) of Fasus.'

[Fanyala's descendants]

- 1550 The descendants of Fanya went to Bitongò, Saadu, Moikamanu, Kònigbialò,
Dunufua, Soofawusudu, Kòsadu, and Gbaamu.
His next youngest brother was Ndawèn.
His descendants moved to Kojadu, Yakòdu, Pinè, Sigbidu, Konòse and Gbèèma.
They are the people of Sebadu.
As they say, "If you get Ndawèn as a witness in Kòniya,
1555 You have a great witness."
They call them the people of Sebadu.
His small brother's name was Kanfeeman.
Kanfeeman, Moana Kòsanò, Moana Kòdua...
They say that anyone who provokes my brother Kanfeeman,
1560 Someone will fight that person.
They called him Maana.
They live in Foebwedu, Vamalòdu, Zimosi, Kasiadu, and Gbiidu.
Sònamò's descendants moved to Zaaka.
They live in the Boola region.
1565 They are Fasujan's descendants.

[FONINGAMA'S WIIKELEN SACRIFICE AND THE LAWS OF MUSADU]
[The 'sacrifice of one thousand']

They made the *wiikèlèn salaka* for the sixteen sons.

[The Laws of Musadu]

- They said, "We are going to pass some laws.
If you beat your wife on the farm,
And no one is there to plead her case,
1570 Then you have committed a crime.
If you spoil a woman's belly,
You have committed a crime.
If you lie too much about someone,
You have committed a crime.
1575 If you steal too much,
You have committed a crime.
If the market is full where the *masa* and the poor and the rich buy their food,

1566 *wiikèlèn salaka*: = 'sacrifice (*salaka*) [of] one (*kèlèn*) thousand (*wii/wa*).'

1567 'laws' (*ton*): Yves Person titled these 'the customs of Feren Kama [Fòningama]' or 'the laws of the Konyan' (1968b:184,825; Ch. 7; Fig. P).

1571 'spoil a woman's belly': This law seems to have been directed against mothers, mid-wives or men who committed abortions or otherwise caused the death of unborn babies.

1578 'and you upset the market': Securing order in the market was vital for the growth and prosperity of a principality. In the mid-nineteenth century, special persons were delegated to maintain "peace" in markets near this area (Anderson 1870/1971:79). It is said that Saji Kamala's main offense

And you upset the market by disrupting everything and stealing goods...
 If that happens during the reign of any *masa*,
 1580 And he does not punish the offenders,
 His descendants will become worthless,
 And none of them will prosper.”

[Fòningama promises to execute those who disturb the market]

Fòningama said, “I have seen all of the laws today.
 However, anyone who disturbs the market will be executed.
 1585 I make that law.”

[Four of Fòningama’s sons raid the market]

After Fòningama passed that law,
 Some young men raided the market.
 Four of them were Fòningama’s sons and their friends.

[Fòningama orders the execution of his four sons]

They went and told him.
 1590 Fòningama said, “Carry them.
 A man’s words are more important than his sons.”
 They executed all of them.
 When you hear that four of Fòningama’s sons died because of the law in Misadu,
 That is how it happened.
 1595 Twelve sons remained,
 And the division was made among those sons.

[Fòningama’s twelve sons divide the land]

They caught another one of his sons.
 When they carried him to Fòningama he said,
 “Carry him to the same place that his brothers went.”

when he sieged Musadu was that he attacked the market (Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8, l. 302; Fairhead et. al. 2003).

1587 Ibrahim Béété said that four of Fòningama’s sons were executed because they stole a cow (App. 7.35, l. 192-213; see Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8, l. 38).

1592 ‘executed’: These executions could be brutal. When George Seymour traveled near the area in 1858, he claimed that he saw a young man’s two hands and heel cut off before he was decapitated. The rest of his body was “quartered” before they buried him (1859-1860/2003). The same year, near the same location, James Sims reportedly witnessed a man respectively get his fingers, ear and nose cut off. The ruler only ordered the man to be killed this early in the execution after Sims turned away from looking at what was happening (1859-1860/2003).

1596 ‘division’ (*talili*): Many informants used this ‘division’ cliché to describe how the Kpelle, Loma and Fòningama’s descendants left Musadu.

- 1600 Before they reached the executioner's ground,
The Donzo in Nyèla took a cow.
They went and met the people who were going to kill him at the execution
grounds.
They said, "We are placing this cow between the son of Diomanu and the knife.

[The sacrifice for the Diomanu]

- From now on in the Diomanu house,
1605 If anyone breaks the laws,
That person should bring a chicken or a cow instead of killing the offender."
The children for whom the *wiikèlèn* sacrifice was made,
Were being killed one by one.
They said, "May God bless the Donzo people."
1610 That is when the twelve sons were divided.

[FENJALA TRAVELS TO MUSADU]
[Fènjala travels from Diemou to Musadu]

- Fènjala, who was keeping the Dioma hat,
Came from Diemou at the same time.
The Dioma hat that was left with us...
Fòningama left Diemou, in the Kòniya region,
1615 Because his child had come and was a man.

[Fènjala dishonored by his brothers]

But his brothers did not honor him when he came.
He was handsome, tall, and bright,
And he was strong like his father.

[Fènjala's brothers disown him]

- They said, "If this man stays here,
1620 We will loose some of our prestige.
Let's say that he is not our father's son.
Our father never told us that he left a child on the road."
Our father's first born was Fasu.
Those are the Fasusi.

1603 Diomanu: Here, Vase said "Yomanu."

1612 Diemou: Kamala may have meant to say Musadu. He earlier identified Diemou or Jèmu as
being in Wolodu (l. 1038).

[Fènjala's descendants]

- 1625 Then Fènjala left and went to Simandu.
He settled in the town of Sòònu.
He married a woman named Sòòna.
The woman gave birth to Sòòna Kaman, Sòòna Suma, Bamajan, Finiwusu.
Sòòna Kaman became the grandfather of the Gbèladu.
- 1630 Gbangunò Saji came from that family.
He was the tenth chief warrior.
Sòòna Suma was the ancestor of Simandu and Kelawani.
Bamanjan became the ancestor of the people from Linko.
Amara from Linko was one of his descendants.
- 1635 Finiwusu's descendants moved to Koningò, Maana, Buse, Konakò, Kolibriama,
Kwanga and Fòòma.
That is how they came.

[Foningama's children]

- Djobba: How many children did Fòningama have?
Vase: Sixteen of Fòningama's children were born in Misadu.
One then came, so he had seventeen children.
Four were executed,
1640 Which left twelve.
The one that came made thirteen.
Their descendants lived in all of Kòniya.
Fòningama settled in Misadu and became prosperous.

[NYANZAMOLIDU AND THE BANANA SEEDS: I]

- After the *wiikèlèn* sacrifice,
1645 The Sware *muewu* came to bless Fòningama.
Fòningama added stalks of bananas to their food.
They had never seen bananas before.
After they ate the bananas they said,
“Diomani, thank you, thank you, thank you.”
- 1650 They thanked him many times.
“What do you call the thing that you put on the food?”
He said, “Banana.”
They said, “Please give us some banana seeds so that we can plant them in Mau
after we leave.”
He said, “Okay, sit down.”
- 1655 We will give you some banana seeds when we get some.”
They are still waiting for the banana seeds in Kòniya up to this time.

1635 Maana: Also Moanu or Mahana.

1638 'seventeen sons': see Appendix O.

That is the talk about Simandu.

[FENJALA'S SACRIFICE IN MUSADU]

[Fènjala goes to Musadu]

When you ask some people,

They say that the descendants of Fènjala and the descendants of Fasujan are the same.

- 1660 It is true that they came from the same father,
But Fènjala was really Fòningama's first son who was born in Diemou.
He later followed him to Misadu.
He followed his father after the *wiikèlèn* sacrifice was made.

[Fènjala not welcomed by his brothers]

When he came,

- 1665 His brothers did not welcome him with honor because they did not know him.
They said, "Fasu is the first born."
Those are the people they call the Fasusi.

[Fènjala instructed to complete the 'sacrifice of one thousand']

Then the people said to Fènjala,

"If you want to overcome them and become more prosperous than the other Diomani,

- 1670 Sacrifice 100 cowry shells.
This will complete your portion of the *wiikèlèn* sacrifice."
He made the sacrifice and then went and settled in Sòònu.

[Fènjala's descendants]

He later became prosperous as I explained earlier.

He had Sòònè Kaman, Sòònè Suma, Bamajan, and Finimusu.

- 1675 Finimusu's descendants were Setuma and Nyanduma.
They are in Koningò and Maana.
Otherwise, Finimusu had many children.
When you hear Buse, Kolibliama, Kwanga, Fòòma, and Konakò,
All the people in these areas are the descendants of Finimusu.
1680 Misadu became prosperous.

1671 'this will complete your part of the *wiikèlèn* sacrifice': According to one assistant, this means that Fòningama made a sacrifice for all of his children so that some or all of them would become great. Kamala implied that Fòningama's sixteen sons were present in Musadu when the sacrifice was made, and that Fanyala was still in Diemou. Fanyala did not participate in the original sacrifice and fulfill the obligations that his brothers had made, so that is why he had to offer 100 cowry shells.

[NYANZAMOLIDU AND THE BANANA SEEDS: II]

- When the Sware man asked for the banana seed,
He was told to sit down.
He went and made a farm and shelter.
He cut some trees in the farm and put them together.
1685 He said, "Let me put these small tree branches together.
When the rainy season comes we will use them as firewood.
The spot where these branches were joined became the town of Nyanzamolidu.
That is how Nyanzamolidu was founded.
Djobba: What is *nyazan*?
Vase: *Nyazan* means 'small branches.'
1690 That was how Nyanzamolidu was founded.
Since that time God has always answered the calls of their *muewu*,
The Sware.
They worked for Samori Turé.

1687 Nyanzamoridu: = '*mori* land (*du*) of the small tree branch (*nyaza*).' Mammadi Donzo said "Nyonsomoedu" (App. 7.36, ln. 148).

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**HISTORY FROM THE MUSADU EPIC:
THE FORMATION OF MANDING POWER ON THE
SOUTHERN FRONTIER OF THE MALI EMPIRE**

VOLUME IV

By

Timothy William Geysbeek

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of History

2002

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.7A

FOFIN SUMAWOLO

Place and date of interview: Siatulò (Lansedu?), Guinea, 12 March 1986

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek and Majongbè Mohammed Kromah (Chèjan)

Context of interview: Fofin Sumawolo was the chief of a small farm town named Siatulò ('road in the bush') that he said was founded in 1930. Sumawolo stated that he was born

in 1911, and he prided himself in knowing about the past. He has since passed away.

Sumawolo was happy to receive Mohammed Kromah and myself, but chided us for coming so late to collect some stories. Sumawolo knew Mohammed Kromah and his father, and had narrated some history to Mohammed on a previous occasion (l. 15).

Sumawolo only talked to us a short time during the first interview, and told us that when we returned he wanted us to come in the morning so he could talk for a long time. We left his village after the interview, having just come from Watafélédu (Mohammed's father's village), and went to Damaro. We returned a few days later on March 23 when he granted us a second interview. Siatulò is located about half-way between Watafélédu and Nionsamoridu along the eastern side of the Fon-Going Mountain, and seems to be the town of Lansedu that is located on modern maps.

Transcribed by: Boakai Yahah, with Amara Cissé (Monrovia, Sept. 1992)

Translated by: Boakai Yahah, with Amara Cissé (Monrovia, Sept. 1992)

Checked by: Boakai Yahah and Tim Geysbeek (Monrovia, 1993); Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995)

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[OPENING REMARKS]

- What I am talking about today,
Is being said in the town of Loni.
Loni, because we are talking in Africa.
Old-old things should be said at the right place.
- 5 This settlement,
The person who founded this town,
His name was Foeboe Sumawolo.
He cleared this place.
This town has been here for fifty-six years.
- 10 But that is not what we are talking about.
He has asked...
I, Fofin Sumawolo, am talking today.

1 Loni: = 'place of learning (*lō*).’ Fofin likened his little farm town to the United Nations. He said that Loni is the place that everyone should come to learn and get information.

3 Africa (*falafin*): Literally, 'black (*fin*) skin (*fala*).’

12 Fofin: = 'black (*fin*) father (*va/fa/fo*).’

The kind of things that I am going to say,
You Jomah Kamara,
15 I have given you that kind of information in the past.
I say, “You came to Kòniya,
But you don’t know anything about Kòniya...”

* * *

[ZO MISA AND FENGAMA IN MISADU]
[Zo Misa in Misadu]

The Kòniya that he was talking about,
30 I will start talking about Kòniya.
It is a Kpelle word and is said - Gòni-nya.
Ah, the person who made Kòniya successful,
To make Kòniya well known,
To make Kòniya neat,
35 Was Zo Misa Kòma.
He was in Misadu.
Misadu is the oldest town in Africa.
Among all of our towns in Africa,
Misadu is the oldest.
40 The next oldest town is Kuòkuò.
The next oldest town is Kalala.
The oldest of all of them is Misadu.
Misadu means...
The person who made Misadu important,
45 His name was Zo Misa Kòma.
He did everything.
He went there.
He went and settled there.

[Fèngama’s *wulukin* sacrifice]

But the person who came first,
50 The Misadu business,
To make the *wulukin* sweet,
To make the *wulukin* sweet,
Was Fèngama [Fonongama].

14 Jomah Kamara: Jomah was the Mandingo broadcaster for Radio ELWA (Monrovia) during the 1980s. Sumawolo was talking to Mohammed Kromah, although mistakenly said Jomah.

Fèngama, he came from Tabu.
 55 When they sat down and talked,
 They called the Fina people the Kamara.
 They called them Kamara.
 They don't understand the difference between the Tabu Kamara and the Simu
 Kamara.

[Fèngama challenges Kònsaba in Gbè]

The day Fèngama came,
 60 He went and saw his older brother in Gbè.
 He said to Kònsaba, "Big brother, I am worried."
 About that...
 "It is not good to cheat children who come from the same father.
 If you cheat them,
 65 That means that bad will come to you."

[Fèngama makes a *wulukin* sacrifice, Nyusumadu founded]

He told him...
 Our ancestor [Sumawolo] told him that he should make the *wulukin* sacrifice.
 After he made the *wulukin* sacrifice,
 It was taken and given to Jan Vale.
 70 After that, Jan Vale came and settled in Nyusumadu.
 He is still waiting for the banana seed.
 He [Fèngama] said, "Bananas have seeds.
 We'll give you some seeds before you leave."
 They are still waiting.
 75 Zo Misa Kòma, èh - Fèngama...
 Our ancestor asked him [Fèngama] to make a *wulukin* sacrifice.
 After he made the *wulukin* sacrifice,
 He sired thirteen sons in Misadu.
 If you see this Misadu,

54-58 Fofin seemed to be saying that there are three kinds of Kamara: the Tabu Kamara (the Kamara to whom Foningama was related), the Simu Kamara (identity unclear), and the Fina Kamara (*fina* or *funé* = the Kamara *jèlilu*). According to Sumawolo, those who say that the Tabu/Foningama Kamara are Fina Kamara are wrong. If Simu is a variant of Sibi, then Sumawolo may be saying that the Sibi Kamara are not *jèli*. Sumawolo did not note the origin of the Kamā who went to Musadu, which makes his comment especially difficult to interpret.

69 Jan Vale: Sware?

71 'still waiting for the banana seed.' Many informants tell about how certain *mori* helped Foningama make a sacrifice (Ch. 8). They say that these *mori* went to Nionsamoridu to wait for some banana seeds that Foningama was going to give them before they returned back home. Foningama never went back to give them some banana seeds, so they stayed and built the town. Their descendants are said to still be waiting for the banana seeds.

80 At that time the British people from England went there.
Do you understand?

[Three strangers and three citizens]

At that time,
Ah, Zo Misa Kòma,
There were three strangers in Misadu,
85 And three citizens:
Tumaninkèmè, Zo Misa Kòma, our ancestor.
They went there.

[The division in Misadu]

Now then,
A division took place in Misadu.
90 Why is Misadu said to be the oldest town?
Division.
It was because of the division.
Who was divided?
His [Fèngama's] twelve - èh, thirteen sons.
95 Fasu, Fanyala were the ones who were divided.
During that - excuse me...
He stopped...
The way he stopped...
He said, "Today is today."
100 After the division, I am saying...
He said, "Fasu, Fanyala..."
After that happened,
Fasu went that way.
Fanyala,
105 Went to the right.
After that they called him Fanyalagbè.
Fanyalagbè, it began and continues that way.
Please excuse me.

[Zo Misa's talisman destroyed]

Moreover,

80 England (Anglè): refers to Sierra Leone or England, depending on the context. This might be a reference to Benjamin Anderson from Monrovia who went to Musadu in 1868 and 1874 (Fairhead et. al. 2003).

84 'strangers': *lona*. 'citizens' (*duu lèn*): = 'children (*lèn/dèn*) [of the] land (*duu*).'

95 Fasu: = Yves Person's VaSudyan. Fanyala: = Fèn Jala (*jala* = 'lion').

106 Fanyalagbè: 'bright (gbè) Fanyala.'

110 Zo Misa Kòma...
Our ancestor wrote a *sèbèlikè*,
And drove him [Zo Misa Kòma] away from there [Misadu].

[Zo Misa's curse]

He [Zo Misa] went down.
He said, "I will not stay here."
115 He said, "The conspiracy here...
There is a great conspiracy here."
If you see...
He said, "Since there is a lot of cheating here,
If you spend time with the people there...
120 They cheat more than anyone else in the world."
When that happened,
Zo Misa Kòma was the first person to be there.

[Zo Misa's wife and son]

The woman who was with him,
Her name was Yòyò.
125 Yòyò's child's name,
His name was Wiyè.

[Zo Musa's southern journey]

If you see Gbòtò creek,
That is the one that they called...
When he reached there,
130 He drank some [water].
[He said], "Come, bring my snuff can.
Come, bring my snuff can."
That is the place that they call Gbo.
God agreed, and then he went to Boola...

* * *

[Zo Misa's *saafè*]

The Zo Misa Kòma that I talked about,
During the time that he was leaving,
His *saafè* was catching human beings and eating them.
220 When it saw a rooster,

111 *sèbèlika*: or a talisman that has been written, like a *lisimu*.

131 'snuff can': = *salabòlò*.

It would catch it.
When it saw a sheep,
It would catch it.
Those things happened in Misadu.
225 At the time that those things were taking place,
Our good brother from the same mother whose name was Gbokpani...

[MUSADU'S AGE]

Their handmark is in Misadu where the cotton tree is,
It is in the area where the old market was located,
And is called Anglè (England).
230 That is how that happened.
Excuse me.
About the founding of Misadu...
The old man who lived with us told me,
In the year that he died,
235 That Misadu was 2050 years old.
Misadu has been here that long.
After Misadu was founded...
That is how long ago Misadu was founded.

[NYUSUMO TELELE FOUNDS NYUSUMODU]

This Nyusumodu.
240 Who founded Nyusumodu?
Nyusumo Tèlèlè.
He went to Nyusumodu.

[GBANA AND NYANA]

The Komia who were there...
The region of Gbana is called Gbana.
245 The region is called Gbana.
The Jagbènilu lived there.
They said, "Gbanda."
They were involved in *nyana* activities there.
The persons who worked hard to spread it there were Fafala and Mawiala and
Fasòna Bala and Mèèwusu and Tango Tawiya.
250 He is buried on the Tamiya farm road.
That is now a road for a big town.
That is how Gbana was founded.
Who took up the quiver and arrows for it [and fought for nyana].
His name was Fasòna Bala.
255 He got up, you know, where his land began.
He went from Kugbedu,

To stay at Moedu,
 And went to Wola,
 Went to settle at Wolalola.
 260 That was his region.
 When that happened and he rose he said, "Wait.
 I am going to wait for the Loma so they won't enter here.
 Which woman was with him that day?
 Her name was Muamè Jiya.
 265 Muamè Jiya, she delivered four sons.
 While that was happening,
 The Kuma - Kumala, their ancestor came from Tubalawe.
 At that time, when he came, he sat before the enemies. (cough)
 He sat before the enemies.
 270 "Dugbangu," who had done many things, was *masa* Kangali.
 He dragged their mouths.
 Maamè Jiake then said, "Father, won't you let me raise this child?"
 "Name him. What was his name?"
 She said, "Mèsia."
 275 There were four sons,
 And Moe Kumè became the fifth one.
 The Koloma (Kumala?) went from Gbolofasa to Mau to the three previous lands.
 That is how the Koloma came.
 She said, "Moikumè."
 280 Mèkiya had four sons,
 And Moikumè became her fifth one.
 That is - that is how they came, to shorten the story.

[THE OLDEST TOWN, MISADU]

Well, the ground has done many things.
 You see, he asked me about the towns,
 285 Which town is older than all of the other towns.
 Didn't he ask that?
 Misadu.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.7B

FOFIN SUMAWOLO

Place and date of interview: Siatulò (Lansedu?), Guinea, 23 March 1986

Context of interview: After Muhammed Chèjan Kromah and I interviewed Fofin Sumawolo on March, we went to Damaro for a week. We then returned to Watafèlèdu where we met up with Chèjan's father Mustafa Kromah. Chèjan, his father and I then went to Chèjan's father's farm in Mamolodu, and returned through Siatulò on the way back to Diakolidu. During our first interview, Fofin chided us for arriving late in the afternoon and requesting an interview. He said that on our return, we should interview him in the morning so that he could be prepared to talk for a long time. We unfortunately arrived late in the day on March 23, and he again lamented that we did not come in the morning so that he could speak to us for a long time.

Transcribed by: Boakai Yamah, with Amara Cissé (Monrovia, 1992)

Translated by: Boakai Yamah, with Amara Cissé (Monrovia, 1992)

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek and Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1993) - text only

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995, 1996) - tape and translation

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The Kamara-Fula *sangu* and the *fon*i seed: 773-800

[The Sumawolo found Siatulò]

Fofin: I did not find it [Siatulò],

- But I will tell you the name of the person who found it.
 The name of the first person who settled here was Foeboe.
 Foeboe Sumawolo.
- 5 His mother's name was Jèènè Keita.
 His father's name was Sumana Sumawolo.
 I am going now.
 My - my name is Fofin Sumawolo.
 After Foboe died,
- 10 Kònè Moi came and settled.
 His [Kònè] wife's name was Minata Sumawolo.
 His second wife, her name was Fatuma Kamala.
 My wife is Wata Kònè.
 The one [second wife] next to her is Bògò Kamara.
- 15 That is finished.
 Siatu was founded fifty-six - èh, fifty-seven years ago.
 That is it.
Muhammed: Are you finished? Why was the town founded?
Fofin: The town was established to make farms, find food, and eat well.
 Because we have come here,
- 20 We are thankful to God.
 We are thankful to the Merciful God.
 This ground has been good for us because we have gotten food.
 Very well, very well, very well.
 We thank God that this land is rich.
- 25 We do not disregard what we have...

* * *

[Strangers and the three curses of Koniya]

- Excuse me.
 If you see this land of Koniya,
 Jomani Saji cursed it.
 Samoli cursed it.
- 270 Zo Misa cursed it.
 What was the cause?
 Strangers have more power than the citizens.
 It was because they cheated.
 Should I leave that place a little bit,
- 275 Or should I explain?
 All can't be known...

* * *

6 Sumana: Also Usman, Ansumana, Ansu.
 15 'That is it': *C'est finis*, in French.

- Tim: Who is the joking partners of the Kromah?
685 Fofin: What did he say?
Chèjan: He said, "Who are the *sangu* of the Kromah?"
Fofin: Um?
Chèjan: The Kromah *sanangu*?
Fofin: Koloma.
Chèjan: Who are their *sanangu*?
Fofin: ... The Kromah's joking partners...
The *lasi* between who and who?
690 That will put us back.
Chèjan: That is what the man likes.
Fofin: The Kromah he is referring to is their uncle.
Fakoli, his *lasi* was the Sayon people.
Chèjan: The Sayon. Tim: Hum.
Fofin: Which Sayon?
Their ancestor who participated in the division in Misadu.
695 The three strangers.
The three citizens.
Tumaningèmè, Zo Musa Kòma, our ancestor.
Those are the real *lasi* of the Kromah.
Who was chosen in the division?
700 Nadianguni [Sayon?] did not participate.
Sani [Famoli Sayon] was the one who went to Misadu.
The three strangers [and] the three citizens.
He [Sayon] did not have many children at that time.
When one had a son,
705 He would die.
When the other one had a son,
He would die.
That is what they told our ancestor when that happened.
Who did he meet in Misadu that day?
710 The name of the person who they met,
His name was - èh,
He met Seku Talata.
When they met him now,
When that happened,
715 He [Famoli Sayon] went and met our ancestor.
He [Famoli Sayon] asked him to pray to God for him.
He [Talala] prayed for him he said,

696 'citizens' (*duu lèn*): 'land (*duu*) children (*lèn/dè*).'

699 'the division': of the Manden (l. 764). This is similar to the story that another Sumawolo told (App. 6.1).

715 Famoli Sayon: l. 753.

- “When someone wants to settle there, they-they...
 You should bring a deer.”
 720 After that happened,
 He [Famoli Sayon] went and caught a young deer by the Dion river.
 He then brought it in the house,
 And hid it.
 After seven days,
 725 He brought the deer outside and said,
 “May God’s will be your will.”
 You should build your house where the deer goes to rest.
 Then he got up.
 The deer went to the hill at Tabila and lay down.
 730 He saw where the deer went and said that was not a place where a town
 should be built.
 Our ancestor said, “According to what I know,
 That is the place where you should live.”
 He responded, “There is no water there.”
 He said, “If God agrees,
 735 And if God makes it possible,
 Water will come there.”
 He wrote and put it in the bamboo.
 He took it and gave it to him.
 He said, “If you drink this,
 740 You will find a place to settle.”
 After he drank some,
 He found a place to settle.
 At dawn, the place turned to mud.
 He went and dug at that place.
 745 That is the area that they call “clean Kavaladu.”
 The water has never finished.
 Our ancestor said, “If God agrees,
 If it pleases God,
 You will sire four sons.”
 750 When that happened,
 Four sons were born.
 What was the first name of the first son?
 His name was Famoli Sayon.
 He stayed in Gbana.
 755 Manuboe, he stayed in Jila.
 Fafèn, he stayed in Simanu.
 Fee Kèmò went down the hill to Mabuwalò and went to Gbèkèla.
 He went to the three lands before him and the three lands behind him.
 The Koloma,

737 ‘bamboo’: = gbò.

755 Jila: = Guirila.

- 760 Who are their *lasi*?
 They are the Sayon.
 That is how they got involved.
Tim: He told why, right? Why they can joke with each other. He told why?
Chèjan: Why do they have *lasi*?
Fofin: U-hun, Mande.
 The *lasi* came because of the division that took place in Mande.
Chèjan: The Kromah?
Fofin: The Sayon people.
- 765 The name of the person who formalized that relationship was Nadiangili and the Dayon.
 Who were the Dayon?
 They were the ones in this land who asked, “Who is my walking mate?”
 Those are the people we call the Dayon.
 They say, “The Dayon and his walking mate (Sayon).”
- 770 The Sayon and Dayon.
 Haven’t you heard that?
 I say, didn’t you people hear?
Chèjan: I hear.

[The Kamara-Fula *sangu* and the *foni* seed]

- Tim: How about the Kamara?
Fofin: Kamara.
 Fèngama.
- 775 The reason why the Kamara and Kruma are *sangu*?
Chèjan: He asked, “Who are the *sanangu* of the Kromah?”
Fofin: The Fula?
Tim: Why?
Fofin: Fula.
Tim: Why?
Chèjan: He asked, “How did they become *sanangu*? How did they become *sanangu*?
Fofin: Aan. He [the Fulbe] drove them.
Chèjan: Drove what?
- 780 Fofin: The Kamara.
 The Kamara and the Kruma.
Chèjan: The Kamara and the Fula?
Fofin: Yii, the Fula,

765 Dayon: = Sayon or Sanoe. Faliku Sanoe, whose mother was a Kromah, explained that Fakoli worshiped a female “idol” named Fakoli Dumba (‘big head’) and a male “idol” named Fakoli Kuba/Kumba (‘big mouth’) (see Conrad 1992:155-157). He said that spirits sometimes shook Fakoli Dumba and Fakoli Kumba, and that Fakoli worshiped them every day until noon while he was naked (personal communication, 1993). The Sanoe ancestor always joked with Fakoli about this, precipitating a ‘joking relationship’ between the Kromah and Sanoe.

The real-real-real-real, to say Fòningama-Fòningama...
 They drove him and hid him.
 785 The *foni* seed was there.
 They went and put him in the granary.
 After they put him in the granary,
 They looked for him but could not find him.
 After that, they let him out.
 790 When he came out [they said,] “Where was he?”
 “He was on the *foni* seed.
 That is the person whose name is Fòni Kama.
 It is Fòningama.
 Was it the Fula man the one who hid him when Kama came down?
 795 Foolish Kama...”
 When foolish Kaman climbed down...
 Foolish Kama...
 Yes.
Chèjan: That is why they are *sanangu*?
Fofin: The Fula...
 800 That is how that came about...

784 ‘They drove him and hid him’: According to other accounts, Foningama’s relatives drove him from Sibi, and the Fulbe hid him in a granary when he reached Wasolon (Ch. 3). This might better be translated, ‘They drove him and [another person] hid him.’

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.8

LAYI YAYA DOLE

Place and date of interview: Musadu, Guinea, 23 March 1986

Interviewed by: Mohammed Chèjan Kromah and Mustafa Kromah, with Tim Geysbeek

Context of interview: When I went to Guinea with Mohammed Chèjan Kromah in 1986, I wanted to visit Musadu because I was curious to see this town that was of such mythical, legendary and historical importance. When we arrived in Diakolidu after we interviewed Fofin Sumawolo in Siatulò for the second time, a woman said that no one would tell us any history when we went to Musadu. Chèjan's father Mustafa Kromah, however, accompanied Chèjan and I to Musadu, and Yaya Dole was one of the first persons we met. We arrived during the early afternoon around 1:00 p.m. and left about three hours later. Dole agreed to let us interview him because he knew Chèjan's father. Mustafa Kromah was a well-known hunter-herbalist who had known Yaya Dole for many years. When we interviewed Dole, Chèjan interpreted the questions that I asked. Chèjan's father was present for the interview, along with a young man named Amara Donzo and some restless children.

After Yaya's wife treated us to a much appreciated meal of rice and chicken, Yaya gave us a tour of Musadu. He introduced us to some of the elders of the town, and showed us the rock near the mosque that he said marked the grave of one of Foningama's sons (l. 42-52). We then chartered an old pick-up truck and went to Doofatini (Figure 41). Doofatini is a small wooded area with big granite rocks that is situated north of Musadu, and Yaya explained how Zo Musa allegedly started a secret initiation society there (l. 9-

15). I did not record what Dole said when he took us through the town and when we went to Doofatini. When I visited Chèjan six years later, I asked him to explain, as best as possible, what Dole told us.

Yaya Dole said that he was born in 1911, and is said to have come from a long line of noble figures in Musadu's past. According to Yaya Dole, Fuomuo Dole was one of the 'strangers' who accompanied Tumaningèmè and Fòningama to Musadu (l. 20-21,37-56,108-120), the Dole are one of the three major trading clans in Musadu (l. 220-26), the Dole, Kromah and Kamara have a special obligation to help each other because a *lasili* relationship binds them (l. 126-145), the Dole are supposed to get a portion of any of the game that is killed in the region (l. 868-87), the Dole play an intermediate role in dispensing a portion of meat that is sacrificed to any Kamara man who is in town if a Kamara woman gives birth to a child (l. 318-342); the Dole are an important chiefly clan (l. 978-983), and the Dole yard is an important place where decisions are made (l. 474, 848-854). Outside sources assert that the Dole were one of the three clans who assumed the chieftaincy of Musadu after the Kamara left, and that Yaya's grandfather Vafin Dole was the chief of Musadu whom Benjamin K. Anderson met in 1868 and 1874. Samori Turé installed Yaya's father, Kunba, as the chief of Musadu in 1883, and Yaya himself was Musadu's chief from 1958-1962. Yaya was a respected elder of Musadu until the time of his death on March 27, 1991.

Of all the people whom I interviewed, Yaya provided the most personal information about himself and his family. He did not reserve any modesty in explaining

¹Person 1987:259; Anderson 1870/1971:88-89; 1912/1971:27. Some of the lines that are cited in this introduction are in portions of Yaya Dole's interview that are not included in this supplemental appendix.

² Person 1968b:440-44.

some of the important things that he accomplished in Musadu, but he also said some equally candid things about himself that were not very flattering. Yaya said that he was short and fat when he was young (l. 739-742), and that he did not start to lose weight until he joined the army (l. 743-747). Yaya also said that he never misbehaved when he was a youth (l. 1057), and that he developed a close relationship with his father. He eloquently explained how his father miraculously received his eyesight (l. 770-829), and told how his father spent time telling him stories about the past (l. 737, 769). His father also let him deliver his messages when he was a child (l. 460-66, 862), and exempted him from carrying firewood (l. 1115-1119).

Yaya Dole said that he was a farmer when he was a young man, and that a *kaamòò* helped make rain fall when his land got too dry (l. 830-47). Dole also said that he was popular (l. 1089), and that he did not chase women like some of the other men in his clan who used their noble status for this reason (l. 1090-1104, 1196-1201). His statements about the relationships of men and women were more direct than anybody else who was interviewed, even to the point of saying that it was shameful for his father's brothers to chase his fathers own wives (l. 1105-10).

Yaya Dole stated that he became the chief of Musadu when he was about forty-seven years old, and held the position for four years (1958-62). During that time, he said that he led the drive to build the first French school in Musadu (l. 213-219). Although Dole was the chief and later held some government posts in town (l. 476-88), he claimed that he never became wealthy because all of the chiefs in the region cursed him when he was young (l. 463-65). Dole lamented that he was poor and that he had to carry loads on his head, but he was proud that he was still able to work (l. 1046-53). He also talked

about his role in building the main mosque in Musadu (l. 493-503).

Finally, Yaya Dole expressed a greater sense about the importance of history than did most other speakers. He said that his father used to tell him old stories (l. 737, 769). Seven years later, Ibrahim Béété attributed much that he knew about the history of the region to Yaya (Appendix 7.35). Dole cherished a list of his ancestors that his father had written in Arabic, and regretted that somebody stole the list (l. 200-212). Yaya felt that it would have been good if I had actually written down everything that he said, so that I could learn who the past leaders were and which persons had betrayed others in the past (l. 1145-54). He was also concerned that somebody might steal what he said - either by looking at what had been written, or secretly recording his interview (l. 1155-1162).

Transcript and translation: Djobba Kamara made a very rough translation of Yaya Dole's interview in 1986. We translated Yaya's interview a second time in Macenta in July 1992, but learned that this translation was inadequate after we checked the translation the following January in Monrovia. So, I had the tape translated a third time. Faliku Sanoe made a new transcript and translation, and asked Ansu Cissé and others for assistance when he listened to portions of the tape that were too difficult to understand. Boakai Yamah later listened to the tape and checked Faliku's transcript and translation. I read through the transcript and translation with Faliku, typed it into the computer, and reviewed the first two drafts of my typed version with Faliku. I later listened to the tape and checked the translation.

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[ZO MISA IN MISADU]

Yaya: I am Layi Yaya Dole.

They say that the person we met here when we came was a slave of the Kamèna
people,

But that they could not control him.

They were Zo Misa and Jufa Kòni.

5 He was Loma.

Zo Misa was a Sanyo.

Jala Misa was a *jiaka*.

2 Kamèna: Kromah, not Kamara.

4-7 For Zo Misa, Jufa Koni and Jala Misa, see Yaya's statements in his group interview (App. 7.4, l. 254). These were the 'citizens' of Musadu (see Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, ln. 1462).

4 Jufa: 'enemy (*ju*) killer (*fa*),' or strong warrior.

5 Dole also said that Zo Misa and Jufa Kòni were Kpelle (App. 7.4, l. 256). Here, Dole seems to be saying that Zo Musa was Loma.

7 *jiaka*: = *jèli* or bard. *Jala* (*jara*) means 'lion.' Jala was sometimes used as a praise name for a warrior (Johnson 1986:183, n.2), though could just be a common name. To some degree, every young man was eligible to be a warrior under certain circumstances, so Jala might not mean much here (D. Conrad, personal communication, 2002). Jala could also represent the clan name Jara or Konè; Jara and Konè are

- The *doo* activities started here.
 They went into the heavily wooded area and marked each other because God did it.
- 10 I will show you the place after *séfana*.
 That is where they used to have the *doo fa*.
 That was where the *doo fa* originated.
 That is the area that they call Doofatini.
 The wooded area is there,
- 15 And a very big rock is there.

[THE DOLE OF MISADU: I]

That is where they were.
 They left Baayòla and came to this town.
 They came to this town here about eight hundred and five years ago.
 My ancestor came when that happened.

equivalent clan names (Misiugin/Vydrine 1994:105). The fact, however, that “Musa” is part of his name strongly suggests that he was a Kromah.

8 *doo*: *du*, or sometimes *do*, means ‘secret,’ ‘mystery’ or ‘hidden’ (see ln. 13; Silverman 1996).

9 ‘heavily wooded’ (*tuba*): ‘heavily/big (*ba*) wooded (*tu*).’ For a note on *tu* and *wa*, see Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, ln. 1396. ‘marked’ (*tèè*): Literally, ‘cut.’ This is a reference to scarification. ‘because God did it:’ or, ‘because of God’s help.’

10 ‘I will show you the place’: The driver took Yaya, Chèjan, Chèjan’s father, Amara Donzo, and myself to Doofatini (l. 13; Fig. 41).

11 *doo fa*: English-speaking Manding associate Zo Misa’s *doo* to the Poro society.

13 Doofatini: See Vase Kamala, App. 7.6, ln. 1478. Yaya said that this was the place where Zo Musa initiated people, and that a big python used to emerge from an opening in the rocks (App. 8.2). (On the relation between pythons and the Komo and Poro societies, see Brooks [1993:75-77]). According to Baba Dole, this was the place where people were circumcised, and that some people died during this process. He also said that this was an “evil” place associated with *kòma*, and that Doofatini only came to be used for “secrecy” related activities after the Manding started to become influential in Konya-Mani. Zo Musa was allegedly the first person who started to use this area to form an association to oppose the Manding according to Yaya Dole (l. 2-15). The Kpelle who preceded Zo Musa did not use this area for such reasons (App. 8.3; see Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1489).

Doo, *tu* and *tini* respectively mean ‘secret’ or ‘secret society,’ ‘forest’ and ‘hill.’ My assistants could not come to a consensus about how to translate *fa* in this context. *Fa* means ‘father,’ but none could see how ‘father’ is the correct translation here. Boakai Yamah suggested that *fa* here might be ‘to die’ or ‘to kill.’ He said that *fa* may refer to the ritual death of the secret, and that Doofa means ‘to kill (*fa*) the secret (*doo*).’ The ‘secret’ is revealed or ‘killed’ when a person is initiated and learns the ‘secret.’ Djjobba Kamara suggested that *fa* means ‘to carry out’ or ‘to practice,’ and that *doo* stands for ‘secret’ or ‘tattoo society’ (personal communication, 12 Oct. 1999). Doofatini, he says, means ‘hill where tattooing is practiced.’ (The Liberian English word for scarify is tattoo). The name of a creek near Doofatini is *Dookòò* (‘secret creek’) or *Doofakòni* (‘secret /*fa*/ creek’) (Mohammed Chèjan Kromah 1992, App. 7.17a; Mustafa Kromah 1992, App. 7.20).

18 ‘They left Baayòla’: See line 59, and Yaya Dole 1985, App. 7.4, l. 234-243. Zo Musa supposedly moved from Baayòla to Musadu with Tumaningèmè (l. 80-86). Yaya also said Baiyòla.

- 20 Fuomuo Dole is the ancestor of the Dole.
 When we left Mande the Kamara ancestor, Fòningama, came.
 The Kromah say that they are chiefs of the town.
 Tumaningèmè's children are the chiefs of the town.
 When a case is presented to them,
- 25 They present it to us.
 We are the two clans in this region: the Kromah and the Dole.
 When a case is presented to the Kromah in Koniya,
 They present the case to us.
 I am Fuomuo Dole's descendant.
- 30 His brother was Fuomuo Sima.
 They are the other Dole.
 Those are the two father's houses and their descendants.
 His name was Fuomuo Sima.
 They lived in Dialu before they came here.
- 35 That was the second place where they settled.
 This was the third town.

[FONINGAMA'S SON EXECUTED]

- Now, Fòningama stayed here and sired twelve children.
 They killed his son who violated the law,
 And put a rock over his grave.
- 40 A piece of the rock is still here.

20-21 Ibrahim Béété similarly stated that the Dole migrated from Mani (Mande) (App. 7.35, l. 160). Vase Kamala indicated that Fuomuo Dole may have been in Musadu before Foningama, having been summoned from Kèwa to destroy Zo Musa's *saafè* (App. 7.6, l. 1444). According to Yves Person, the Dole were important clerics of the Kamara (1968b; Ch. 5). Some stories indicate that the Dole predated Foningama to Musadu (Ch. 4), so none of this information necessarily contradicts itself.

22 'The Kromah say that they are the chiefs of the town': Yaya affirmed this statement in lines 144-145 (see Bangali Koesia 1985, App. 7.4, l. 2-13; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36a, l. 516-19). 'chiefs' (*soti*): Literally, 'town (*so*) master/owner (*ti*).'

23 According to Dole, Tumaningèmè was Zo Musa's owner (l. 80-86).

27 Koniya: When speaking fast, as in this sentence, Yaya said Kònya.

30 'brother': lit., 'mother's son.'

34 Dialu: Dialu was reportedly an old slave area where slaves farmed (Baba Dole 1992, App. 8.3).

39 'rock': Ibrahim Béété said that Fòningama's first four sons who were caught violating the law were decapitated. Their heads were buried, and covered with dirt and this rock (App. 7.35, l. 192-218). Another source claimed that the mosque was built over the tomb of Foningama's supposed daughter Magnambouy (Mayāmoi) who married the cleric who is said to have introduced Islam to the region (Bouyssou 1913, in Lelong 1949:24, App. 4.3). See line notes 48 and 1124-32.

- We do not stand on it even though the mosque has been ruined.
 You can only put your hand on it,
 But you can not put your foot on it or step on it.
 Part of the rock is near the mosque now.
- 45 We moved it when we rebuilt the mosque.
 The mosque was not a female mosque after it was rebuilt.
 It was a Jamia [mosque].
 They took them to a different area.
 It now lays where the big mosque is located.
- 50 It is not in its original place.

41 When I visited Musadu in 1986, Yaya Dole showed this rock to Mohammed Chèjan Kromah, his father Mustafa Kromah and myself. The rock was located outside the front wall that surrounds the mosque. Shortly before we went to the mosque, Dole instructed someone to clean the area around the rock to make the rock visible. When I went to stand on rock, Yaya warned me to stay away. He explained that *jina* resided under the rock. He cautioned that a person could place one's hand on the rock, but not one's foot. Many Manding believe that ancestors and other spirits live in or under rocks; the Manding give homage to these spirit beings by performing rituals over, praying over, and making sacrifices over sacred rocks (e.g., Niane 1965/1980:71, 91, n. 140; Zahn 1974:10). Earlier in the epic, Zo Musa reportedly 'removed one of the large stones which was located in front of the fetish huts and which was used to "make sacrifice."' He transplanted this stone at the base of the tree in the town that became known as Zota (Ch. 6). One Kromah claimed that the power source of Zo Musa was the black rock that was kept in the Kaaba in Mecca, and implied that the Kòma people took part of the rock, and thus the rock's power, before Muhammed conquered Mecca (Ch. 7). Several other Maninka traditions link the origins of the Kòma to Islam, Mecca, and the Kaaba (Conrad 1992:152-154, 164-166; see Conrad 1990:270, ln. 6121).

Dole also said that the rock was removed from its original location when the mosque was enlarged several years ago. This might have occurred when the people started to build Musadu's current central mosque in the 1950s. This might have replaced the mosque that Pere Bouyssou saw in 1913 (Lelong 1949:24, App. 4.3). The Musaduka officially completed the mosque in May 1994 (App. 7.8; App. 7.17). The mosque was newly painted for this event, and several people from Musadu who lived in Monrovia and other areas in the sub-region went to Musadu to attend these celebrations. All of the people from Musadu who lived in Monrovia were supposed to pay a certain sum of money to help finance this celebration.

46 'female mosque' (*mise muso*): Faliku Sanoe said that round buildings or mosques are "female," and that square buildings are "male." He knows of two female mosques in Liberia, one in Bopolu and the other in Butwo. According to Benjamin Anderson, the Musadu mosque was "a quadrilateral building, surrounded by an oval-shaped wall" (1870/1971:92). Sanoe's explanation that female mosques are round seems to contradict Anderson's description. Part of the problem may relate to differences in cultural concepts of shape, or whether the Manding (and other African peoples?) use the mosque wall, the exterior shape of the building or the interior construction to determine its maleness or femaleness. It is also possible that the mosque that Anderson described might have been rebuilt by Yaya Dole's time. 'Female mosques' are mentioned elsewhere in the literature (Marty 1922:129-130). Prussin explains that while the Fulbe were more known than the Manding for building round mosques, the interior of Fulbe mosques were built in a square. Different categories of people entered the north, east, south and west doors of the mosque (1995:22-24, 51-43; see Caillie 1830: 257; Marty 1921:314-319; Trimmingham 1968/1980:155; Person 1979:261). The history, shape and significance of male and female buildings in West Africa needs to be researched further.

47 Jamia: = A mosque that is used for Friday prayers. This can be any mosque, but is often a central mosque where people tend to congregate for their main prayers on Friday afternoon.

48 'them': some pieces of the rock. The grave stayed in its original place. One assistant said that they would not move the body. They knew that the body would decompose, so it would not have any special importance.

49 'It': the rock (l. 44).

- It was covered with dirt,
 But the young men cleared the brush that was over it with a hoe.
 The children said that a person came all the way from Monrovia to see Misadu.
 He is a very important person.
 55 He is called Amara, Amara Dunzo.
 He is here today.
 His father and I judge all of the cases in this town.

[ZO MISA IN MISADU: II]
 [Zo Misa founds Misadu]

- Our ancestor came and met them here.
 They left Baayòla and came and met them in this town.
 60 The creek would overflow and the fish would stay on the bank,
 And they would not know when it happened.
 That is why they settled here.

[Zo Misa's *saafèlè*]

- Now, his [Zo Misa's] *saafèlè*...
 I am not going to mention its name (everyone laughed).
 65 He used to look for his things.
 Nobody in this town except for me can say that they know its name. (laughter)
 My father was the *masa* of this region and my ancestor was the *masa*.

52 'the young men cleared the brush that was over it with a hoe': Does that mean that this rock has become less important over time? It seems like this rock would be cleared off if it was still important. (The more recent traditions say that Fòningama's son or sons who were executed for breaking the law were buried under this rock [l. 39; Ch. 8]). Robert Launay's discussion about "abandoned *lo* [*do*] groves and the graves of saints" seems to apply to this case, even though Fòningama's sons do not seem to have been Muslims:

The abandoned *lo* groves and the graves of the saints are, in any case, powerful symbols of what individuals reject in the past and of what they cherish and hold sacred. They embody the reality of a religious tradition, a continuity of practice throughout the generations, if not the conviction that the ancestors, those at whose tombs one seeks succor, were holier, more pious, and altogether better Muslims than people nowadays. Yet, they embody the conscious abandonment of certain practices and the adoption of others, if not the conviction that Muslims today are more scrupulous, more pious, than the ancestors (1992:221-22).

53 'a person': = Tim Geysbeek.

55 Amara Donzo: = the person who cleaned the dirt from the rock. Amara was present for the interview.

58 'met them': Zo Misa and Jufa Konè.

59 Baayòla: See line 17.

64 'I am not going to mention its name': Yaya said that he was the only person who knew the name of Zo Musa's *saafè*. The idea that Zo Musa's *saafè* had a special name is similar to the suggestion that Bamana staffs have "sacred names that reflect their power and their use in secret situations" (McNaughton 1988:122).

67 'My father was the *masa*': Speaking about Molikuma Dole. 'my ancestor was the *masa*': probably a reference to the nineteenth century chief Vafin Dole.

- We have been the *masaya* since Misadu was first established.
 We never shot a gun [to become *masa*].
- 70 I was also one.
 I carry a gun wherever I go.
 The *saafèlè* was disrupting the town when they came.
 When the *daan* used to bathe their children and place them in a fanner on the
 ground between two roofs,
 Pigs would come and eat the babies.
- 75 That is why they put an end to that [practice] in the wooded area.
 Those are the things that it used to do,
 And they were not powerful enough to stop it.
 My ancestor sent a message to ancestor Fuomuo Dole,
 And someone was quickly sent to Mori Kòlò in Fesula.

[Misadu named]

- 80 He said, "My man, we came to a man's home.
 His name is Misa.
 They said that they should name the town now."
 That is what Zo Misa said.
 They said...
- 85 Tumaningèmè said, "No, no, the name is Misadu.
 We came and met you here.
 Therefore, this town will be named after you - Misadu."
 That is why we call it Misadu.

68 'We have been the *masa* since Misadu was first established': In other words, the Dole have been among the earliest chiefs of Musadu (see Person 1987:259).

69 'We never shot a gun': means that the Dole did not acquire their chieftaincy by force.

70 'I was also one': Yaya Dole was the chief of Musadu from 1958-62.

73 *daan*: *Daan* means 'isolated' (McNaughton 1988:135; Ibrahim Béété 1993, l. 46). According to Faliku Sanoe, *daan* in this context is not synonymous with the Dā people. The connotation someone who is not a non-Muslim or perhaps not Maniyaka is certain situations.

74 'Pigs would come and eat the babies': Yaya is the only person who equated the *saafè* with pigs. Pigs symbolize a difference between the Manding and the Kpelle. Muslims consider pigs to be unclean, so they do not generally raise pigs. The Kpelle do not hold the same belief, so they raise pigs. So, one might interpret this statement to mean that the Kpelle would come and 'eat' the Manding.

75 'That is why they put an end to that [practice] in the wooded area': Yaya is saying that the *daan* in Musadu stopped laying their babies on the ground to dry because pigs used to come and eat them. Faliku Sanoe said that he saw women place babies in fanners and then set them between the roofs of houses that were built closely together so that they would not be bothered by pigs and other animals that roamed through town.

76 'it': pigs or the *saafèlè*.

78 'My ancestor': This could be any ancestor, even one from another lineage. Fuomuo Dole: see Vase Kamala (App. 7.6, l.1439-1440).

79 Mori Kòlò: = 'old (*kòlò*) mori.' Dole continued the story on line 89. Vase Kamala said that a Kaamòò Mue Kuò (Mori Kolo) was Zo Musa's owner (App. 7.6, l.1456). This could have been a descriptive term to identify the person, but may have also been his name.

86 'We came and met you here': See Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36, ln. 7.

[Fila Layi Kènè helps destroy Zo Misa's *saafèlè*]

- They sent someone to bring Mori Kòlò when the *saafèlè* got out of control.
90 No, no, Fila Layi came.
Fila Layi wrote a *lisimu* when he came and put it around the neck of a frog.
They placed it where the *saafèlè* traveled.
The *saafèlè* exploded when it swallowed the frog.
That is why he left this place.

[Zo Misa collects water and dirt from Misadu]

- 95 He went and entered...
He took water from Miyanwiyan Creek,
He took water from Gbeaku Creek,
He took water from Dion Creek,
And he took water from Jiakò Creek.
100 The name of the other creek on the road is Miyanwiyan.
Two creeks are named Miyanwiyan.
The Diomani will not drink from the one that is on the Famoila road.
The Diomani will only go there to wash their faces,
But they will not drink.
105 He took that water and some dirt from the hills and seven valleys around town.
He took that number and carried them.
He left the town to us when he left.

[Zo Misa curses Misadu]

- Fòningama came after that happened.
He [Zo Misa] said, "Fuomuo Dole, Tumaningèmè and Fòningama.
110 God has made strangers more important than citizens.
They are the strangers and we are the citizens.
They have driven us away.
God has made the stranger more important than the citizen in town."

90 Fila Layi: was a Kanè who, in some accounts, founded Ferentèla (l. 1073-79; see Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, ln. 1439; Ch. 3).

95-107 See Vase Kamala's account for this episode in App. 7.6, l. 1490-1505.

96 Miyanwiyan: 'red/light skinned (*wiyan/wulèn*) boa constrictor (*miya*).'

99 Jiakò: 'show (*jia*) again (*kò*).'

104 It is not clear why the Diomani or Kamara are prohibited from drinking from this water.

107 'us': the people who stayed.

110-111 'citizens' (*duu-dèn*): Literally, 'land (*duu*) children (*dèn*).'

[Zo Misa's journey from Misadu to Zota]

- When they reached Kanikolela they said "Kanikoke!"
115 That means, 'We left them.'
When he reached Jiewu he said,
"Fuomuo Dole, Tumaningèmè, and Fòningama, "yèlewule," 'good bye.'
God has made the strangers the citizens in Misadu.
There were three strangers: Tumaningèmè, Fuomuo Dole and Fòningama.
120 We were three.
He went and settled in an area called Zota.
That father settled there.
Misadu does not have any power to pass a law against that place.
One white kola nut...
125 All you need to pay is one white kola nut if you violate anything.

[LASISI RELATIONS IN MISADU]

- It is just like the way we are here.
If the Kromah is a real Kromah and not illegitimate,
Then we only pay one white kola nut.
We work together as one people.
130 If a Diomani is in trouble anywhere,
And you are a Dole or Kromah,
You are responsible for everything.
You must intervene and help solve the problem.
You must stand and do that.
135 The *lasisi* relationship is hard.
The *lasisi* relationship is hard.
The *lasili* business is hard because you have to help free that person from trouble.
Otherwise, you will become the owner of the trouble.
You must help the person who is in trouble if you are able,
140 Even if you are younger than the person.
That is how they left the town.
The rest of the people who came later met us here.

114 *kanikoke*: is an expression of happiness. This mountain was reportedly named because of Zo Musa (Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1506-42; Ch. 6). For a similar story about Fala Wubo, the progenitor of the Wubomai-Loma who fled from Musadu and rejoiced when he reached Kanikokela, see Geysbeek (1994:8).

116 Jiewu: derives from *yèlewuli*. This mountain is located north of Boola.

117 *yèlewule*: a Kpelle word.

121 Zota: also Zotia ('Zo's town').

122 'That father': Zo Musa.

125 If a person from Musadu goes to Zota and breaks a law, that person only needs to pay a white kola nut as a penalty.

138 'you will become the owner of the trouble': You are responsible to help that person.

When they talk about the citizens of the land and town,
The real ones are the Kromah.
145 They are here now...

* * *

[THE TRADERS OF MISADU]
[Dole, Kromah, and Sanyo traders of Misadu]

220 That is what all of my ancestors did.
They used to say that when everyone [in town would] assemble,
That the young traders would remain on one side of the road.
My father and the crowd stayed here.
The three groups of traders are the Dole, the Kromah and the Sanyo.
They let all of them go on the other side of the road where the sun rises.
225 None of them used to go on the side where the mosque is located.
That is where we used to stay...

* * *

[THE EARLY HISTORY OF KONIYA]
[Misadu, Nyèla, Yakodu, Beyla, and the formation of Koniya]

All of the towns of Koniya came from here [Misadu].
240 Nyèla came from here.
The person who left here and established Nyèla was Vamadi.
The Kamèna people of Yakodu were Kèmò Jiako's people.
The Kamèna people of Yakodu who owned the small village were slaves of the
Koniya people from Misadu.
Beyla...
245 Beyla came from here.
The Béété came from here.
They named the town Beyla so they say Beyla.
One of them is the third imam in this town, Layi Blaima.

[Doo and Gbana]

All of the places that they asked about...

143 'children of the land and town' (*so du dèn*): Literally, 'town (*so*) land (*duu*) children (*dèn*).'
221-226 The Dole, Kromah and Sanyo presently live on both sides of the road (see Figure 57).
239 Speaking of the *Konya so luulu* or the 'five towns of Konya.'
241 Vamadi: a contraction of Va ('Father') Mammadi.
242 Yakodu: = Diakolidu. Kèmò Jiako: Is this Jiaka Boe (l. 161)?
243-244 'small village' (*toda*): For more on *toda*, see Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, ln. 1396.
248 Layi Blaima: A reference to Alhaji Bintu Ibrahim (Blaima) Béété who was interviewed in 1993 (see App. 7.35, l. 277-284).

- 250 I am talking about their *gbanda*.
 When Zo Misa left from here...
 That *gbanda* is the place they call Gbana today.
 When they...
 When they used to ask us [non-initiates] to go in,
 255 They used to bring the *doo* outside in Gbana.
 They now call it Gbana.
 That land is now known by that name [Gbana]...

* * *

[THE DIOMANI IN MISADU]

- The Diomandé have built a house for their sister here.
 If she is not an illegitimate child...
 320 The real-real Diomandé can not live in a house in this town.
 A house that a person can live in can not be built here,
 Because he is closely related to his ancestor.
 [The Diomani do not have a house in Misadu] so their foot will not hit the stone.
 Now, when all of us take one cow [to sacrifice],
 325 They [the Kromah and Dole] give it to any of the young Diomani men who are
 in town.
 That will be their share.
 They do not have any other share.
 We don't do it for the Loma children.
 We don't do it for them.
 330 We do it for the Maniya children.

250 *gbanda*: One possible meaning is 'before (*dā*) the okra (*gban*).'

255 'They used to bring the *doo* outside in Gbana': Probably referring to a masked dancer.

Mohammed Chèjan Kromah said that Yaya told us that there is an opening that initiates pass through when they leave Doofatini. The initiates go to Gbana where their final ceremony is conducted before they return home (App. 8.2).

318-42 Musadu gives a share of the cow to the visiting Diomandé or Kamara, and the Diomandé women give part of the sacrifice to the Dole.

323 'So their foot will not hit the stone': Yaya was apparently saying that the Kamara did not live in Musadu so they would not be able to cause any divisions with their uncles. According to Alhaji Béété (App. 7.35, l. 233-55) and Mammadi Donzo (App. 7.36, l. 495-97), the Kamala were not permitted to build houses or live in Musadu; they should lived outside of Musadu to protect the town. Donzo noted that Saji Kamara's attack on Musadu (in 1873) was especially greivous because he broke this law (l. 273-465). Person claimed that there was a fall-out between the Kamara and the people of Konya-Mani and Musadu after Foningama's sons broke a law; the breaking of the law forced the Kamara to leave Musadu and Koniya (1987:259). This law, banning any permanent Kamara presence in Musadu, may be a mechanism that the Maniyaka instituted to keep any dominant Kamara presence away from Musadu. The Kamara then, helped protect Musadu by not being in the physical position to disrupt the town (l. 37-40; Vase Kamala 1986, App. 7.6, l. 1566-1610; Ch. 8). Saji is said to have agreed not to "disturb any Mohammedan town: and Musahdu in particular" after Sole Blama forced him to lift the siege of Musadu (Anderson 1912/1971:30). The Maniyaka, however, still regard Musadu as 'the sacred town of the Kamara' (Person 1986b:242, 288) or 'the town of the Kamara' (Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 2207).

- We do it for them.
 The Diomani woman who will come to town...
 We can't get our uncle's [Diomani's] share unless we get it from our own people
 who we have married.
 When a Diomani woman delivers in town, when that happens...
 335 When they bring the baby outside.
 They give one hundred *dalasi* to Layi Yaya and say
 "This is for you and all of your brothers.
 Your uncles are not here.
 You are here."
 340 They will give the share from their mother's side.
 They will take it and give it to me.
 I will share it with any Diomani children who are there...

* * *

[CLAN RELATIONSHIPS]

- They say that there are twelve clans.
 After all of the work was stopped,
 1065 The Koesia and Fuomoisia joined together and became one.
 They are some of the Dole.
 They call them Koesia.
 They made their father's generation well-known.
 That became their clan.
 1070 They joined together and became one.
 The Sefu, Dukuwe, and Dunzo were together.
 They joined together and became one.
 The two Kènè branches...
 Fila Layi was anxious to come here.
 1075 He wrote a *lisimu*.
 He put it on the neck of the frog and destroyed Zo Misa's *saafèlè*.
 They joined together.
 The two Kènè branches joined together and became one.
 That group of Kènè were the largest.
 1080 Even now, they don't divide anything if there is something for them to do.
 They can't divide it when it is time to work.
 [They will say,] "Let this clan do this,"
 Or, "Let this yard owner do this..."

336 *dalasi*: A five franc coin (Conrad 1990:93).

1065-70 Fuomoisi: This is one of the Dole lineages in Musadu (l. 16-36). The Fuomoisi branch of the Dole apparently developed an alliance with the Koesia in the past.

1074 Fila Layi: A Kanè, see line 90.

1080 'They don't divide anything': When work is apportioned to the Kènè, both lineages work together and share the responsibilities. It is not divided among the lineages.

[FONINGAMA'S SONG ABOUT JALA]

- When Fòningama used to play with his son he would sing:
- 1125 "Stop, stop, listen,
 Jala can't hear 'Stop.'
 Stop, stop, listen,
 Jala can't hear 'Stop.'"
- The rock is in the ground here...
- 1130 He sang, "Jala can't hear 'Stop.'"
 He would not listen when you said "Stop."
 That is the rock that is here in the ground.

1124-32 Jala seems to be Fòningama's first son Fèn-jala or Fanyala who is sometimes described as having been born in Diemou before Fòningama moved to Musadu (see Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1039-43). It is likely that Yaya's story about Fanyala has some authenticity because he presented it in the form of a song which is more easily remembered. The song says that Jala did not listen to (or respect) his father; this is consistent with other traditions which claim that Fanyala had an adversarial relationship with his father (Ch. 8). Vase Kamala, on the other hand, said that Fòningama left Fanyala with his mother when he (Fanyala) was a child - after the Diemouka tried to kill Fòningama (App. 7.6, l. 1039-79). Fanyala later returned to Musadu where he conflicted with his brother Fasujan, not his father (App. 7.6, l. 1611-24, 1658-80). Yaya also seemed to suggest that Fanyala was buried under the rock near the mosque (ln. 1132). Yaya's story differs with Vase Kamala's claim that Fanyala traveled on to Sondu after he made a sacrifice in Musadu and failed to usurp authority from his step-brothers (App. 7.6, l. 1626-27, 1658-80), and adds to the list of people who were buried under this rock. Others who are said to have been buried under this rock were Foningama's sons who were executed for breaking the law and Foningama's daughter who married an important cleric (ln. 39,52). Stories about the breaking of the laws and the rock are cliches which cannot be taken literally that explain something that happened in the past. The fact that Vase Kamala, Yaya Dole and others offer different views about what happened is not surprising. These differences, in fact, may provide some clues as to how these cliches can be interpreted. At a most general level, they may indicate that Foningama did not fully control his sons, and that Fanyala may have been killed after he failed to unseat his step-brothers in Musadu. Following this scenario, Fanyala's sons would have been the ones who moved on to Sondu. Furthermore, a link between Fanyala's presence in Musadu and the breaking of the laws suggests that civil strife occurred. These explanations are speculative, and leave many points unanswered - like how the story about Foningama's daughter fits into the picture.

1132 'That is the rock that is here in the ground': Dole implies that Jala was one of the children who was executed and buried under the rock.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.9

AMARA KAMARA

Place and date of interview: Damaro, Guinea, 18 March 1986

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek and Majongbè Mammadi (Chèjan) Kromah

Context of interview: Mammadi Chèjan Kromah took me to Guinea in 1986. After we visited his mother and father's home in Watafélédu and Mamolodu respectively, we went up to visit his wife's family in Sumandu. We also went to Damaro and stayed for one week. Everyone, from chief Amara Kamara to the youth association, treated us with great honor. We were given a nice round houses within which to stay, and were fed well every day. The youth association organized a soccer game and asked both of us to play. Chèjan and I donated a soccer ball and set of uniforms to the soccer team before we left. The youth association also asked a *jèli* to come from another town to provide entertainment, and then hosted a modern dance later in the evening. Two Kamara also took us to the ruins of the original site of Damaro (Gbèfè), to a large cave, and to two waterfalls. One of the men who had a job in Conakry and was visiting Damaro eventually took us on to the next town in his jeep.

On the day that we left, Amara Kamara agreed to give us an interview. He was the chief of Damaro and the *jamanati* or chief of the region of Sumandu. In the interview, Amara said that he was a trader before he became a chief (l. 286-342). We interviewed Amara outside on the veranda of his porch, and a half-dozen elders of the town were present as well. A couple of the elders contributed to the interview, but I did not record their names. Amara Kamara died in 1993 (Figure 15).

Transcribed by: Ansu Cissé (Monrovia, 1993)

Translated by: Ali Kromah (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1993) - tape/transcript/translation

Checked by: Ali Kromah & Tim Geysbeek (Monrovia, 1993) - transcript/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

Translation note: Most of Mohammed Chèjan's questions were based on questions that I gave him. I did not record most of the questions that I asked, and none appear in the transcript. Places where I turned the recorder off to discuss the next question are indicated by three periods in brackets ([...]).

[Fanyala's descendants]

Mammadi: How did the Kamara go to Damaro? How did the Kamara get to Damaro? Where did they come from before they settled here? He (Tim) also asked how Sumanu became established.

Amara: The Kamara came here.

Our ancestor, his name was Foningama.

Foningama, his son's name was Fanyala [Fèn Jala].

Fanyala, his son's name was Fanumawulèn [Fandumawulèn].

5 Fanumawulèn, his son was Sona Simani.

Sona Sima, his son's name was Funumusu.

Funumusu, his son's name was Fakasia.

Fakasia, his son's name was Soso Kamara.

Soso Kamara, his son's name was Jalakòlò.

10 Jalakòlò, his son's name was Jalakòlò Sewulèni.

Jalakòlò Sewulèni, his son's name was Chèmò Yama.

Chèmò Yama, his son's name was Fata Chèwulèni.

We are Fata Kèwulèn's children [...].

7 The Kamara in Damaro have a voluntary association named after their ancestor Fakasia. The Fakasia association is partly designed to raise funds for "development projects" in Damaro (e.g. clinic, school). The Damara association has branches in Monrovia, Conakry, and other towns, and the members of the association normally meet in Damaro on an annual basis. According to one Kamara genealogy, Fakasia was an early-eighteenth century founder of Kassiadougou in Sumandu (Camara, Appendix 4.9; see Geysbeek 1988:54).

* * *

[Foningama migrates to Misadu]

Mammadi: They say that there was trading in Misadu that went between Misadu and Liberia. They also say that there was slavery, that they sold slave and kola nuts among each other. Did some of the Damaro people do that, to take goods through Misadu all the way to Liberia?

Amara: I say that when Foningama came,
He came to Misadu and settled in Misadu.

Mammadi: Foningama settled in Misadu before -

135 Amara: A-han.

Elder: Foningama came from the Malaka region.

Amara: From the region of Malaka.

He went from the region of Malaka to Sibi, near Bamako.
Then he left Sibi,

140 And he came and settled at Misadu .

He Foni...

He sired Fanyala there.

Fanyala came and sired, eh-eh - Foningana, eh - Fanumawulèn there.

Foningama, our ancestor, came from the region of Malaka.

145 Foningama left Sibi, near Bamako,

And came and settled here.

When he left Sibi,

He went to Misa[du] and settled in Misa[du] [...]...

* * *

[Misadu, the oldest town in Koniya]

Mammadi: Koniya. He asked about Koniya, the area that they call Koniya. Which is the oldest town there.

245 Elder: Eh-eh - in Koniya.

Misadu is older than any of the other towns there.

Misadu.

Misadu is older than any of the other towns in Koniya.

Amara: Misadu is older than all of the other towns in Koniya.

Mammadi: Misadu is the oldest. Tim: Is Misadu older than Damaro?

Mammadi: Yes.

Tim: It is older...

250 Amara: White people are troublesome.

Elder: He is talking about something serious.
This is a very important matter. (laughed)

251 'He is talking about a very serious thing': The conversation was shifting to how Musadu was founded. The elder seems to be saying that he did not want to talk about Musadu, for in doing so he would have to acknowledge that Musadu was older than Damaro and that Damaro owed some of its legacy to Musadu. Muhammed then moved the conversation to other topics.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.10

FATA BAKARI KROMAH

Place and date of interview: Macenta, Guinea, 28 October 1990

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek and Makula Mammadi Kromah

Context of interview: This was the second of three interviews that I conducted with Fata Bakari Kromah. Fata Bakari was my stranger father in Macenta. I also interviewed him in 1985 and 1992 (Appendix 7.25). Makula Mammadi Kromah, who first introduced me to Fata Bakari and the Kromah family in Macenta in 1984, was my interpreter.

This interview lasted from about 8-8:45 p.m., on the veranda of Fata Bakari's house. It was dark outside, and we did not have a lamp, so we used a flashlight whenever we needed light. We had talked about the Kòma society the night before, and I asked him to record some of what he had said. About three or four other middle aged men were present for the interview, but there was no outward indication that they influenced what Kromah said.

I introduced the setting at the beginning of the tape, and explained how I felt the interview should proceed. This is not included in the text.

Transcribed by: Ansu Cissé (Monrovia, 1993)

Translated by: Faliku Sanoe (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1993) - tape-transcript/translation

Checked by: Boakai Yamah & Tim Geysbeek (Monrovia, 1993) - transcript/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995, Summer 1996) - tape/translation

Translation note: I explained each question to Mammadi in English, and Mammadi

repeated the question to Fata Bakari in Maniyakã. There was quite a bit of conversation between Mammadi and myself about the topic and the questions that I wanted to ask. Therefore, I only transcribed the exchanges in English that provided important information, and may have influenced Bakari. To the best of our ability, everything that Bakari said is translated below. A more complete translation would reflect all of the exchanges. The original tape has my discussions with Mammadi, Mammadi's questions to Fata Bakari in Maniyakã, and Fata Bakari's answers in the same language. This is the way that the interview proceeded, so the tape is clear and is easy to use to work from to make a translation. Faliku Sanoe returned to school at the University of Liberia in late spring of 1993, so that is why I brought in Boakai Yamah (who knows the speaker) to help me check the translation.

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[KÒMA: I]

[The *kòma*: chiefs, punishments and secrets]

Tim: He will answer in Maniya, and you will speak in English, okay?

Mammadi: He said that he will ask you some things, and you will talk in Maniyakã. Then I will explain them to him in English.

Bakari: He will ask me?

Mammadi: Okay, now you ask him. Tim: Yea. I will ask him, but you will ask him (laughter)... Mammadi: He said that he would ask you some things about the *kòma* society, *kòma*, the *kòma* that they used to bring out. He wants you to explain some of those things to him, how it happened. This was what you were talking about last night, and you can talk about that now.

Bakari: *Kòma*,
Only the big *fama* used to have it.
The poor man never had it.
The people who had it were the big *fama*.

- 5 It was only used to punish.
They would punish anyone who wanted to overthrow you.
When they asked all the men to come,
Everyone would come out.
All the men agreed about one thing.
- 10 When the *kòma* did anything among the men,
It would be kept secret.
It would be kept secret.
That is what the men agreed.
It was like the military government,
- 15 Like the way that he controls the soldiers and immigration.
This is what we call "togetherness."
The name was *kòma*.
It was for the *masa*.
It was called *masafin*.
- 20 It was for the *masa*.
Some people say *kòma*.
If someone tells you something and you are not satisfied,
You can say *kòma*,
But we took that word from the French language.
- Tim: Is there any relation between the *Kòma* and the Poro and Sande. Are they on the same line? Mammadi: He asked, "What is this *kòma*? Is it the *ghan* that the children bring out in the day time? Can everyone see it? (not understand question)
- 25 Bakari: Aye, you can't see it,
Unless you are a man and are a member.
You can't tell the secret.
They will let you see it when you reach that stage.

1 *fama*: A chief who theoretically acquires his power by force, as opposed to a *mansa* or *kunti* who comes to that role because of his position in the clan.

15 'soldier': *sòdèsi*.

16 'togetherness': *dekola*.

23 *kòma*: From *comment* ('how')? The word *ghan* that Mammadi used in the following question is a mask and masking outfit with which children play; they supposedly do not have any sacred value.

- Children and women can not see *kòma*.
 30 Only the real men.
Tim: Oh, so, as the question again. Are the *Kòma* and Poro the same? Are they somehow the same? Mammadi: The Poro? Tim: The Poro. The Poro society in Liberia. The Kpelle people and the Loma people. Mammadi: They got the same *Kòma*. Tim: They got the same one? Mammadi: They got the same one. The Kpelle people and the Loma people got it. The Mandingo people own, they call it *Kòma*. The Loma people, they used to go in the bush, sometime they make seven year in the bush. They learning. Tim: A-han. So, it is all the same. (Mammadi never asked the question, and Bakari did not respond).

[The *kòma*: strangers, *jèli*, scarification and *ngafui*]

- Mammadi: The Loma and Kpelle *kòma*, are they the same with the Maniya people?
Bakari: There is a little difference,
 The Loma people, the Kissi people, Kpelle people.
 They mark their skin.
 The Maniya people,
 35 They don't do that.
 They will ask a stranger a question if he sees the *kòma*.
 They will give him a place to sit if he answers [correctly].
 They may not kill you [if you do not answer correctly],
 But they will confine you to a special area.
 40 After that,
 They will come to an agreement. (children singing)
 The *jèlilu*...
 The Maniya own the *kòma*.
 The Loma own the *nyana, nyana*.
Mammadi: What about the Kissi?
Bakari: I don't know its name in Kissi.
 45 I don't understand Kissi.
 They used to start it [marking] from the back of their head and then go down to their waist and stop. (short explanations during this sentence)
 When they used to ask the Maniya...
 If they met the masked dancer and answered the it correctly...
 They would be part of the group when they answered it correctly.

36 'they will ask': The *kòma* members will ask a predetermined question that has a predetermined answer.

39 Speaking about someone who is not a member.

46 [marking]: in his commentary about this procedure, Mammadi said that instruments like fish hooks were used, and that herbs from the forest were placed on the skin that was cut to make the wound heal.

48 'masked dancer': *masafin*.

- 50 The Loma,
If you go when they are having their meeting,
They will know that you are part of them when they put their hand on the back of
your neck like this.
They would not ask the person again when they found out.
It's name in Mainyakã is *nyana*.
- 55 It's name in Loma is *ngafui*.
The Loma call it *ngafui*.
The Mainya call it *nyana*.

[The *kòma*: masks and bird feathers]

- Mammadi: Do the Maniya *kòma* have a mask?
Bakari: Aye! [They] have masks.
They would cover the wooden [mask] with something.
Mammadi: What kind of wood? (short discussion with audience member)
- 60 Bakari: Only the people who make them know that.
I don't know that.
Only the Maniya peoples that you are talking about know that.
We don't know that.
We only used to see it when it was finished.
- 65 When they put...
They put the wood [mask] on their head,
And covered it with cloth,
And put bird feathers all around it. (discussion about feathers)
Bird feathers.
- 70 When that happened,
When it went to grab anyone,
When men were in the yard at that time,

55 *ngafui*: a type of masked dancer not associated with the Maniya people. Forms of *ngafui* are found in several South-West Mande languages. According to Valentin Vydrine, *ngafui*: is attested in South-Western Mande languages: Mende (dial. Ko) *ngafa* (tone: low-falling), Mende (dial. Kpa) *gafa* (tone: high-falling?) "devil of the Gbonji secret society appearing at funeral celebrations of important men; spirit", Loko: *ngòfò-ng* (tone: low-falling); Bandi: *ngaafua-ng* (tone: low-high or low-falling); Looma: *gòvhè* (/vh/ stands for a "hooked v") or *gove* "ancestor; spirit of the dead"; Kpelle (southern dialects) *gòfè* (tone: low-low)... *Ngafui* [is] not a name of a secret society, but its semantics relate somehow to the secret society activities" (personal communication, 28 Nov. 1998).

Afui, which is the suffix of *ngafui*, is a Poro "medicine" among the Macenta Loma that "consists of herbal remedies, a horizontal mask and a number of musical instruments which constitute the voice of the mask" (Højbjerg 1999:542). Related terms are *nuinag*, a Kpelle word for 'forest spirit' with a 'man's personality' (Welmers 1949:225-226), *nana*, Konor for "one of the grand Poro masks" (Holas 1952b:44), and *nama* and *gnagba* which are 'master fetichers' similar to the *Kòma* in Manding (Camara 1977:21,47,59).

57 Mammadi's word for 'mask' in the next question is *masili*. The speaker interchanged the words Mainya and Maniya (l. 47).

59 'wooden' (*jili*): Literally, 'stick, tree.'

- It would come and bow down.
Then it would dance.
- 75 When it would go this way in the bush,
It would have all of its feathers.
They used to have special people who worked on it.
They used to decorate it with feathers.
They used to decorate all of it.
Mammadi: Even the chest and the hands?
- 80 Bakari: When they put it on,
They would be completely covered.
They would be lost inside.
If you don't know the person who is dressed inside...
You could not identify the person inside who was all dressed up.
- 85 You could not look at the face and identify the person easily.
You would not know until you took it off.
That is when you would see the person.
Mammadi: How did they put the feathers on?
Bakari: Aye, hey, the people who put the feathers on were very powerful.
Tim: In Mali, they got one society called *komo*. Mammadi: *Kòma*? Tim: *kòma* or *komo*. Are they the same society business from Mali? Mammadi: [He] said, In Mali, the Bambara have a society that is called the *komo*. Is it the same thing?
- Bakari: Umm.
Mammadi: He said yes, it's the same.
- 90 Bakari: Tell him that anything associated with a masked dancer (*masafin*),
Their *kalamòò* are the people of Mali,
The Loma and the Maniya.
All of them came from Mali and spread through out the world.
Most of the people left this thing when Islam came.
- 95 People who never joined Islam still have their own.

[Trade in *kòma* artifacts]

- Today, now,
Some people can come.
If I have a mask outfit (*masafin*) and these are my children,
At a time like this,
- 100 And if thieves come to my children,
If I have a mask outfit (*masafin*),
They will go through them [my children] and take my mask outfit (*masafin*).
They would give them to people and be taken away.

96-106 The implication being that the children do not care about the cultural value of the mask and accompanying accessories, and that merchants purchase these materials from the children without the consent of the older people.

100-01 Thieves come when it is dark.

- If I come and look where they were kept,
 105 Then I can say that the people had stole my mask outfit (*masafin*).
 Ha, my children know,
 Because they have become goods to be sold at this time.
 People are buying them and taking them to the white people's land.
 People who are looking for the masks,
 110 The Loma ones and the Maniya ones,
 The people who are looking for these things are in a society.
 Some have cars.
 They come from Monrovia and come here.
 There is a company in Monrovia.
 115 When they come,
 They get those things and sell them in Monrovia to that company.
 After that happens,
 They are taken to the white man's land.
 I don't know what the white man does with them.
 120 Those who are involved in this business really invest plenty of money.

[Islam vs. *kòma*]

- But we did not do those things since we became involved in *mori* activities.
 We do not have any business there.
 In fact, we do not even think about *kòma* any more.
Kòma is not important in this country any more.
 125 Even the people who have *kòma* keep it a secret,
 Because the government does not like it.
 Islam does not support it.
 These two groups don't support it.
 They don't support it.
 130 But not everyone...
 Not everyone has joined the religion.
 That is all that I know about that.

[Important role of the *kòma* before the twentieth century]

- Mammadi: He asked if there was more *kòma* business in the beginning than today.
Bakari: Oh yes! Very much so!
 At that time, there were not many people who had joined the religion.
Mammadi: He asked when that happened?
 135 Bakari: Aye, ah, which one?

108 'white man's land': *tubabu duu*.

111 'these things': Masks and related paraphernalia.

114 'company' (*compini*): From English.

121 '*mori* activities': = Islam.

133 'Oh yes! Very much so!' *Koju! Kosovè!*

- Mammadi: The time when the *kòma* was important, when there was plenty of *kòma* business in this country. In what years did this happen?
- Bakari: Aye.
- Mammadi: How many years has that been now?
- Bakari: When the *kòma* was put down?
- Mammadi: No, the time when *kòma* business widespread. What year was that?
How many years ago was that? How many years?
- Bakari: We heard about it and saw it from the beginning of the world.
- Mammadi: Alright, but how many years has it been since you met it? Fifty years or forty years or how many?
- Bakari: To say that *kòma* activities were in the land?
- Mammadi: To say that *kòma* was very important in the land. How many years ago was that?
- 140 Bakari: *Kòma* was important about forty years ago,
[But] *kòma* has not been so important [since then].
- Mammadi: He asked if the *kòma* activities were plenty during our grandfather's days, like Sonindènè Boakai's days?
- Bakari: Oh yes!
It was very important then.
It was used for instruction.
- Mammadi: At that time, some Maniya who were involved with this *kòma* business and others [who joined] with the religion, right?
- 145 Bakari: Umm.
- Mammadi: He asked if there are many Maniya who have joined Islam today who do not participate in the *kòma* business.
- Bakari: Umm.
There are many Maniya who do not pray,
But they also don't have much power with the *kòma*.
- Mammadi: (English) Plenty Mandingo there, they are not Muslim. Of course, they got the name Muslim, but they are not Muslim. But they not serious for *kòma* business [either]. (Maniyakā) Were *kòma* activities practiced in the Misadu area? Were there some here?
- Bakari: Oh yes!
- Mammadi: Even today?
- 150 Bakari: No.
- Mammadi: The Vai. Did the Vai belong to the *kòma*?
- Bakari: The Vai.
I am not able to say anything about the Vai because they live on the ocean coast...

* * *

141 Sonindènè Boakai: Fata Bakari Kromah's mid-nineteenth century grandfather who is said to have founded modern Musadu (Person 1968b). The speaker's statements in this section suggests that the Maniyaka of this area adhere to Islam much more strongly now than they did before the middle of the twentieth century and earlier.

145 Umm: = yes.

[MISADU]
[Foningama?]

Mammadi: He asked if the Maniya in this town know the story about Foningama from Misadu.

Bakari: Most of them know,
But for the history to stay in the mind of a person,
215 To start from the beginning - to-to-to-to,
And go in order and not bend and not tell a lie,
There are not very many people [who can do that].
You will know some.
It is possible to explain some,
220 But to tell the story in order,
How the ancestors worked,
The person who remembers that is the person who God especially worked with.
Not everyone can remember that. (someone enters and is greeted)

[Zo Masa Kòma]

Tim: On the Beyla side, they were talking about one man named Zo Musa Kòma.
Okay.

Bakari: (laughed) Zo Masa Kòma.

Mammadi: Zo Musa Kòma. Tim: I wonder if that Zo Musa Kòma, the Kòma behind his name, if it [is] the same *kòma* we getting, he were telling me [about]. That is what I want to know. Mammadi: ... Zo Musa Kòma. He said that he wants you to talk about Beyla... They used to say, Zo Musa Kòma.

225 Bakari: Zo Masa Kòma.

Mammadi: That Zo Masa Kòma. What is the Kòma name? Or, how did he get Kòma attached to his name?

Bakari: *Nyana*, Zo Musa Kòma had *nyana*.

Nyana.

He had *nyana*.

All of that *nyana* business came from Mali. (short discussion about Masa rather than Musa).

230 Zo Masa Kòma is the name of a person.

Zo Masa Kòma.

He was a person. (women enters and is greeted)

[KÒMA: II]

Mammadi: He asked if the *kòma* and *nyana* left from Mali and came here.

Bakari: No, all of the *kòma* did not come from Mali.

235 It used to come with different people.

Let's say that you have something and I love it,

And I say that I must find the same kind of thing.

When that happens,
I will come to you as a friend.
240 In that kind of situation,
We are in one place.
When I happen to get that item,
Wherever you brought it from,
And I received the thing from you,
245 I will not ask where you got it from.
It is something from you that I want.
When I get it,
I will say that I got it from my namesake.
That is how the *kòma* business came.
250 It can not be said that the *kòma* was in Mali and then went to another land.
It was not done that way.
We now reject the *kòma* business.
If you have fifteen men at one place,
The *kòma* will be there.
255 The *kòma* will be there.
But we do not think about those things...

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.11

LANSE KAMARA

Place and date of interview: Douama-Sobala, Guinea, 29 October 1990

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek and Makula Mammadi Kromah

Context of interview: Lanse Kamara was the mid-fifties clan head of the Kamara in Douama at the time of the interview, and said that he was a descendant of Foningama's son Fanyala (l. 101). We interviewed Lanse Kamara in his room. Lanse Kamara, Makula Mammadi Kromah and I were the only adults present for the interview, except for a man who left shortly after it started. A half-dozen children were also in the room, and several other children were playing outside. Mammadi told the children to be quiet and leave the room near the end of the interview because they got too noisy.

Transcribed by: Ansu Cissé (Monrovia, 1993)

Translated by: Faliku Sanoe (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Boakai Yahah (Monrovia, 1993) - tape/transcript/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek and Faliku Sanoe (Monrovia, 1993) - transcript/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

Translation note: There was some discussion between Mammadi and myself about what Lanse said and what questions should be asked. This is not included below except when it is important to explain what was being asked or to better understand the dynamics of the interview.

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MISADU AND MANDE

Fòningama in Misadu: 113-119

Zo Musa, Kònsaba and Kamanjan?: 120-129

[INTRODUCTION]

Lanse: My name is Lanse Kamara.

Mammadi: Listen, he wants to know your position in this town? What is your position in this town?

Lanse: I do not have a position that is different from my father's.

Mammadi: Are you the president of all the Kamara here?

Lanse: Yes.

Tim: He is the *kabila kundi*? Mammadi: He asked if you are the *kabila kundi*.

Lanse: Yes, I am the *kabila kundi* for the Jomani here.

5 That is the place that I hold.

[FONIŊGAMA AND THE JOMANI]

[The Jomani and the Kamara]

Mammadi: Who are the Jomani?

Lanse: This is what they call the Jomani.

Mammadi: What is the difference between the Jomani and the Kamara?

Lanse: There is no difference between the Jomani and the Kamara.

They are the same.

If he is asking for the difference between the Jomani and the Kamara,

10 There is no difference in the meaning.

It is like when there is a *funèni* and Kamara,

It is like when the little brother has more power.

You can praise him if you like.

15 The *funé* is the older brother.

Mammadi: Are the *funé* - *jèli*?

Lanse: Yes, they are *jèli*.

[They are the ones who] praise their younger brothers.

We are the same children.

They call those children the Kamara:

2 'president': *presedant*. In Mammadi's question.

5 'place': From the French *place*.

- 20 Some people know more than others.
 During the days of our ancestors,
 Like the way they are fighting a war,
 They are fighting a war,
 If your small brother goes ahead of you and gets power,
 25 Then you have to be one of his followers and praise him because he is a man.
 This is how the old people's *jèli* business originated.
 The reason is because they are older.
 That is the meaning.
Mammadi: Where did the *funé* come from?
Lanse: The *funé*?
 30 All of the *funé* came from Sibi.

[Kamara ancestor immigrates from Sibi]

- Mammadi: Can you talk about the history of the Kamara in Sibi, and how they
 came here?
Lanse: The Sibi matter,
 I can't explain all of that to you.
 There is a reason why they left Sibi and came here.
 It was because of *fadènya*.
 35 Our ancestor's younger brother was one of the powerful men.
 They said, "If we allow this man to stay here...
 He is too powerful."
Mammadi: What were their names?
Lanse: I don't remember their names right now.
 They only told us that Sibi was the Kamara ancestor's town.
 40 That is the beginning.
 That is a long story.
 When that happened...
 People will only learn that by reading a book.
 You have to learn it that way.
 45 If you don't learn it that way,
 It will be hard for you to understand.
 That is how my ancestor did it.
Mammadi: In what *jamana* is Sibi located?
Lanse: Sibi, that Sibi,
 That business about Sibi happened a long time ago.
 50 Ah, it is in this country...
Mammadi: It is not in Mali or Guinea?
Lanse: It is not in Mali or Guinea.
 Sibi might be in the, èh-èh - Arabu country.
 The Arabu place.
Mammadi: Do you know anything about Silamaka?
Lanse: I don't know.
Tim: Do you know Sumaka?

55 Lanse: (no answer)

[The Fula hide Fòningama in *fonio*]

Tim: Okay, Foningama?

Lanse: Fòningama.

Tim: He came from Misadu.

Lanse: A-han.

Fòningama, Fòningama.

That is Sibi talk.

60 Our ancestor left Sibi and came and met the Fula, ah - in Futa.

That is where they called our ancestor.

When their, our ancestor...

[The Fula were] hiding him when the war came.

They put him in a place where they keep *fòni*.

65 That is where they hid him.

They called him, "The man with *fòni* on his head!

What kind of man is this!

He has *fòni* on his head."

It is because of the *fòni* that they named him Fòningama.

[Fòningama's children divided in Misadu]

70 Our ancestor left and went to Misadu.

That is where he sired his children.

Most of his children were born there.

He sired three of his sons there.

They were divided in Misadu.

75 Some came this way.

Some went to the Zèlèkole area.

Some went to Kankan.

Some of them came this way.

They all came from one person.

80 Those are the descendants of our ancestor after he came here.

They said, "The Kamara..."

* * *

[MISADU AND MANDE]

[Fòningama in Misadu]

Mammadi: How did Fòningama become a big man in Misadu?

Lanse: Fòningama was the first who left Sibi,

And came to Musa[du],
The first Jomani.
115 He became popular in Misadu.
That is why his name is associated with Misadu in this region.
A person can raise his voice where he gets power.
All of the Jomani who are in this forest region,
They agree with Misadu.

[Zo Musa, Kònsaba, and Kamanjan?]

Mammadi: Where did the name Musa come from? The name Musa came from...
Where did it come from?
120 Lanse: I don't remember that.
You may become powerful in a town,
But you may not be the first person who went there.
The town owner's name may disappear if you become powerful in a town,
And your own name will stay.
Tim: Do you know Kònsaba?
125 Lanse: Is it a human being?
Mammadi: Do you know Zo Musa? Zo Musa, have you ever heard anything about
him?
Lanse: Ahan. What country did he come from?
Mammadi: They talk about Kamanjan in the Sunjata story. Do you know
something about that?
Lanse: No.
Mammadi: Do you know a story that is interesting to you? You can go ahead and
tell it. But if you have nothing to tell me, that is okay.
Lanse: We will come back to that sometime.
The beginning of that [story] and what we have been talking today may not be the
same...

123 'town owner': *so ti*.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.12

FATA MUSA KIÈLÈ (KUYATE)

Place and date of interview: Douama-Sobala, Guinea, 29 October 1990

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek, with Makula Mammadi Kromah

Context of interview: The interview began at 5:45 p.m. Fata Musa was a strong man, probably in his fifties or early-sixties, and was the *kabila kundi* of the Kuyatè in Douama at the time of the interview. He was the chief of Douama up until 1989. We interviewed him on his veranda at dusk. Fata Musa spoke forcibly, and did not seem to be restrained when he spoke. A couple of other men listened to the interview, and the children played on the ground below. Many kids crowded around us a couple of times during the interview, and were sent away each time because they were making too much noise. We recorded our conversation with Musa Kièlè after we had interviewed his older brother, the *jèli* and former chief of Douama, Minata Musa Kuyatè.¹ Fata Musa was interviewed again on July 12, 1992 (App. 7.21). The quality of the voice and recording in both instances is very good.

Transcribed by: Ansu Cissé (Monrovia, 1993)

Translated by: Ali Kromah (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1993) - tape/transcript/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek and Ali Kromah (Monrovia, 1993) - transcript/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

¹Minata Musa Kièlè's interview does not appear in this appendix because he did not talk about Musadu (see App. 19).

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[FONINGAMA AND THE JOMANI]

[Foningama flees from Sibi to Wasolon]

Tim: Is Foningama in the Kamara story?

Mammadi: He wants to know if Foningama is in the Kamara business.

Musa: Foningama.

Hey, that is long.

I can explain it.

205 It started in Sibi. (person enters and is greeted)

That Foningama, he had two sons.

Mammadi: He came from Sibi, right?

Musa: He sired them,

But not in Sibi.

Now, this Foningama...

210 His father’s children are the Sibi Kamara here.

Mammadi: Where is Sibi?

Musa: Mali.

It is in Mali, in Mande.

Their father was Jomani.

Good.

215 That Foningama,

His father’s children drove him,

And he went to a mountain.

He went through an opening in the mountain,

And went all the way to, èh-èh - Guinea.

220 That was from Sibi, in Mali.

[“Foningama” with the Fula and the *fonio* in Wasolon]

His name was Kaman.

Good.

When Kaman came, he met the Fula in Waso.

Wasolon is in Guinea and Mali.

- When he came,
 225 He saw the Fula man.
 The Fula man took him and hid him in the *foni* granary.
 Then he went and told the people.
 He called the people and said, "I have a stranger."
 He brought him out and sat him down.
 230 He called the group and said, "Here he is."
 They said, "What is your name?"
 He said, "My name is Kaman."
 That happened in Wasolon.
 Then they began to say "Foningama."
 235 *Foni - fon*i is on this person."
 They said, "Foningama."
 That is why they call him Foningama.

[Foningama leaves Wasolon and travels to Kankan]

- Foningama came and settled in Kankan,
 And sired one son there.
 240 They called him Kamara.
 Those are the Kamara in Kankan.

[Foningama leaves Kankan and travels to Misadu]

Then he went to the Kpelle.
 He went to the Kpelle area and sired two children.
Mammadi: In which country? In which town?
Musa: In the Beyla area, in Misadu.

[Fanyalaba Jomani's descendants in the forest region]

- 245 Good.
 The first son whom he sired while he was there was Fanyalaba.
 Foningama's first child was Fanyalaba.
 See Bliama's mother came next.
 See Bliama is the one who is in Tinikòlò,
 250 Who is in Konikò,
 Who is in Maanu,
 Who is in Koligblama.

238 Thus, according to the speaker, his full name was Foni Kaman Kamara or Foningama Kamara.

242 'Kpelle': The speaker said Gbèlèse.

249-253 See Bliama's descendants live in these areas.

249 Tinikòlò: = 'under (*kòlò*) the hill (*tini*).'

250 Konikò: = *koni* = 'hill/mountain,' *kò* = 'creek' in this case?

- See Bliama's descendants are in the Konisèdu that you passed through when you came here.
- 255 But Foningama's people went into all of those places.
Sewòni's two children went into that whole area.
One side goes all the way to èh-èh - Konokòlò,
To go from Konokòlò and come to Buse,
To go from Buse and come to Gboni and Kwadu,
260 And to come to Douama here.
Mammadi: Eh, which one?
Musa: Eh, this thing - Fanyalaba...
Fanyalaba's descendants.
See - See Bliama's mother is with the other people on this side.
Foningama's own...
265 Foningama's generation is here.

[The Jomani of Foningama in southern Guinea]

- Every Jomani on that side is a descendant of Foningama:
To start from Sibi and to go all the way to Kankan;
To go from Kankan and come to Kissidu [Kissidougou];
To go from Kissidu and come to Gbokedu [Gueckedu];
270 To go from Gbokedu and come to Macenta,
Eh - to Beyla, Yomou and the forest area,
All are the descendants of Foningama.

[MUSA FOUNDS MISADU]

- Mammadi: He asked why the name Musa is in the name Misadu. Where did that
Musa come from?
Musa: That Misa was Kpelle.
Misa was living...
275 He founded Misadu.
He was Kpelle.
But, if you see what happened to Foningama...
Eh, Fanyalaba's descendants...
It was for the people of Fanjalaba.
280 They got it because they fought.
Misa was Kpelle,
And Misadu was in Kpelle country.
He was Kpelle.
Good, and he founded Misadu.
285 Yes!
But now there are no Kpelle in Misadu.
They are all Koniya.
If you see any Maniya in this area,
They came from Misadu.

290 That is the old-old town,
 But it also came from Mande.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPENDIX 7.13

ALHAJI KALAMOO DOLE

Place and date of interview: N'Zerekore, Guinea, 8 November 1990

Interviewed by: Djobba K. Kamara

Context of interview: I met Kalamòò Dòlè ("Banabula") on the afternoon of November 7 in the N'Zerekore market. Djobba and I made arrangements for an interview, and Djobba interviewed him the next morning just before we went to Beyla. Djobba spoke to the alhaji in his room in N'Zerekore. Nobody else was present for the interview except for one or two women who periodically passed through the room. In the background, one can occasionally hear people talking. The interview lasted about twenty-seven minutes. Alhaji Dòlè said that he got his information about how Musadu was founded from his father Ansumana (line 3), and that his information about Samori Turé came from an Ansumana Cissé who fought with Samori (lines 451-475). The speaker is from Musadu, and knew the Yaya Dole who I interviewed in 1986 (line 247).

Transcribed by: Faliku Sanoe (Monrovia, 1993)

Translated by: Faliku Sanoe, with Boakai Yamah, Ansu Sise, and Amara Sise (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Faliku Sanoe and Tim Geysbeek (Monrovia, 1993) - transcript/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

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[INTRODUCTION]

Djobba: What is your name?

Alhaji: Dòlè, my name is Layi Kalamòò Dòlè.

Djobba: Layi Kalamòò Dòlè. Can you tell me how Misadu was founded?

Alhaji: Yes.

Djobba: Was your father the one who narrated this story to you?

Alhaji: Yes, his name Mèmè... Mèmè Vasumama Dòlè.

Djobba: Mèmè Vasumana Dòlè. A-han, was he born in Misadu?

5 Alhaji: Yes, he is from Misadu.

[ANCIENT MISADU: I]

[Zo Musa and the Kromah in Misadu]

Djobba: How was Misadu founded?

Alhaji: About how Misadu was founded,

My grandfather told me that they were in Bòkoma.

It is located in the area of Gbèso.

By God's grace,

10 The Kamanawu were...

10 Kamanakawu: Kromah, a reference to Tumaningèmé (l. 133-140). Djobba Kamara, like my non-Konyakā speaking assistants in Monrovia, was unfamiliar with this name and was not sure to whom it could be equated. It is very similar to Kamara. I specifically asked about this when I was in Musadu in

- Djobba: The Kamanakalu?
Alhaji: Kamanakalu.
 They had a slave,
 And his name was Musa.
Djobba: What was he?
Alhaji: He was a slave named Musa.
 15 Musa often went fishing.
 God agreed,
 And he saw a creek near a big river.
 This creek was called Dion.
 He used to go farm there.
 20 He would tell his fathers when he went to farm.
 The Dòlè were living in the old village.
 That village was called Dòle[la].
 They were living...
Djobba: Were they the father of the slave?
Alhaji: The name of the father of the slave was Kromah.
Djobba: A-han, is that their father who you are talking about?
 25 Alhaji: Yes, they are the Kamanaka.
Djobba: What kind of people are the Kamanaka?
Alhaji: They call them Dumbaya.
Djobba: Kromah?
Alhaji: They are Kromah.
 The slave of the Kromah founded Misadu.

[The Dòlè settle in Misadu]

- 30 The Dòlè built the other side of the town.
 They said, "Ah, this will be a good place to live."
 It will be good for us if we live here."
 They decided to settle there.

[The Kromah lead Misadu]

- 35 "We agree to settle here,
 But we can't settle here without a *kundi* (leader)."
 Who was going to be their *kundi*?
 They asked the Kamanaka to be their *kundi*.
 The Dòlè,

1992, and was told that Kamènaka refers to the Kromah. The name is also pronounced Kamènaka (Kamèna), and is equivalent to Kromah. Another name that is equivalent to Kromah (besides Dumbaya) is Kamè or Kèmè as in Tumani Kèmè (Tumaningèmè).

18 Dion: Jòn.

33-45 The speaker continued this story on line 139.

36 'the Kamanaka': Tumaningèmè.

- They were next to them.
 God agreed that the town started to grow popular.
 40 They said that problems would come.
 This thing...
 [They said], “We need to pray to God because the population is rising.
 Jealousy will come.
 People will become jealous.
 45 We must do something great so we can remain unified.

[Misadu and Mandi]

- Djobba: The question I have is, how did Misadu get her name?
Alhaji: Misadu got its name from...
 It came from Mandi.
 They came through Kalala.
Djobba: Mandi or the Arab country?
Alhaji: No, that is not in the Arab country.
Djobba: A-han.
 50 Alhaji: This Man[di] is near the border between Konowari and the Sudan...

* * *

[THE TWELVE WARRIOR GROUPS OF MISADU]
 [Twelve warrior groups]

He went to Misadu.
 He said, “During that time,
 Twelve fighting groups were in Misadu.”

47 Mandi: Mande, or the Manden.

50 Konowari: Côte d'Ivoire.

98 ‘twelve fighting groups’ (*kèlè bulu tan ni fila*): lit., ‘twelve (*tan ni fila*) fighting (*kèlè*) hands (*bulu/bolo*).’ Twelve is partly sacred because it is the sum total of the two most sacred numbers, five and seven (Weisswange 1976:8; Schimmel 1993:192). According to different versions of the Sunjata epic, for example, Sumaworo’s clan is divided into twelve sections (Lanse Kamara 1990, App. 7.11, l. 186-203, 236-254), Sunjata defeated twelve hunters (Buhnen 1994:13), sorceresses divided a sacrifice that was supposed to lead to Sunjata’s premature death into twelve pieces (Kouyaté 1987, in Conrad 1999a:186), twelve kings thrust their twelve spears into the ground when they paid homage to Sunjata (Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:73), and Niani Mansa Kara Kamara took twelve copper arrows to the Manden (Cissé/Kamissoko 1991:65). In the Musadu epic, there were twelve groups of warriors (Sumawolo 1984, App. 6.1; Kalamòò Dòle 1990, App. 7.13, l. 98-112), Foningama had twelve sons (Ch. 7), Foningama’s sons divided the land into twelve sections (Kèwulèn Kamara 1992, App. 7.16, l. 198-425), twelve clans settled in Musadu, twelve people introduced Islam to Konya (Lanse Donzo 1992, App. 7.28, l. 29-37, 239-267), Konya was segmented into twelve regions, Foningama ruled those twelve regions after he became *mansa* (Moliké Sidibé 1993, App. 7.32, l. 228-253), twelve Kamara children were executed for breaking the Kamara-Dole oath (Kalamòò Dòle 1990, App. 7.13, l. 160-197), and twelve of Foningama’s sons remained alive after four were executed for breaking a law (e.g., Dauvillier c. 1905, App. 3). Twelve is not as significant in Islam as other numbers, although there are categories of twelve like the division of the year into twelve

- There were twelve fighting groups.
100 No, there were only nine fighting groups that were in Misadu.
They were all in their own houses.
All of them used to go and capture people and bring them.
Djobba: Can you name those nine warrior clans?
Alhaji: The nine warrior groups?
I can tell you each of the names of the ones that I know.
Djobba: Okay. Go ahead and name them.

[The Dòlè in Misadu]

- 105 Alhaji: First, there were the Dòlè.
Djobba: Did they have their own warriors?
Alhaji: Yes, they had their own warriors. (woman enters and is greeted)
The *kundi* of those warriors was Kaba Yamba.

[The Wèlèlè (Cissé) in Misadu]

- Another one there,
Their name was the Wèlèlè.
Djobba: Wèlèlè?
110 Alhaji: The Wèlèlè.
That is what we call them.
We group all of them together and call them the Cissé.
Djobba: Who was their war *kundi*?
Alhaji: Their *kundi* was Mue Blaima Cissé.

[The Béété in Misadu]

- The second...
Djobba: The third.
115 Alhaji: The third ones were called the Béété.
Those Béété were not living in the town,
But they were living at the edge of town.
They always used to come to town.
They...
Djobba: What was the name of their war *kundi*?
120 Alhaji: Their war *kundi*'s name was Vafin Béété.

[The *nyamakala* in Misadu]

The fourth one was a *nyamakala*.

months that are important (Schimmel 1993:192,,199-201; see Brenner 1984:49-52,193).

105 'first' (*premiere*): French.

- Djobba: *Nyamakala*, right?
Alhaji: Yes, they were *jèli*.
Djobba: A-han, *jèli*.
Alhaji: They were *jèli*.
Djobba: They were the *nyamakala*?
Alhaji: Yes, they were the *nyamakala*.
125 Their *kundi*'s name was Lama.
Djobba: Lama who?
Alhaji: Lama *Jèli*.
Their area was in Kabakono.
Djobba: Kabakono?
Alhaji: Kabakono.
Djobba: Kabakono.
Alhaji: Kabakono.
130 They used to call them when they were in their houses.
They used to call them.
They used to call them and say, "Lama at the entrance of the door." Ooh.

[The Dumbaya in Misadu]

- They used to call the fifth group, Timaningèmè.
Djobba: Timaningèmè?
Alhaji: Tumaningèmè.
Djobba: Timaningèmè?
135 Alhaji: They were the Tumaningèmè, Gèmè, the Kamanaka.
Djobba: Kananakalu?
Alhaji: No, the Kamamakawu.
Djobba: Kamalakawu.
Alhaji: Kamanakawu.
People call them the Dumbaya.
Djobba: I understand. What was his name? Tumaningèmè?
Alhaji: Timaniṅ - Timaningèmè.
Djobba: Tumaningèmè.
Alhaji: Tumaningèmè.
140 He was one of the fighters.

[The Sayon in Misadu]

The other ones were,
They were the Sayon.
We call them the Dugala [Dukala].
Do you know them?
Djobba: Yes, the Sayon?

- 145 Alhaji: The Sayon.
Djobba: What were they called?
Alhaji: The people called them the Sayon.
 Their grandfather was from Gbana.
Djobba: Which town in Gbana?
Alhaji: They called the town (pause) Gbakèdu, Gbakèdu.
Djobba: Gbana-Gbakèdu?
Alhaji: Gbana...
- 150 They ran away.
 At that time the Sayon lived with them,
 With the people of Misadu in the wooden barricade.
Djobba: Why did they run away?
Alhaji: They ran away from their *badèn*.
Djobba: Their Sayon *badèn*?
Alhaji: Yes, from their Sayon *badèn*.
Djobba: Was there a war between them and their *badèn*.
- 155 Alhaji: There was a war between them and their *badèn*.
 They said, "If we don't live with the powerful people...
 The only powerful people are the people of Misadu.
 We must go and live with them."
 They said, "Well, we have done that.

[THE JOMANI VIOLATE AN OATH AND ARE EXPELLED FROM MISADU]

- 160 Let's look for a powerful person who will come and lead us.
 They sent a message to...
 They sent a message to the Yomanu.
 The Yomanu said, "Whether it true or false,
 We can't settle in Misadu town because there is an oath between us.
- 165 The oath between us is this:
 Anyone who spoils it...
 When that happens,
 That person will bear the consequences.
 The Dole and Jomanu agreed to make an oath.
- 170 There were twelve Jomani *jèli* after they took the oath.

153 *badèn*: Literally, 'mother's children.' The fact that these Sanoe fled from their *badèn* is serious because that means they were fleeing from people with whom they had close attachments.

159 Picking up from line 45.

162 Yomanu. Jomanu or Jomani. \Y\ and \j\ are often interchangeable. The *nu* suffix is a plural marker for the Jomani. 'Whether false or true': literally, 'Whether bushy or clear.'

165 'oath': *sè*.

170 Jomani *jèli*: According to Faliku Sanoe, the Kamara in Butwo, Liberia, are *jèli*. He said that the Ngawula Kamara have a lesser status than the Fina Kamara. Sanoe did not know anything about the Ngawula Kamara.

- The people who violated the oath...
 Fèngama arrested the people for that reason,
 And executed them.
- Djobba: The question I want to ask is about the oath that was between the Jomani
 and the Dòlè. Was there a conflict between them, or not?
- Alhaji: There was conflict between them,
 175 But when the Dòlè were faced with a problem,
 When Misadu faces problems,
 The Jomani should come,
 And protect them,
 And help free them from their trouble.
- 180 He said, "There is an oath between you and someone who will rescue you
 during times of trouble.
 Anyone who spoils the oath will suffer the consequences."
 The oath was established,
 And the Kamara (?) said,
 "It is your turn, Dòlè, we have taken the oath."
- 185 [Dòlè said,] "All our school children should not be harmed by anyone.
 If our children get in trouble and you don't come to rescue them,
 God will know about that."
 The Jomanu took the oath.
 God made the Jomanu violate the oath because they were powerful.
- 190 Their children suffered the penalty after the school children broke the law.
Djobba: How many children in number were they?
Alhaji: They were twelve in number.
Djobba: Did all of them die when they were punished?
Alhaji: No, not all of them.
 Only four of them violated the law.
- 195 They said, "Since this is the case all of us must leave."
 The Jomanu were the ones who did this.
 When they left they went directly to Misadu.
Djobba: Who? The Dòlè?
Alhaji: No, the Dòlè did not leave.
Djobba: The Sayon?

171 'The people who violated the [oath]': Literally, 'The people who spoiled the problem.' These were four of Foningama's sons (l. 194).

180 'oath': The Kamara and Dole vowed to protect each other in times of trouble. The Kamara ended up violating the oath, and not being allowed to live in Musadu as a result (Ch. 8).

189 'The Jomani violated the oath because they were powerful': The Jomani abused their power. They seemingly either did not protect the Dole, or they harmed the Dole.

192 'Only four of them violated the law': These four were executed (l. 173), but all of the Jomani suffered the consequences of being expelled from Musadu (see ln. 199-200).

194 Four of the children were executed, and the others left town (l. 173, 194).

195 'They said, "Since this is the case, all of us must leave"': Stories about the Jomani leaving Musadu like this are similar to Vai accounts of the Kamara or the sons of a chief who left Musadu and went to the sea because they broke some laws (Ch. 8).

Alhaji: the Sayon.
 They [the Jomanu children] went to the areas that surround Misadu.
 200 They went to the areas that surround Misadu.
 Some went to Gbana.
 Some went to Jiila.
 Some went to Sumandu.
 This is how they were divided.
 205 God made that division happen...

* * *

[ANCIENT MISADU: II]
 [Foningama's sister's two wells in Misadu]

Djobba: Thank you. What about Foningama history?
 380 Alhaji: Fèningama history, Fèningama's oath, Fèningama's oath,
 The oath that Fèningama made,
 The person who did that was Fèningama.
 After the oath was made,
 His mother - his sister,
 385 He gave his sister to the people of Misadu at that time.
 His sister said that she did not want to live in Misadu.
 Then he said, "I will take care of all of your needs if you stay in Misadu."
 [She] said, "I will go freely on my own."
 He said, "Okay, that is good."
 390 He dug a well there.
 That is the well that we call Kanakò.
Djobba: That is Kanakò well?
Alhaji: Kanakò.
Djobba: Kanakò?
Alhaji: Kanakò.
 395 The well that he dug there...
 The well that he dug there stayed for a long time.
 There was no beginning or end to the well.
 It did not get dry in the rainy season or the dry season.
 He dug another well.
 400 They [the people of Misadu] bothered his sister because of this well.
 That is in the eastern part of Misadu.

200 'They went to the areas that surround Misadu': Literally, 'They made a circle around Misadu.'

202 Jiila: = Guirila.

380 'history': *ta[lilu]* (in Djobba's question).

384 'sister': = *badènmuso*.

391 Kanakò: = Kaniyakò.

397 'There is no beginning or end': Lit., 'There is no head or tail.'

That well is called Se - Seningbè [Saningbè].
 That well,
 The water can't get dry.
 405 It can't get dry in the rainy season,
 It can't get dry in the dry season.
Djobba: What is the name of that well?
Alhaji: We call that well Seenu [Sani].
Djobba: Seenu?
Alhaji: Seenu.
 It is there but you don't know about it.
 410 It is on the eastern side of Misadu.
 That is all that I know.

[The power of Misadu and the Jomani in Koniya]

Djobba: Eh, how were Koniya and Jiila and Simanu and the other Maniya *jamama* built?
Alhaji: Koe - Koniya and Misadu.
 My grandfather Ansumana told me that (pause) Jiila, Koniya...
 No.
 415 Let me say that of all the towns that have been established,
 Misadu is the oldest.
 All of them used to go to Misadu.
 The people of Koniya,
 The people of Koniya,
 420 I do not distinguish between any of them except for the Jomani.
 Nobody in Koniya can challenge Misadu.
 But who was backing Misadu?
 It was Fèningama.
 Fèningama used to go to Misadu.
 425 He used to come and help Misadu.

402 Sèningbè (Saningbè): = 'white (*gbè*) gold (*sèni/sani*).'

412 Koniya: Up to this time, the speaker said Koya.

425 'He used to come and help Misadu': Or, the Kamara used to come and help Musadu. One of the elements of the Kamara-Dole oath was that the Kamara should defend Musadu (Ch. 7-8).

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.14

ALHAJI BRAIMA KROMAH

Place and date of interview: Diakolidu, Guinea, 9 November 1990

Interviewed by: Djobba Kamara, with Tim Geysbeek

Context of interview: When I went to N'Zerekore in 1990, I met Martin Ford's assistant from Gban, Liberia, Faliku Sanoe. Faliku had been very helpful to Ford, and Ford asked if I could locate him when I went to Guinea. When I went to Diakolidu, Faliku put me in contact with one of his younger brothers who lived there, Mammadi Oppong Sanoe. Mammadi, probably in his early-twenties, was the principal for the Liberian Refugee school in Diakolidu. When I asked Mammadi who might be able to tell some history, he introduced us to Alhaji Braima Kromah to whom he was related through his mother's side of the family. Djobba Kamara, Muhammad Oppong and I interviewed Brahim Kromah under the veranda in his yard on Friday afternoon at 4:00 p.m. after the main prayers. The only others present were a few children and a couple of men. Brahim was sick at the time, and his voice was weak. He was willing to give the interview, but did not answer some questions for which he seems to have had some information. Brahim stated at the end of the interview that he was seventy-six years old, and we greeted him again when I went to Diakolidu in 1992. Braima said that he was a farmer, and that he was involved in Seku Turé's Parti Democratique de Guinée during the Seku Turé era. He also said that he went on the pilgrimage to Mecca in 1975.

Transcribed by: Ansumana Cissé (Monrovia, 1993)

Translated by: Boakai Yahah (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Ali Kromah (Monrovia, 1993) - tape/transcript/translation

Checked by: Boakai Yahah & Tim Geysbeek (Monrovia, 1993) - transcript/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

Translation note: Geysbeek asked most of the questions in English, and Kamara translated them into Maniyakã. Kamara also summarized much of what the speaker said to Geysbeek. Geysbeek's questions, Kamara's summaries and Kamara's short discussions with Geysbeek are not included in the text unless they contributed to our understanding of what was asked or what the speaker said.

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[INTRODUCTION]

Djobba: Your name is Alhaji Braima Kromah, right?

Braima: Yes.

Djobba: Did you ever become the *jamanati* (chief of the region)? What things did you do when you were younger?

Braima: Eh, here, our ancestor...

When Almai was captured,

He came here to this town.

5 The white man - the white man came to this town.

When the white people came,

From here to Wejènnè and Tuba,

Our ancestor was the *jamanati* (chief of the region).

He was the *masakè* (chief).

Djobba: Umm, I asked, did you ever become *masakè* here?

10 Braima: No, I never became *masa*.

The kind of *masa* I was,

I was a *masa* in the R.D.A.

I was that kind of *masa*.

Djobba: How do you know the things that you are going to talk about? What people told you?

Braima: A-hun, the only one who told me what I am going to talk about was my father.

Djobba: What was his name?

15 Braima: My father's name was Mammadi Kromah.

Djobba: He also came from Jakodu?

Braima: He lived in Jakodu...

* * *

[ANCIENT KONIYA: FONINGAMA KAMARA AND ZO MASA KÒMA]

[Foningama and Kònsaba in Gbè]

Djobba: What about Foningama? Do you know anything about him?

Braima: The things that I know about Foningama's background...

Foningama came from Gbè.

Djobba: Gbè?

Braima: Gbè.

Do you hear?

45 Foningama came from Gbè.

Kònsaba and Foningama,

They came from the same father.

Do you hear?

3 Almai: Almami Samori Turé, when he was captured in 1898.

5 'white man': *tubabu*.

- Djobba: They were in Gbè?
Braima: They were in Gbè, Gbèsoba.
50 Do you hear?
They moved from Wolodu and went to Gbè.
The Kpelle were in Gbè at the time.
The Kpelle were in Gbè at the time.
Do you hear?
55 The Kpelle who were there, Foningama...
When Kònsaba came,
He became stronger than the Kpelle.
He drove the Kpelle from that *jamana*.
He was the one who supported Foningama when he came here.
Djobba: What was the relationship between Foningama and Kònsaba?
60 Braima: What was the relationship between Foningama and Kònsaba?
Foningama and Kònsaba were *fadèn*.
Djobba: Who was the oldest of the two?
Braima: Kònsaba was older than Foningama.
Djobba: What was their father's name?
Braima: Their father's name was Fonobakeyala.
Djobba: Eèn?
Braima: Fonobakeyala.
Djobba: Fonobakeyala.
65 Braima: Aan.
Djobba: Do you know where he came from?
Braima: No, I don't know where he came from.
Djobba: Did Foningama and Kònsaba come to Misadu together?
Braima: No.
Djobba: Who came first?
Braima: Foningama was the one to went to Misadu.
Kònsaba stayed in Gbè.
Djobba: Do you know Foningama's mother['s name]?
70 Braima: No, I don't know.
I know the name of Kònsaba's mother.
Djobba: What was her name?
Braima: Fonobakeyala.
Djobba: His mother? You said...
Braima: His mother's name was Kolanama.
Djobba: Kolanama. Kolanama what? Her clan?
Braima: I don't know about her clan. (light laughter)

49 Gbèsoba: = 'the big (*ba*) town (*so*) of Gbè.'

64 Later, and in agreement with other oral traditions, the speaker said that Kònsaba tried to kill Foningama (l. 75ff).

63 Fonobakèla: = 'man who makes (*kè*) big (*ba*) food farm (*fono/folo*).'

[Kònsaba's conspiracy and Foningama's flight to Misadu]

- Djobba:** How did the activities concerning Foningama's laws take place? I have heard that they passed some laws, and that if you violated the law, something would happen. What happened?
- 75 **Braima:** Eh, a-han - Kònsaba...
The way that Foningama left Gbè to come here...
Kònsaba Yomanu dug a big hole.
Do you hear?
They dug a hole.
- 80 After they dug a hole in the ground,
They took a mat and laid it over the hole.
They told Foningama to sit there that day.
He said, "A-hun, I will not sit there."
"Ah," he said, "You should let another person sit there."
- 85 He thought, "Uun, there is a plot against me here."
If you hear that Foningama left there,
That is why he went.
Then he came here.
Djobba: He then came to Koniya, to Misadu.
Braima: Misadu.

[Laws in Misadu]

- Djobba:** The laws that were in Misadu at that time...
- 90 **Braima:** I am not aware of them.
Djobba: Do you know that some laws were passed before, that something would happen to people who spoiled the market. Some of Foningama's son's died because of that. You don't know about those things, right?
Braima: I'm not aware.
They passed the law for everybody.
The Jomani used to attack the market,
So they said that anyone who raided the market should be dealt with according to the law.
Djobba: Do you know what happened to them?
Braima: Aan, I don't know that.
Djobba: Who raided the market? Do you know who some of the people were who raided the market?
- 95 **Braima:** No, I don't know.

[Foningama's sons]

- Djobba:** Do you know how many children Foningama had?
Braima: Eh-èh, I don't know how many. (light laughter)
Djobba: But do you know some of them?
Braima: Yes, I know some of them.

- Djobba: What are the names of the ones that you know?
Braima: A-han, the name of one was Simandu.
Djobba: Do you know his name?
Braima: No.
100 Someone went to that place, èh-èh-èh - Tobalo. (speaker greeted someone who passed by)
Djobba: Tobalo?
Braima: Aan.
Do you hear?
One went to, èh - Maana here.
That is all that I know about that.
Djobba: Do you know how Foningama died?
105 Braima: No.

[Fakoli Kromah]

Djobba: Tell us a little about your ancestor Fakoli.
Braima: (light laughter) I don't know about that.
Djobba: Even if you can only tell us a little about your ancestor.
Braima: No. (light laughter)
Djobba: You don't know?
Braima: I don't know because someone has told you about that.

[Tumaningèmè Kromah]

- Djobba: What about Tumaningèmè?
Braima: (light laughter) Tumaningèmè. (light laughter)
110 He is our ancestor.
Djobba: What happened?
Braima: Tumaningèmè, he came from Tina.
Djobba: Tina? Where is that? Is that in Guinea?
Braima: It is in Guinea.
It is in Wolodu.
He went from there and came to this place.
115 Eh-èh - to this place, to Falabana [Farlabana].
Djobba: Is Falabana in Koniya?
Braima: Falabana is in, ah - Jilila.
Djobba: So that is where he came from before he came to settle?
Braima: That is where he came from.

98 Simandu: = Sumandu.

107 It seemed like the speaker knew something that he did not want to divulge in many instances like this when he laughed.

108 I do not know to whom the speaker was referring.

109 Tumaningèmè: = Tumani Kèmè or Tumani Kromah. Some say Tumaningèmè Kromah to emphasize his identity.

- Tumaningèmè did not come directly here.
He went to many places afterwards.
- 120 People can tell more about him in the places where he stayed.
The land is called, èh-èh (pause) -
What was the name of that town?
Audience member: Sigidi.
Braima: Sigidi.
Djobba: He left Sigidi and went to Misadu?
- 125 Braima: No.
He settled in Sigidi and then became...
When he stayed there...
Audience member: Falaba.
Braima: He left from Falabana and went to Sigidi.
- 130 That is what I know about that.
Djobba: Nolasoba is a Kromah town. Do you know about that?
Braima: Yes, I know about that.
Djobba: What is the name of that town?
Braima: Nalasoba.
Djobba: Norosoba?
Braima: It was in that town.
What town are we talking about?
Audience member: Sigidi.
- 135 Braima: It was in the *jamana* of Sigidi.
Djobba: Do you know how the Kromah settled there?
Braima: No, no, I don't know about that.
Djobba: Have you ever heard of Silamaka or Sumaka?
Braima: That is about Gbèsoba.
Gbèsoba, I said before that Kònsaba was in Gbèsoba.
That is where Sumaka was.
- 140 Eh, that was Gbèsoba.

[The Kromah found Jakodu]

Djobba: Who was in Jakodu before your ancestor went and started the place?
Braima: A-an, nobody had settled there.
My ancestor was the one who went there.
Djobba: They also say that the Kpelle lived here, that they were in this land.
Braima: Yes, yes, the Kpelle lived in these areas,

[Zo Musa founds Misadu]

But those Kpelle were in Misadu.

124 Sigidi: = Siguiri.

132 Nalasoba (Norasoba): Assistants said that Norasoba means 'big (*ba*) town (*so*) of glory (*nala/nola*).⁹ Another translation is 'large village' or 'capital of an area' (see Moraes Farias 1989:161).

- 145 Djobba: What was his name?
Braima: Zo Masa Kòma.
Djobba: Zo Musa Kòma?
Braima: Aan.
Djobba: What do you know about Zo Musa Kòma?
Braima: I don't know anything about him. (light laughter)
Djobba: You don't know anything about him? Didn't he found Misadu?
Braima: He was the one who founded Misadu.

[Zo Musa, scarification and medicine]

- Djobba: How did he get the name Kòma?
Braima: A-han, he had medicine.
150 He had some kind of medicine.
That medicine was bad medicine.
Djobba: What was its name?
Braima: Of that medicine?
No, I don't know the name of that medicine.
Djobba: What kind of work did the medicine do?
Braima: A-han, that medicine,
155 It would take and dogs or small children,
And swallow them if it saw them.
Djobba: The medicine would swallow them?
Braima: Aan.
Djobba: That is how he got the Kòma name?
Braima: Aan.
Djobba: Because he was a Kromah? Is that how he got the Kòma name, or
something else?
Braima: No, no. (speaker laughs)
160 His name was Zo Masa Kòma.
He was scarifying [people] in an area behind that place, Dagbanò.
Djobba: That was a town?
Braima: Aan.
Djobba: The town was Dagbanò?
Braima: Aan.
Djobba: I want to ask if he was the first person who began to scarify?
Braima: Aan.
Djobba: No one else did it except for him?
165 Braima: Right, right.
No one else did it except for him.
Djobba: Why did he start to do that?
Braima: I do not know the reason.

149 'medicine': *basi*, here and elsewhere in the interview.

151 'bad medicine': *basi ju*.

161 'scarifying': = *wintè*, which means to split or cut. Dagbanò: = 'to stutter.'

[Foningama's sacrifice?]

Djobba: Foningama made some sacrifices here. What do you know about that?

Braima: I don't know about that.

Djobba: What was the thing that they called *wilikèlèn* sacrifice?

Braima: (laughter) I don't know.

[The coming of Islam]

Djobba: How did Islam (*Siamiana*) come here?

170 Braima: Aan?

Djobba: How did Islam (*Seama*) come?

Braima: How did Islam (*Seama*) come?

You know, everything comes...

What did you say?

How did Islam come?

175 It was not one person who brought Islam.

One person did not bring Islam.

You know, some people have gone on *heji* to Makka from here.

Only a few people went to Makka.

What did you say?

180 The children who we do not send to learn...

I don't know about those things.

[Zo Musa's *saafè* and his flight to Zota]

Djobba: Do you know small? When Zo Musa was there, was Foningama there at the same time?

Braima: No.

Djobba: Who went there first?

Braima: Zo Masa went there first.

Djobba: Where did Zo Musa go after he left?

Braima: When Zo Masa was there,

185 Foningama became more famous than Zo Masa.

Foningama forced Zo Masa to leave.

[He] left Foningama.

[Zo Musa said], "Eh, the people of this land,

You hate me.

190 You are driving me away for Foningama's sake."

After he said that, Zo Masa left.

Zo Masa Kòma left and went to the Kpelle region.

171 Djobba and the speaker pronounced the word 'Islam' slightly different, accounting for the problem here. Djobba is a Koadu-Gbonikā speaker, and Alhaji Braima speaks Konyakā. Both are dialects of Maniyakā.

178 Or, gone on hajj to Mecca.

Djobba: What town did he go to?

Braima: He went to that place that was -

Djobba: Zota?

Braima: Aah, Zota.

Djobba: What happened? Did Foningama drive Zo Musa Kòma, or did he leave because he [Foningama] became well-known?

195 Braima: It was because he became more well-known.

Saafè, Zo Masa's medicine worked effectively against our people.

That was the reason why they sent Zo Masa away.

We did not like his medicine.

Djobba: What kind of people drove him away from the town?

Braima: Aye, an - I don't know.

[Clans in Misadu]

Djobba: You said that the Jomani were there, right? The Kromah were there, in Misadu. What other kinds of people were there?

200 Braima: (laughed)

Djobba: The Cissé? The Dukule? What other kind of people were there?

Braima: I don't know all of them now.

I only know what I talked about.

I only know what I talked about.

Djobba: Was it only the Kromah and the Kamara?

Braima: Uun (yes).

[The man from Liberia travels to Misadu]

Djobba: Some time ago, they say that someone went from Liberia to Misadu. Do you know anything about that person?

205 Braima: I don't know anything about that.

Djobba: Have you ever heard about him?

Braima: I have heard about him.

Djobba: But you are not able to explain it now?

Braima: No, I am not able to explain anything about it.

[Zo Musa's trip to Zota]

Djobba: Before Zo Musa reached Zota, did he go to any other places before he went there?

Braima: When he left,

He only took one road and went.

Djobba: Did he go by any towns?

210 Braima: Yes, he passed here.

195 'well known': = *sanga*.

- Djobba: Jakodu?
Braima: Aan, and he went to Yusumodu [Nionsamoridu] and continued.
 He went between Yusumodu and that place, èh-èh - Jèwu.
 When he reached Jèwu...
 We tell our neighbors, “*Mòòsi-o*” (see you tomorrow).
 215 Like the way we say, “*Mòòsi-o*,”
 They say “*Yèliwuli*.”
 When they pass and say “*Mòòsi-o*,”
 [They say] “*Yèliwuli*.”
Djobba: Is that Kpelle?
Braima: That is Kpelle.
Djobba: Where did he go after he left there?
 220 Braima: When he left he went to the area of Boola.
 Then he went home to Zota.
Djobba: When he left, did someone go with him?
Braima: No, I don’t know that answer.
- [Unanswered questions]
- Djobba: Jakodu... Your ancestor Jakòlò. Does his name have a meaning? Does it mean anything?
Braima: A-han (no).
Djobba: Does the name Misadu mean anything? Does the name have a meaning?
Braima: Eh, that person,
 225 This Zo Masa Kòma,
 His name was Musa.
Djobba: You know that this whole area is called Koniya. This is the region of Koniya. How did that name come about?
Braima: No, I don’t know that.
Djobba: Do you know how Dukulela was founded?
Braima: I don’t know.
Djobba: What about Nyèla?
Braima: I don’t know. (light laughter)
Djobba: What about Yusumodu?
 230 Braima: I don’t know. (light laughter)
Djobba: How many years old are you?
Braima: I am seventy-six years old.
Djobba: What about Kòma?
Braima: I don’t know about that. (laughs)

216 Yèlewuli became the name of a mountain just north of Boola because of this incident. Vase Kamala and others give more elaborate stories about what supposedly happened (App. 7.6; Ch. 6).

219 Kpelle: Gbèsè.

221 ‘home’: *fèso*.

225-226 Note that Djobba and Alhaji Braima consistently used different names for him - Musa and Masa respectively. Here, the speaker used both.

Djobba: I know that you don't want to mention it because of Islam. But are you aware of it? (Djobba laughs)

Braima: I don't know. (laughs)

[Foningama, Kònsaba and *funé*]

Djobba: He said there are Kamara and there are *fin*a. How many Kamara ancestors are there?

Braima: The house of the ancestors of the Kamara...

235 Djobba: The real Jomanu ancestor,

His name is Kònsaba.

They are related to Foningama.

They are from the same clan.

They had the same father.

240 Djobba: Do you hear?

They and the *fin*a people are not the same.

Djobba: Who was the ancestor of the *fin*a clan?

Braima: I don't know.

Djobba: But they did not have the same father as Foningama.

Braima: No, no.

Djobba: They were not the children of Kònsaba? They were not the children of Foningama? They were not the children of Kònsaba?

Braima: No, no.

Djobba: They were not the children of Foningama.

245 Braima: No, no.

Djobba: How did the *fin*a get their name?

Braima: I don't know. (laughs)

Concerning the children...

[The Kromah]

Djobba: What about the Kromah. Do they have different ancestors?

Braima: Aye, there are many ancestors for the Kromah.

Djobba: How many are there?

Braima: I don't know the number.

Djobba: But of the ones that you know, tell about that you know about.

250 Braima: Kè, I can't see that amount,

Before I lie about that.

Djobba: What about in Jakodu? How many are here?

Braima: In Jakodu here, (pause)

There is only one house.

Falamadu, Sumordu, Massadu...

Djobba: Are you naming clan heads?

233 Someone in the background said in English that the speaker did not want to talk about the *kòma* because that would be taking us back to the time when the Kpelle were dominant in Konya.

255 Braima: Yes.

[The Jomani *funé* and the Kromah]

Djobba: What I am asking about... Aren't the Jomani *funé* your *jèli*?

Braima: Yes.

Djobba: Do the Kromah have their own *jèli*?

Braima: No, no.

[The age of Jakodu]

Djobba: How was Beyla founded? How was Beyla founded? Who were the first people to go there?

Braima: I don't know.

Djobba: Which is oldest, Beyla or Jakodu? Which one was founded first?

Braima: Jakodu is older,

260 But Beyla is the one that is written on paper.

When they captured Almami [Samori],

When they came here to Beyla,

They wrote the name Beyla and said Beyla.

Djobba: The white people capture the *almami*?

Braima: Yes.

Djobba: How old is Jakodu?

Braima: No, no, I don't know how many years. (everyone laughed)

Djobba: But the person who was alive at this time will tell us. Was it here during the time of Samori?

265 Braima: Yes.

Djobba: Did Jakodu exist when Samori was born, when he was living?

Braima: Jakodu was here during Samori's time.

Djobba: What about during Sunjata's time? The Sunjata who was in Mali - Mande?

Braima: Eèh-èh, I don't know about that.

Djobba: What about [during] Sumawolo's [time]? (light laughter)

Braima: I don't know about that [...].

[CONCLUSION]

Djobba: Thank you. What does Kromah mean?

Braima: I don't know.

Djobba: It does not mean anything?

270 Braima: Right [...].

238 'clan': *kabila*.

260 'Beyla is the one written on paper': Beyla and Diakolidu are only separated by one mile or so. Beyla is the name that appears on most maps, although Beyla is much smaller than Diakolidu.

268 [...] means that we paused for a length of time and then resumed the interview.

Djobba: Have you lived in other areas since you were alive? Have you left Jakodu, or have you stayed here?

Braima: I have never left Jakodu,
Except for the time that I went to Makka and came back.

Djobba: What year did you go to Mecca?

Braima: It has been fifteen years since I went.

Djobba: What kind of job did you do before you went?

Braima: I was a farmer.

Djobba: What kind of farming, rice or tobacco? What things did you farm?

275 Braima: I planted rice, potatoes, and cassava.

Djobba: Was your father alive when Samori was alive?

Braima: Aan.

Djobba: Did your father ever tell you anything about Samori?

Braima: Aan, he talked to me,
But those things are not in my mind now.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.15

SOKO KONÈ

Place and date of interview: Macenta, Guinea, 28 June 1992

Interviewed by: Makula Mammadi Kromah and Tim Geysbeek

Context of interview: One of Mammadi Kromah's wives was Gbendu Konè. Mammadi said that one of Gbendu's relatives in Macenta might be willing to narrate some history to us. Had Mammadi not been related to Soko Konè, I would not have gotten the interview. Soko Konè claimed that he was born in 1898, although he did not seem to have been that old. He was the *kabila kundi* of the Konè in Macenta. We went to Konè's house and conducted the interview in his large bedroom. We sat on small stools, and Soko sat on a goat skin. An elder Kromah from Sierra Leone listened to the interview as well, but he was very quiet and did not say anything. Soko wanted to talk about his own clan only, and rebuffed most questions about the Kamara. He also referred us to the Mammadi Kanè whom we interviewed the following day.

Transcribed by: Ansu Cissé (Monrovia, 1993)

Translated by: Boakai Yahah (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Ali Kromah (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek & Boakai Yahah (Monrovia, 1993) - transcript/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

Translation note: Soko was sometimes hard to hear because he had a raspy voice and talked fast. The following does not generally indicate what Geysbeek said; only the dialogue between the speaker and Mammadi Kromah was translated.

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[ANCIENT MISADU]

[Foningama migrates from Mali to Misadu]

- 280 Soko: Let me talk about the Jomani.
 Do you hear?
 Mammadi: Foningama.
 Soko: You say Foningama.
 There was a hunter who came from Kolònò.
 Do you hear me?
- 285 One male hunter.
 When he left,
 He went and settled in Tabu.
 He left from Tabu,
 He went to Sibi.
- 290 He left Sibi,
 He went to Kaaba.
 He left from Kaaba,
 He went to Misadu.
 He had twelve sons in Misadu.

[Seablama, Fanyala and Foningama's twelve sons]

- 295 Before he reached Misadu,
 He had sired See Blama.
 He had already sired See Blama.
 Do you hear me?
 He then came and sired twelve sons.

283 'hunter': *dunzu*.

300 Fanyala-Fanyala was the first son.
 Do you hear me?
 They-they-they are in Konokòlò.
 They are in Konokòlò.
 They are called the Fanyala clan.
 305 They will tell that to you.
 Do you hear me?

[The Konè do not participate in the division at Misadu]

The division that was done in... in Misadu,
 The Konè had no part of that.
 When our ancestor came from Bamarana...
 310 They said that our ancestor came from Bamarana.
 Eh, the Konè were just here,
 They came from Bamarana and Mali.
 That is how the Konè came.
 But to say that the division that was done here...
 315 Eh, that was how the Jomanu came.
 That is how Foningama and others and the Kanè came.
 They will tell you about that.
 But that does not concern our ancestor.
 Our ancestor came,
 320 And this is how we came.
 The activities of Foningama do not concern our ancestor.
Mammadi: Where did Foningama settle when he had the twelve sons? Where was
 he before he came?
Soko: Eh, he came from Kaaba.
 He left Tabu and went to Sibi.
 From Sibi, he went to Kaaba.
 325 After he left Kaaba he went to Misadu.
Mammadi: Did he stay in Misadu until he died, or what, or where did he go?
Soko: Ahan, that is where he stayed until he died.

[Fanyala and the division of Foningama's children]

Mammadi: Did his twelve sons leave, or did they stay there?
Soko: They went to different places.
 They went to different places.
 They went to different places.
 330 Some went to Gbè.
 They separated and went to different places.

300 Fanyala: Vase Kamala claimed that Fanyala (Fènjala) was Foningama's first son who was born in Diemou before Foningama moved to Musadu (App. 7.6; 7.38).

- Some of them became Kpelle.
 Did you hear that?
 Eh-èh-èh - there are the people of Molidu.
 335 The people of Molidu are there.
 The people of Molidu are there.
 Do you hear me?
 The people of Konokòlò,
 Eh-èh - are the descendants of Fanyala.
 340 They are there.
 Eh, Fanyala's first son was, èh - Fanduwulèn.
 They are the people of Molidu,
 Eh-èh, the big brother of Fanyala's clan.
 Do you hear?
 345 Those are the stories about that side...

* * *

[Zo Musa Kòma's medicine]

- Mammadi: Zo Musa Kòma.
 390 Soko: Zo Musa Kòma.
 They are the Jomani.
 Zo Musa Kòma.
 The Zo Musa Kòma who we are talking about,
 Are the Jomani.
 395 Do you hear that?
 The Zo Musa Kòma we are talking about,
 They said... they said... they said that he used to swallow people.
 All of that happened in Misadu.
 I, a Konè, do not know much about that.
 400 Our ancestor-our ancestor-our ancestor...
 Our ancestor never did anything in Misadu.

[Foningama the warrior]

- Mammadi: He (Tim) asked, "What kind of job did Foningama do? What was his
 profession?"
Soko: Foningama.
 Wasn't he fighting war?
 He was fighting war.
 405 Do you hear that?...

* * *

[THE DIVISION OF FONINGAMA'S CHILDREN IN MISADU]

Mammadi: He asked if Foningama ever made a law in this land to say that this should not happen, or if he ever made a sacrifice. Did he make any big sacrifices, like when they have those big dances. Can you explain some of the things that he did?

650 Soko: Foningama.

Ah!

I don't know about that.

When he had the twelve sons,

Eh, when he had twelve sons,

655 Each went to a different region.

Eh, the sacrifices that he made...

Except for the sacrifices that he made...

He was in Misadu.

The division was done in Misadu.

660 We do not know about that.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.16

LAYI KEWULEN KAMARA

Place and date of interview: Macenta, Guinea, 28 June 1992

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek, Makula Mammadi Kromah, Boakai Yamah and the speaker's son Jala Kamara.

Context of interview: When David Conrad and I worked together in Macenta in June 1992, Conrad's assistant Jala Kamara started to tell us something about Foningama when he heard us talking about Musadu. When we asked Kamara if we could interview him, he directed us to his father. It turned out that I first met his father, Layi Kèwulèn Kamara, in Safekoydu, Guinea in 1984. His father was from Kolodu (l. 244-45). When Kèwulèn grew up, he purchased kola nuts in Guinea and traveled to Koindu, Sierra Leone to sell them. He married Kanvè Konè, a sister of Makula Mammadi Kromah's wife Gbendu.

We met on a Sunday morning at about 10:00 a.m. in a good-size bedroom in Jala's house. One other person in addition to those mentioned above attended the interview, but he declined to give his name. To our dismay (and my neglect), we had to start the first fifteen minutes of the interview over because the batteries in the recorder were used; the batteries recorded the interview very poorly.

I always began the interviews by asking general questions, and then preceded to more specific questions when necessary. This turned out to be a poor tactic in this case because Layi Kèwulèn repeated many things. He finally complained that the questions were too broad, so I began to ask more specific questions.

The speaker seemed to be at least in his eighties at the time of the interview. He

said that he was born four years before the white man (Dr. Walter Voltz) as killed in Busedu. Voltz was killed in 1907, so this would have made the speaker about ninety years old at the time of the interview if his estimate is fairly accurate.¹

Translated into English by: Adama Talawole (Macenta, 1992)

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek & Adama Talawole (Macenta, 1992)

Checked by: Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1992) - tape/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

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¹"Death of Dr. Voltz" 1907.

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[ANCIENT MISADU: I] [Foningama in Mande]

- Mammadi: Please tell us about Foningama.
Kèwulèn: Hum.
 Talk about Foningama.
 Foningama was living-was living in Timoni.
 He went from Timoni in Mali to Kaaba.
- 5 There is where we are.
 Do you hear?
 We are speaking Manyakā.
 Do you hear?
 He went to Kaaba,
- 10 And they called him.
 The people who were living there,
 They were the *Kònè*.
 I can't remember his name because I was not born then.

3 Timoni: This may be Tabon in modern Mali.

- That is just what everyone called him.
 15 They called him by his clan name.
 The Kònè were there.
 The Kromah were there.
 The Keta were there.
 That is where Foningama grew up.
 20 He was called.
 They said to him, "Jomani, the Bamana are bothering us too much.
 Each time we make a farm,
 They come and destroy them.
 25 When we grow corn,
 And we get ready to harvest the corn,
 They drive us away.
 Therefore, come-come-come help us."
 That is why he came.
 30 He went to Mande.
 When he came from Mande,
 He stayed there.
 No settlement is permanent.
 He rose and came.
 35 He left the children that he sired in Mande.
 He also left the children that he sired in Timonu.
 He got up.
 He said that he was going to fight a war.

[Foningama in Kankan]

- He came to Kankan.
 40 When he came to Kankan the Kònè were there.
 The Kawa were there.
 The Kawa said, "This is not our town.
 Our town is Dangana."
 They said, "We came to you people.
 45 You did not stay."
 They looked at him [Foningama] in a dream,
 When someone was divining to find out about him.
 They said to him, "Do you know what happened?
 You must be careful."
 50 Then he went to Tòlon.

15 'clan': *jèmu*.

18 Keta: = Keita.

41 Kawa: = Kaba.

43 Dangana: = Jankana, near Kankan (see Kaba 1973)?

47 'divined': *sisikalalò*.

50 Tolon: = Toron.

[Foningama meets Zo Misa Kòma in Koniya]

- He passed Tòlon.
He went to Koniya.
The person he met in Koniya was Zo Misa Kòma.
He said, "I have come to you.
55 I want to fight.
I want to fight a war.
When I went to Tòlon,
The people said that they did not want to fight.
They said that they did not want to fight.
60 I came to help make you prosper."
He said, "My hand is under it.
I will tell the Loma.
The Loma are my neighbors."
He met Zo Misa Kòma and told him everything that he wanted.
65 He was living in Goniya at that time.
The Kpelle say "Gòniya."
"Gòni" means 'rock.'
Gòni.
We say *kawalò* and they say *koniya*.
70 That is "Koniya."
We Maniya call that "Koniya."
He prospered there.

[Foningama defeats the Loma and Kpelle]

- He fought the Loma.
The Loma submitted to him.
75 He went down and fought the Kpelle.
They submitted to him.

[KAMARA CONQUESTS]

[Foningama and the Kònè go to Dukòlò]

He went down until he reached Dukòlò.
He reached Dukòlò.
He saw people with guns.

61 'My hand is under it': = I agree.

69 *kawalò*: 'in/on (*lò*) the rock (*kawa/kaba*).'

77 Dukòlò (also Dulukòlò): = Monrovia. Monrovia is most commonly known as Dukò. Dukò or Dukòlò is translated several ways: 1) Dukò = 'Du River (*kò*); 2) Dukòlò = 'in (*lò*) the Du River (*kò*);' 3) 'under (*kòlò*) the ground (*du*);' 4) Dulukòlò = 'yard (*lu*) under (*kòlò*) the ground (*du*).' Concerning the last point, houses are built under the cliffs of the hill where the Ducor (Dukò) Hotel is located in Monrovia. One assistant said that Dukò was a Kpelle word, not a Manding word.

- 80 [He said], "I must go back."
 I am speaking the truth.
 He went to Dukòlò, small Dukòlò.
 He saw guns with the people there.
 They were in the small boat.
- 85 Some of them came from the boat to kill monkeys.
 He asked, "What is the name of this town?"
 The town that is on the ocean,
 What is it's name?
 They called the place Dukòlò.
- 90 He left and came here.
 He saw guns in their hands that were *kumè*.
 He saw them in their hands.
 He asked, "Do you have plenty of these?"
 They said, "Yes, but they are over there."
- 95 The people who were with him said,
 "Please keep it a little bit away from his mouth."
 The people who were with him were his nephews the Kònè.
 The Kònè, the Jomani...

[Fanyala and Wusu go Monrovia and trade rice for guns]

- His son Fanyala,
 100 He was with Wusu.
 He had two children.
 He had Fan Goloni.
 Fanyala and Wusu said that they would go there.
 They put them in the boat and they went there.
- 105 When Fanya and Wusu got there,
 They purchased guns.
 When they purchased the guns,
 They gave them small blue bowls.
 They [Fanya and Wusu] gave them [the coastal traders] one bag of rice,
- 110 And a short gun was given to them in return.
 That is what they called a *kumè*.
 Then he said, "I am going to come back.
 When I come back, haan!"
 All the Kpelle were under him.
- 115 "Since all the Kpelle are under me,
 When I come back you give me some guns.
 If anyone disagrees with us then we will fight."

91 *kumè*: one assistant said that this meant 'musket,' 'short gun,' or 'pistol.' Another said that it meant 'trade.' 'Pistol' seems like the most likely translation (see l. 111).

96 'keep it a little way from his mouth': = put the barrel of the gun away from his mouth.

108 'small blue bowl' (*tasa bèleni*): = 'small (*ní*) blue (*bèleni*) bowl (*tasa*).'

[Foningama fights the Kpelle, Loma and Kuronko]

- When he returned,
He did not start fighting right away.
120 He rested.
Later after he rested,
He went to Kaylawani.
He took Wusu-Wusu there and told him to settle.
Some of his descendants are in Kaylawani,
125 And some came back down.
Some left the hill and came back here.
When I want to make it short,
They want me to make it longer,
And we will spend more time here if we make it longer.
130 Then he captured that place.
After capturing the area,
He came to the Kpelle.
They said that they would not submit to him any longer,
So he fought the Kpelle.
135 The Loma said that they would not submit to him any longer,
So he fought them.
One part of the Kuronko rejected him,
So he fought them.
God gave him power to fight them.
140 Those were the people whom he defeated.
He said he was going to buy enough gunpowder so he could fight more wars.

[Foningama makes a sacrifice to Talata Sayfu to conquer the land]

- They said to him [Foningama], "If you want to win your wars..."
The ancestor of the Sefu, Talata...
He suddenly came.
145 Talata suddenly came and said, "I am not going to stay long here."
He [Foningama] said, "No."
He asked him to do some work so that he would win his war.
Talata stayed there,
And did some work for the war.
150 God willed for him to win the war.
Talata told him to give,
One hundred young girls,
One hundred uncircumcised boys,

143 Sayfu (Sèlifu): = Sirleaf, Sherif.

151 'work': implies sorcery and divination etc.

152 'girls': *musoni*.

153 'uncircumcised boys': *bilakolo*.

- One hundred body clothes,
 155 One hundred cows,
 One one hundred goats.
 “But please give what you have.”
 He did not get all of these things,
 But he offered the few that he could get.
 160 He mentioned the name but I have called all of them.
 Then he went down.
 When he went down he reached Gbaiselò.
 When he reached Gbaiselò,
 He made his son Fawòni settle there.
 165 His descendants still live in Gbaiselò today.
 They went up and declared war on the people.
 He went down [to the coast] and traded the slaves he had captured for guns.
 The white people took those slaves to America.
 I told him he shouldn’t come.

[Fanyala and Wusu]

- 170 Fanya[la] or Wusu,
 When he saw one of them he said,
 “You have become nine men.
 You have become ten men.
 You have become eleven men,
 175 You have become twelve men.”
 He gave one...
 He gave one *jamana* [to Fanyala].
 Aan, that was behind the hill,
 Which was more populated in Kayliwani.
 180 That was for the old man.
 He gave one.
 That one...
 He-he-he-he Wusu...
 Wusu,
 185 His descendants-his descendants, went-went to the hill that goes - haaaaaan,
 All the way,
 And reaches the Kissi.
 The descendants of Fanya live there.
 I know the names of the whole country.
 190 If I want to call all their names,
 The children are from the same father.
 Two persons might have the same name.

162 Gbaiselò: or Gbaiselò (see l. 676-691).

175 ‘twelve men’: Referring to the twelve sons that traditionists sometimes associate as having been Foningama’s (App. O).

Mammadi and Tim: [unintelligible]
Kèwulèn: Hum.
 Fanyolaba, Fawòni.
 195 Haa! (pause)
 If you say I should lie that is too hard.
 Eh-hèn.

[The Kamara and the ‘twelve lands’ of Koniya: Simanu, Gbana, Kosadu, Jiila, Kaylawani, Konokòlò, Makono, Dukòlò, Kwadu, Tinikòlò, Kuronko, Gbaiselò]

Mammadi: [unintelligible]
Kèwulèn: He [Foningama] is one person who sired many children.
 I’ll say those persons names that I remember.
 200 Do you hear?
 There are some that you know well.
 You know all the names in your country.
 Twelve lands.
 That is the exact number of lands where you can find his descendants,
 205 Including Fanyala and Wusu.
 If you want to call someone’s name...
 If you want to call someone’s name...
 When your name is called and you did not play an important role in this world,
 Then you will live long.
 210 You say, “the real one,” and I don’t want to lie.
 My ancestor Fayalaba had four sons.
 Damaro,
 My name-sake Kèwulèn was there,
 Gbana, (pause)
 215 Kèmòòni was there.
 Kosadu, (pause)
 I have forgotten the name of the old man who was there.
 Those are the six lands.
 Simanu,
 220 Damaro is there.
 Jiila,
 I have forgotten the name of the big man who is there.
 Gbangunò Saji was there.
 Kaylawani,
 225 Va-Amara [Kamara] is there.

194 Fanyolaba: = Fanjuba or ‘big (*ba*) bad (*ju*) Fan.’ Fawòni: = ‘Father (*fà*) thorn (*wòni*).’ Both names have poor connotations.

203 ‘twelve lands’: a symbolic reference to the twelve regions that Foningama’s sons supposedly settled.

215 Kèmòòni: ‘old man.’

216 Kosadu: Kossa.

- Koya Amara [was there].
 In those twelve lands...
 Va Kama [Kamara] who was here...
 Tènu Kakuma Kama lives there.
- 230 The people of Konokòlò,
 Their names are the Kama.
 We saw the Fababa in Makono.
 The old ones now,
 None of their sons are well-known because their children are many.
- 235 If you say that a man is from a particular area,
 Are you not lying?
 Hèè?
 That is why I asked where the military secretary's son was?
 I don't want to lie.
- 240 If I say it,
 I am going to die.
 If I call the name of a person who never lived then I have lied.
 If you die you will be judged.
 My home, Konokòlò here...
- 245 Kwadu,
 Fasu's father was the *masa* there.
 Do you know that?
 Daro Muya.
 I have named all the lands that my ancestor divided,
- 250 The exact lands.
 I am called Layi today.
 [Foningama's land] stretched as far as Dukòlò.
 Only this side remains.
 They left Kaylawani.
- 255 Brother Ji came with his father,
 And they went to Kwadu.
 Kèmò YanGbai lived there.
 He was the chief there.
 Haaan!
- 260 Muuni,
 Va-Koli was there.
 He was the *masa* there.
 That is Koniya.

225 Va Amara Kamara died in November 1993 (App. 7.9: Introduction).

229 Tènu Kakuma Kamara: This is perhaps the Tènu Kamā Kamara whom I interviewed a week later (App. 7.19).

238 'military secretary's son': Speaking about Djobba K. Kamara, who had planned to participate in the interview.

248 Daro Muya: died in about 1986 (Adama Talawole, personal communication).

257 Kèmò Yan Gbai: may have died in the 1970s (Adama Talawole, personal communication).

- All of that is Koniya.
 265 Foningama was a *masa*.
 He had more than one hundred children.
 If anyone names all of them one-by-one, they lie.
 When you converse with some of the children, ask them.
 They will tell you where they came from.
 270 Then you will call his father's name.
 You will hear, "Father!"
 It [Koniya] goes and joins Kissi.
 Then it stops in Bana.
 In that *jamana*,
 275 That is the same Foningama.
 Those are all of his children,
 All those who ruled in those areas were his children.
 They were not empty *fonio* seeds.
 I told you that I was going to cut them.
 280 Didn't I say so?
 Jala, didn't I say so.
 If I am not selective,
 Then I may not be able to say all.
 I have named the children who became prosperous.
 285 Foningama ruled all the area that stretches down to the ocean.
 Some of the people who he sold to America came back.
 They are the Kòngò people.
 My ancestor Foningama made the first route [to the ocean].
 He had two sons.
 290 I don't know all of their names,
 But one of the fought and was a *masa*.
 All of them went down to Dukòlò.
 There was Va-Jiba.
 There was Damaro Jiba.
 295 There was the old man of Gbana.
 There was Va-Kosa in Kosadu.
 Fanyala,
 His son lived in Konokòlò.
 They are included.
 300 Tinikòlò,
 Va-Kama was here.
 His father whose name I can not remember is included.
 All of these persons died before I came.
 I know their children's names.

278 'not empty *fonio* seeds': they were productive, fruitful people.

281 Jala: Kèwulèn's son who was present during the interview.

287 Kòngò (Congo): = Americo-Liberians who returned to Liberia in the nineteenth century.

300 Tinikòlò: 'under (*kònò*) the hill (*tini*).'

- 305 Their children can call their father's names.
 If I call those who are not my children, then when some of them hear what I
 say is a lie,
 Then I have offended God.
 When their children are sitting before you,
 You can ask them.
- 310 When someone calls his father's name,
 Then you will know his name.
 Isn't that right? (pause)
 Koniya, Koniya,
 And all the names related to it,
- 315 Came through Fanyala,
 Came through ancestor Wusu.
 Those are the children of my ancestor Foningama.
 All those I have called are the children of Foningama with the exception of a few.
 But, all are the children of ancestor Foningama.
- 320 It would be said, "Foningama's son."
 Some say, "My grandchild," and some say "Jomani's son."
 Right?
 "Nephew" is not said.
 "Jomani's son" is said.
- 325 There are more nephews.
 If you ask me something, and I tell you, that is the end.
 I talked about Naneliba which stretches and joins Dulukòlò.
 I talked about Koniya.
 No matter when you talk about Koniya you must talk about Misadu.
- 330 The only place that Foningama settled was in Misadu.
 Those are his children and grandchildren that I just called.
 They are too many.
 I can't name all of them.
 It would be impossible.
- 335 I have some of their names in my mind,
 But they did not become *masa*.
 Those were the children who Foningama was depending on.
 I said that we can't do all of that.
 It would be impossible.
- 340 I said that I was going to talk about them.
 That is what I know.
 I will not lie.
 It is finished.
Boakai: We know that you were not able to call all their names. Do you hear? But
 can you tell the ones that you remember and tell where they settled?
Kèwulèn: If that is it...
- 345 Gbangunò Saji was a chief,
 Who was in Gbangunò.
 He was called Saji.

- Do you hear that?
Boakai: Yes, that is clear.
Kèwulèn: Va-Jiba became a *masa*.
- 350 Do you hear that?
Boakai: Yes.
Kèwulèn: Gbana,
 The old man became *masa*.
 They were all children of Foningama, do you hear that?
- 355 Konokòlò,
 Jonva Jiba became *masa*.
 Jònda Jiba was a *masa*.
 Simanu was named after him, "Simanu."
 Do you hear?
- 360 Gbana,
 I think I called the name.
 The old man of Gbana has been named.
 Here in Kwadu,
 You have one of his children - grandsons,
- 365 So I will not call him.
 Anywhere that you can think of,
 Where I made distinctions,
 To start from Kissi,
 To go to Kuronko,
- 370 To go over there,
 Foningama did all that.
 A-han.
 To start from the Kònò,
 To go as far as Nèliba,
- 375 To go to Julagbèni,
 To go to the Jafoba,
 To go to Dulukòlò.
 He was in all of those places.
 All his small and big brothers went there.
- 380 Didn't I say that?
 I think that all of those areas were part of Koniya.
 Koniya had all of them,
 Whether Loma or Kpelle.
 Foningama came from Bamala.

358 Simanu (Simandu, Sumandu): = 'land (*du*) of food (*sima/suma*).'

373 Kònò: Could be referring to the people of the same name from Sierra Leone or Lola.

Unfortunately, I did not ask.

374 Nèliba: = Jèliba, the Niger River?

375 Julagbèni: = 'small (*ni*) white (*gbai*) traders (*jula*).' 'Small' seems to denote a slur on the *julagbèni*. Assistants said that they come from the Mau area of Côte d'Ivoire, and that they are stereotyped as being clean.

376 Jafoba: the Mano people.

- 385 Gbaiselò, I said, was one of his settlements.
 His descendants are there.
 His name was Fangoni,
 Even though he is not there.
 My namesake “Kèwulèn” after the death of his father,
 390 Became *masa*.
 He died less than four months ago.
 Do you hear that?
 I did not see what happened in the days of their fathers - tèlèlakè-tèlèlakè-tèlèlakè-
 tèlèlakè.
 If I continue to tell everything,
 395 I will be like a dishonest man and I don’t want to lie here.
 I will die and my death body will not reach.
 That is why I said that I will not prolong it.
 That is what I told you, my children.
 We can only say them in conversation.
 400 If not, most of which I remember,
 We can lie somewhere and tell the truth somewhere,
 But this one is going out into the world and will be told in the world.
 When you speak a lie,
 Then you have fallen.
 405 Buse,
 My namesake Kèwulèn later became the *masa* there.
 My namesake Kèwulèn later became the *masa* there.
 His father,
 His name was Va Kama.
 410 Kama was the *masa* there.
 When he died, Chèkula was made the *masa* there.
 Right here in Kwanga,
 There was a *masa*.
 Konokòlò,
 415 There were three chiefs in succession.
 Fèlewala was *masa* two times,
 And in our home town,
 It was done twice.
 Bòngò Moigbè in Kwadu,
 Is part of us.
 420 He was called Bòngò Moigbè.
 When some of these are not true,
 It is said that a person who said it is a big liar.
 The name of Bòngò Moigbè comes from Kwadu,

412 Kwanga: = Kuankan.

424 Bòngò Moigbè: Adama Talawole said that he saw a picture of Bòngò Moigbè that was taken in the early-1950s. Old man Benya Kònè Kesselly had the picture in Monrovia. He was reportedly a great warrior from Sakonedu in Kwadu-Gboni. Talawole also claimed that Bòngò Moigbè’s grave was in

425 And that is all that I know about him.

[ANCIENT MISADU: II]
[Zo Misa and Foningama]

I have just been talking about Mani.
Our ancestor left Mani and went to Kankan.
He left Kankan and came.
Haan.

430 When he came,
He settled near Zo Misa Kòma in Misadu.
Haan.
Ancestor Foningama became the *masa* in Misadu.
The real name of the man was Misa.
435 His town's name was Koniya.
He was a *masa* in Koniya.

[Foningama's twelve sons in Misadu]

All of his twelve sons...
Each of his twelve sons became a *masa*.
Those are the names of the sons that I have been calling.
440 Some of them were still ruling when colonial rule came.
If you can think of anyone that I did not name,
And you call their name,
I'll talk about them if you have it [questions] written.

Jala to Boakai: You know that the old man is like a library. All the books in a library deal with different things. If therefore you want to make research, you have to take them [talk about different topics] one by one. Do you hear? If, therefore, you ask the old man in such a way, if you want to know about something [in specific], then you can ask him. But, if you let him [keep on] explain[ing] what he knows, he will keep repeating them. I want you to ask questions. Questions-answers. [Otherwise], he will go ahead and explain things and come back again [talk about the same things again]. That is what we call repetition. Do you see that? What is the next discussion? What we are talking about from the beginning to the end, he will be saying the same thing. It is better for us to ask the question. He can give the answer. But if you continue to ask him like before [asking general questions], he will keep on saying the same thing over and over.

Mammad to Tim: [Explains problem]

Mammadi to Kèwulèn: We have told him that any question that he asks you, that you should answer it.

Kèwulèn: Hun-huun!

- Boakai: Foningama, his mother and father, what were their names?
 445 Kèwulèn: Eh, that happened in Timoni,
 Not here.
 No one can call their names.
 No one can call their names.
Boakai: Where did the Kamara come from before they reached Misadu?
Kèwulèn: They came from Mani.
 450 He was in Timonò, Timon Kamara.
 I think that I have already talked about that today.
 That is what they call Mande.
 That is Mande.
 That is Mande.
 455 We and all these people come from one place.
 These are my children.
 We all come from one place.
 When your children reach ten,
 If all of them become *masa*.
 460 Their children become *masa*,
 And their grandchildren.
 Their children numbered all the way to twelve.
 Do you know the names of all?
 Hèn.
 465 It reached twelve generations.
 In fact, it was more than that.
 The real-real-real-real descendants of Fanyala...
 We call one another,
 And add the name of the country that you come from...
 470 We don't say, what is your name?
 It happened a long time ago.
 This did not happen just yesterday.
 To say his latest,
 The latest war that he fought at that time,

[KONOKOLO HISTORY: I]
 [Malogbano and Koligblama]

- 475 We and the Kissi were in the care of Jiba here.
 He was in Malogbano there.
 He was Va-Kama.
 He was Nangoe [Jongbè?] Kama.
 He was the last *masa*.
 480 Koligblama,
 Va-Kama was the last *masa* there.
 We were not in their father's family.
 Do you hear that?

[Foningama, Gbana, Kwadu and Bòngò Moigbè]

- Gbana,
485 Earlier today I talked about Gbana many-many times.
Those are additional towns.
I have named Kwadu.
Bòngò Moigbè,
He was the last *masa* when colonial rule came.
490 Those are the people we talk about.
Gbangunò Saji was *masa* at the time of Alimami,
Alimami Tule.
I never wanted to talk about all,
Because they are with the Foningama story.
495 All of them are descendants of Foningama.
Foningama was responsible for all of those people.
All of those came from Zo Misa Kòma.
All depended on Zo Misa.
His name was Misa.

[Koniya's boundary to the ocean]

- 500 Musawu,
The Loma call the place "Gòniya."
This Gòniya,
It is this "Gòniya" that is now called "Koniya."
But the boundary stretched alllllllll the way to the ocean.
505 I named the boundary today.
It stretched all the way to the ocean.
All of the small things that I have been talking about,
You can't explain things that happened before you were born.
You say, "My mother told me" or "My father told me."
510 But my ancestor who is not living...
Then you have lied.

[ANCIENT MISADU: III]
[Kònsaba's descendants in Mau]

- Boakai: Do you know anything about ancestor Kònsaba?
Kèwulèn: Kònsaba
Ah, the descendants of Kònsaba are the Gbai people,
515 They live in Gbaisoba.
Their *masa* was called Kònsaba.
That was part of Koniya.

496-499 Mistake? Foningama instead of Zo Musa?
515 Gbaisoba: 'big town of Gbai [Gbè].'

That was also Koniya.
They are the people of Gbai.
520 They are even older than our ancestor Foningama,
In this land.
They were part of the migrations that we talked about today.
They went to Wolodu,
And finally settled in Mau.
525 Didn't I already say that?
Ah, Foningama was responsible for all of that.
They were his children and grandchildren.
It is better to repeat something ten times than lie.
If you still remember something than you can tell me now.

[Foningama's *wukèlin* sacrifice]

Boakai: Do you remember any sacrifice that Foningama made?
530 Kèwulèn: Foningama was told to make a sacrifice,
Of 100 young girls and 100 *bilakolo*.
He brought them out them.
He brought 100 cows.
He brought 100 goats.
535 Foningama did all of that.
That is why he owns all of this land.

[Foningama's laws?]

Boakai: Can you think of any laws that Foningama made when he was chief?
Kèwulèn: Say, his children...
I never heard if he made any laws.

[Fanyala replaces Foningama as chief]

Question: How did Foningama end his life? Did he die or move away or what?
Kèwulèn: (laughs) After he lived as a *masa*,
540 When he became too old,
He appointed someone [Fanyala] as *masa*.
Those are the Koniya people,
And their town is in Sòònu, Sòònu Jargbo.
He [Fanyala] replaced him [Foningama],
545 Before he [Fanyala] went up [to Sòònu in Sumandu].

[Foningama's life ends at Falamani lake]

After he went up,
Do you know the place that he stopped?
Do you know where it was?

Audience: Naam.
Kèwulèn: When he went up he stopped,
550 He stopped at Kankan.
He went down into the Falamani lake,
And no one ever saw him again...

* * *

[Zo Misa travels to Zota]

Boakai: Do you know how Misadu was founded?
Kèwulèn: Zo Misa Kòma was there.
All of the Kpelle who lived there went,
Went down to a village called Zota along the Janu [Diani] river.
That is behind us.
590 They are on the bank of the Janu river.
The town is right below Siisu.
Up to the present time,
The town is called Zota.
It is there.
595 They went and founded Zota,
Because they said that the Maniya were bothering them too much.
It is near N'Zapa.
Zo Misa Kòma left Misadu,
The place he had founded.
600 They went to a hill and said, "Ka Yèlewuli-aye" to the Maniya.
That is called Jewu.
We kpola ide a kpalati.
Then they passed...

[Foningama and the Kromah]

Boakai: Were there any other Mandingo there before the Kamara came?
Kèwulèn: No Maniya came before Foningama.
605 They came there.
Boakai: What about the Kromah and Kònè in this story?
Kèwulèn: Foningama's father-in-law was a Kromah.
Kromah,
They call them the Kamiyè.
That happened...
610 That happened in Mani.

587 Not clear if the speaker meant to say Kpelle instead of Loma, or was saying both.

600 *Yèlewuli*: = 'good-by' in Kpelle.

602 *Wo kpola ide a kpalati*: Kpelle, but one Kpelle speaker could not translate the phrase.

608 Kamiyè: = Kamè (l. 623) or Kromah.

That happened in Mande.
 His uncle came before all of the other people came.
 Some Kanè came with him.
 Some *jiaka* [jèli] also came with him.
 615 Those are the people he brought.
 I can't remember the name of the father and mother of that *jiaka*.
 The four settlers of Misadu,
 They were the Kamiyè,
 The Kanè,
 620 The Keta,
 And Foningama.
 The people who gave a women to ancestor Foningama were the Kromah,
 The Kamè...

* * *

[*Kòma*, *zo* and *kòlòti* from Makka]

Boakai: Do you know anything about *Kòma* business in this history? *Kòma* business.
Kèwulèn: About *Kòma*!
Boakai: Yes - Hay! Hay! Hay!
Jala: How did *Kòma* start?
Kèwulèn: I do not know that.
Boakai: We just want you to tell us a little about it. That is nothing.
Kèwulèn: I am not able. (speaker and others laugh)
 695 *Kòma* business brought about *zo* business.
Kòma business brought about *zo* business.
 It is called *zo*.
 That is what *kòma* brought.
 There is nothing else to say.
Boakai: Who brought it all? Jala: Who owned the first *kòma*?
 700 Kèwulèn: They came with it.
Question: Who came with it?
Kèwulèn: It came from Makka.
Jala: *Zo* activities started in Makka?
Kèwulèn: Yes, it started there.
Kòlòti activities also started there.
 705 The Loma and Maniya all came from Makka.
 The work of the *moli* also started in Makka.
 Alllllll came from Makka.
 The person with *kòlòti* gets more and more power.
 All *kòlòti* are not the same.

708 *kòlòti*: a poison is used to injure and kill human beings.

- Question: Please tell us the name of some towns that had some big-big *kòma*.
 710 Kèwulèn: Is that what they have come for,
 Or have they come so that all of the *masa* can be named?
Response: These are just stories. Don't hesitate. Tell us.
Kèwulèn: Haaa!
 I don't know about *kòma* history.
 I said that they came with it, and it came.
 715 I can't talk about that.

[The Prophet, "Jomani" and "Foningama"]

- Question: How did Foningama get his name? What does it mean?
Kèwulèn: The name came from,
 They were in Makka.
 You know, everyone was born.
 We do not know where Adam and Eve were sent down.
 720 They were in Makka.
 While in Makka,
 Then the Messenger was sent by God,
 When his mother born him,
 They said, "This is the messenger that they talked about."
 725 Do you hear?
 All the people started to submit.
 However, the *sònigè* people did not submit.
 Those who are called *zo* did not submit.
 Those who became Muslims submitted before God's Messenger?
 730 Do you hear?
 Ancestor Foningama did not have anything.
 His old-old ancestor...
 Foningama's old-old ancestor said at that time, "I do not have anything today.
 Since people are submitting before the man...
 735 So he put a rope around his own neck,
 And went to the Prophet.
 He said, "People have been submitting.
 I don't have anything,
 But I have come to convert.
 740 Hold this."
 Then the Prophet said, "*Jònba le nī*" ('This is a big slave').
 He said to him, "I have become your slave."
 The man put a rope around himself and offered himself [to the Prophet].
 He said that he submitted.
 745 Foningama,
 His son was called Kama.

727 *sònigè*: traditional medical practitioners associated with doing bad.

741 *jònba*: 'big (*ba*) slave (*jòn*).'

That is how the Foningama business got started.
Our ancestor Adama did that.
That is it...

* * *

[ANCIENT MISADU: IV]
[Zo Misa: *nyana*, *kòma* and *Zota*]

- Boakai: What does Zo Misa *Kòma* mean?
Kèwulèn: (laughs) Ha!
These people!
His name was Misa.
785 Since he was a *zo*,
He was called Zo Misa.
That *Kòma* name was just given to him.
I don't think that he ever had *kòma*,
But he had *nyana* instead.
790 In fact, they still have not gone away.
They are still there.
They still have them.
They are still near *Zota*,
Right behind the water.
795 If anyone goes and asks about that,
Saying that I have heard about Zo Misa *Kòma*...
When the Manding gave him a hard time...
He [Foningama] said that he was not interested in *zo* work.
Foningama told him that he could go somewhere else to look for a new place to
settle.
800 He agreed and said "Okay."
He left and went to *Zota*.
That is where they continued to do their *zo* work.
Boakai: Liberia?
Kèwulèn: No, this place - N'Zerekore, near Wulo.
The *Zota* people are there.
805 They have not joined together with anyone,
And no one has joined together with them.
They are just doing their work.

747 Foningama: One explanation for the meaning of Foningama in this context is as follows - 'except (*foni*) on/to (*ma*) my (*n*) neck/words/voice (*ga*).'⁷ This is close to the popular phrase *foni n ga mi di i ma*, 'except (*foni*) I (*n*) give (*di*) this (*mi*) neck/word (*ga*) to (*ma*) you (*i*).'⁸ The idea is - 'except I give you my word.'⁹ If someone asks something of you, you agree to give that person your word or neck until you can bring something else. The Jomani ancestor gave his 'neck' or himself to the Prophet because he did not have anything else to offer.

[Jomani, 'the big slave']

- Anywhere our ancestor settled, the *moli* people followed.
If you put a rope around your neck,
810 Your son who submits has to join the *moe*.
That is why they say that our ancestor roped himself and gave himself to the
big man.
The descendants of this man are the *moe* people [Sayfu?] and us.
That is how he submitted.
And you say, "That is how!"
815 That is how he submitted.
When our fathers were told,
They said, "Huum!"
And when they told the other [*sònigè/zo*],
They refused.
820 They would say, "We are part of them." [...]
Mammadi: He wants you to explain how the Jomani man put a rope around his
neck. How did the name Jomani come? Is it related to *jònba*?
Kèwulèn: Haan!
"This is a big slave who has come and been given to me."
He asked, "What is his name?"
They said, "*jònba le ni*" ('this is a big slave'),
825 Jomanu.
Joma.
Foningama is just a praise name.
Mammadi: When he put a rope around his neck he said, "I have become your
slave," The big man said, "*jònba le ni*." That is how we got the name
Jomani.
Kèwulèn: Oooh!
Mammadi: Right?
Kèwulèn: Ooooh!
Mammadi: Foningama's name is a praise name.
830 Kèwulèn: Ooo-hoooo, that is a praise name.

[Foningama the warrior]

- Boakai: What work did Foningama do? What kind of person was he?
Kèwulèn: He never did *moli* work.
He always fought wars.
He fought from the savanna and came all they way down here.
He was always fighting wars.
835 He fought all the time.
All of his descendants fought, even me.

825 Jomanu: The speaker was saying that Jomani is a contraction of *jònba le ni*. Another possibility is that Jomani is a contraction of *joma le ni*, 'this is Joma.'

- From the time that he started from Mani,
 He captured many people.
 We are all included.
- 840 Because that is where he started keeping...
 Until everyone went his way.
 When a town is big,
 Everybody goes in his own direction.
 Huum! Huum!
- 845 When the town is big, everyone only cares about their own things.
 That is why everyone left and went to their own places.
 To talk...
 To talk about Foningama,
 One has to start from Mani, Mande.
- 850 In fact, in the forest region,
 No one is more powerful than the Jomani.
 Like you would say about this man...
 You can not talk about him on a normal basis.
 They are the real-real rulers of this country.

[Elephant (Kònsaba) and leopard (Foningama) taboos; *funé*]

- Boakai: What is the taboo of the Foningama, Kamara?
- 855 Kèwulèn: To refuse anything that comes out for you.
 God didn't give a taboo to anyone.
 Who has ever been told that God gave someone a taboo?
 Can you refuse anything that you want to refuse?
 Look at here in Bòngòmadu.
- 860 Bònsò continued to say that the banana came out for him.
 His descendant refused the banana.
 We have not been told that there is a real-real taboo for Foningama,
 A taboo that God gave him.
 Anyone who tells you this is a liar.
- 865 That is what I am talking about.
 One sees a taboo with your ancestor.
 Can't you see we refuse the leopard?
 There are many categories of taboos.
 Their ancestors, at the time that they had not reached from Mande...
- 870 The people of Gbai,
 Their taboo is the elephant.
 One of their descendants also...
 We are all Kamara,
 But Foningama is not part of them.

855 In the next few lines, the speaker gave the more standard explanation that Islam has abolished totems.

870 The people of Kònsaba Kamara and his descendants in several other oral traditions (Ch. 7).

- 875 They are known as the *funè*.
 Don't you have *funè* in your home?
 Don't they call them Kamara?
 Isn't that so?
 That is what I know.
Boakai: How did the *funè* originate?
- 880 Kèwulèn: I don't know whether they were their father's son or their mother's son.
 Ones' generation expands very quickly.
 I don't know that.
 They are not here.
 They live in the savanna.
- 885 Only we are here.
 The sons of Foningamara are here.
 They are in this land.
 That is what we know about.
Boakai: Do you know any Mainya whose taboo is elephant?
Kèwulèn: Elephant?
Boakai: Aan.
- 890 Kèwulèn: The Gbai people.
 The place is called Gbaisobala.
 When you reach there,
 They will tell you more about that,
 How did their taboo become elephant.
- 895 I don't know much about that.

[Foningama gets his leopard taboo from the Kònè and Kromah]

- Boakai: What about the leopard?
Kèwulèn: That is our taboo.
 After our ancestor became too wild,
 The people said that he had become a leopard,
 That is why it became our taboo.
- 900 Foningama was referred to as Jomani.
 The Kònè... Kònè... Kònè worked for us.
 The Kromah worked for us to make the leopard our taboo.
 Our ancestor used to say, "I should eat leopard."
 The lion business came later.
- 905 Isn't that so?
 Hii-haa! Haa!
 So you see, anything you become interested in becomes your taboo.
Boakai: How did the Kromah work with them?
Kèwulèn: Haa!

889 'elephant': *sama*.

903 "'I should eat leopard'": See Appendix 7.6, line note 229 for an explanation for why a Kamara who would not eat leopard would say this.

That man has the idea about that.
 910 He is sitting down.
 His grandfather told him that.
 He will tell you.
Response: He asked you.
Kèwulèn: If he asked me, then I can't remember that small portion.

[Sosowala and Fala Wubo?]

Question: Do you know any man by the name of Soso Wala?
Kèwulèn: Town, what town?
Somebody: He does not know.
Boakai: Fala Wubo?
 915 Kèwulèn: Loma or Mandingo?
Tim: Loma.
Kèwulèn: He was Loma?
 I don't know about those things.

[Fina Kamara and Foningama]

Boakai: What is the difference between Fina Kamara and Foningama?
Kèwulèn: Haaan!
 The *funè* are separate,
 920 And Kamara are separate.
Funè.
 I don't know what *funè* is.
 I know about the Kamara.
 There is no *funè* today...

[ANCIENT MISADU: V]

[The coming of Islam: Talata Sayfu and Foningama's *wukèli* sacrifice]

Boakai: How did Islam come to this region?
 1090 Kèwulèn: Islam came with those who came with ancestor Foningama."
 What was the name of the uncle who went to Koniya with him?
 One *moe* who came was Sefu Talata.
 Our ancestor Talata came,
 Came here,
 1095 And ancestor Foningama gave him his child.
 He wrote, wrote, wrote and wrote on the paper - the *lisimu* and Qur'an,

909 'That man': Mammadi Kromah, my assistant. The speaker did not want to speak about another clan, especially when a member of that clan was in his presence. The thinking is that the clan member should know more about his clan than someone else.

917 The speaker was starting to get tired.

1090 'Islam': *moiya*.

- And he sold it when he came to one load.
 He was selling in the savanna,
 And came down here.
- 1100 When he came,
 He told Foningama to make a *wukèlin* sacrifice.
 I think that I already said that today.
 He said, "When you offer that sacrifice,
 You will own the land that goes all the way down to the ocean."
- 1105 I showed you the boundaries of that land today, didn't I?
 I showed you the ends of that land.
 Ancestor Foningama offered that *wukèlin* sacrifice.

[Talata marries Foningama's daughter and has three children]

- He [Foningama] gave his daughter to him [Talata].
 She born three children.
- 1110 Those are the Sèlifu in this land.
 They named one Fanyala.
 The descendants of Fanyala are the people of Moedu.
 He got along well with his grandfather.
 Nèmòò.
- 1115 They said to him, "Look, you have a *moli* man now.
 In fact, you are always at your *nèmòò* 's place,
 And you don't even come here.
 In fact, you are part of him [Talata] now."
 Those are the Jomani who became part of the big *moli* people of Moedu.
- 1120 To really say the three sons of Talata,
 They are all in this country.
 Some are in Gboni.
 Some are in Konokòlò.
 Some are in Koligblama.
- 1125 They are scattered all among us.

[Zo Misa leaves Koniya and goes to Zota]

- Boakai: What kind of work did Zo Misa do? Did he work for someone?
Kèwulèn: He did not work for anyone.
 He was a *zo* by himself.
 Some Loma *zos* are still there.
 Earlier I said that Zo Misa,
- 1130 He left his town because of my ancestor.
 He was in Koniya.
 Gòniya,

1101 *wukèlin*: 'one thousand.'

- ‘In the rock.’
 Gòniya.
 1135 After my ancestor settled there...
 The Loma called it Gòniya.
 The Kpelle called it Gòniya.
 The Maniya say Koniya.
 Misa did not settle there because of them.
 1140 They left and went to Zota.
They are not dead because his descendants are still there.
 They are doing their *zo* work there right now.
 That is that.
Boakai: What ethnic group was Zo Misa? Maniya or what?
Kèwulèn: He was Kpelle.
 1145 Even today he is Kpelle...

* * *

[Foningama’s death]

- Question: How long ago did Foningama die? How many years ago?
Kèwulèn: Hiiiiiy!
 That was before my father’s birth. (laughs)
 1225 That was before my father’s birth.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.17

MAJONGBE MOHAMMED CHÈJAN KROMAH, BOAKAI YAMAH AND ADAMA TALAWOLE

Place and date of interview: Macenta and Diakolidu, Guinea, July 1992

Interviewed in English by: Tim Geysbeek, with David Conrad

Comment: The informants spoke Liberian English.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.17A

MAJONGBE MOHAMMED CHÈJAN KROMAH Macenta, 2 July 1992

Tim: Today is Thursday, July 2, 1992. We are asking Mohammed about *saafè*. He was saying that the *kòma* and the *mori* man work together.

Mohammed: You know, the *saafèlè*. This is a sacrifice that the chief will make so that somebody great might come out of their descendants. The *mori* man and the *zo* man always work hand-in-hand. So, they are two people that can't be separated.

Tim: Does the - Do you want to come in? [Someone coming in the room]. I am just talking about *saafèlè*. Okay. Does the *kòma* man ever make [something] without using the help of the *mori* man?

Mohammed: No. The *mori* man always starts something for the *kòma* man.

Tim: Okay. What exactly does the *mori* man [make] for the *kòma* man?

Mohammed: It is a talisman that he will make for him. (Tim: A talisman?). The talisman that he will make for the *zo* man, that will make him more powerful. From there he will try and add some other things by himself.

Tim: The *kòma* man?

Mohammed: Yes. (Tim: A-hun). But always, the *mori* man will start the *kòma* for the *zo* man.

Tim: So the talisman will be writing?

Mohammed: Yes. The talisman is a Arabic writing.

Tim: Okay. How does this *saafèlè* - How does this [*saafèlè*], in the story of Zo Musa, with Vase Kamara... Tell me how this *saafèlè* works in the story. According to you, how do you understand the *saafèlè* working in the story?

Mohammed: Yes. According to me, after Zo Musa went and ask the *mori* man (Tim: Yes) that "he [you] should do some work for me and work for me [so] that [it] will help make me strong, for me and my descendants." And the *mori* man went and work [wrote] that talisman and put it in the horn of the sheep. And they call it *saafèlè*. After Musa got that *saafèlè*, then he started using it on his own, which became a bad medicine. That [*saafèlè*] used to do bad things in the town.

Tim: So the *mori* man was what religion?

Mohammed: He was a Muslim. (Tim: He was a Muslim?). Yes.
Tim: Did he have any kind of help in making his medicine?
Mohammed: No. He started it.
Tim: Okay. He started it though. But then Zo Musa took his medicine, *saafèlè* -
Mohammed: Yes, to make it to make it to [a] *kòma* - èèh, a *nyana*.
Tim: What is the difference between *kòma* and *nyana*?
Mohammed: In our region, in our Mandingo region, we called our devil *nyana* - aah, *kòma*. And in the forest region they called the devil *nyana*. Eeh - we called the forest peoples devil *nyana*.
Tim: What does the *nyana* look like if I see *nyana*. Have you ever seen *nyana*?
(Mohammed: Well - laugh). You yourself? If you don't want to say, don't say.
Mohammed: What we refer to as *nyana* is that - you see a masked dancer.
Tim: With a mask on his face?
Mohammed: Today, all over covered with... How do you call it?
Tim: The raffia?
Mohammed: The raffia around him, that you can't see any parts of his body. But it is a secret that nobody is able to bust [break].
Tim: So, okay. So only the member can see it?
Mohammed: Only the member.
Tim: Man like me, if the *nyana* comes I will not be there?
Mohammed: Yes, unless they permit you. But you will not be there unless you are part of the people.

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SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.17B

BOAKAI YAMAH
 Macenta, 2 July 1992

Tim: This is Boakai Yamah, the same day as Chèjan. Boakai, or what - who made the *saafèlè*?
Boakai: Oh, as far as I am concerned, *saafèlè* can be made by Muslims, *zos*; both men and women. Those are the main people that I know of to be the producer of the *saafèlè*. But what actually it means... Yes, all it means is that some kind of supernatural power that is [has] been made and been placed in the horn.
Tim: In what kind of horn?
Boakai: Mostly it will be a sheep horn.
Tim: Have you ever seen it before?
Boakai: Oh, yes! Even [a] lot of kids or children have it hanging on them and so on, for different reasons. It depends on who fills it. And they fill it with different powers.
Tim: Does the *kòma* make *saafèlè*?
Boakai: But *kòma* in itself is... Or [is] something already on its own. So *kòma* cannot make *saafèlè*. *Kòma* is something, is almost like *saafèlè* in its own.
Tim: Can you make *saafèlè* without the talisman from Muslims? Do you have to have

the Arabic something?

Boakai: No. *Saafèlè* basically... I think... As far as I am concerned, [it] is attached to or is some kind of "juju," whatever you may call it. That is been made placed in the horn.

Tim: By the *mori* man?

Boakai: By the *mori* man.

Tim: Can the *mori* man be a *zo*? (Boakai: Or -) What do you mean by *zo*?

Boakai: They have different means or different titles when you say *zo*. *Zo* is one who can be the head for a society that ladies or men will have. The woman or the man who is doing the actual female circumcision. The women who is actually undertaking the - or the - or the surgery, or whatever thing the ladies go through. That person is a *zo*. They are the *zo*. At that time they may harm people, but they are the *zos*. And that *zo* is also among men. People who join the Poro are the *zos* that put the mark at the back of people among other things that they will do. So those things are done by the *zos*. *Zos* are like kings in [who do] supernatural deeds.

Tim: Can you have a Muslim *zo*?

Boakai: You can't have Muslim *zos*. But the Muslim can sometime use leaves to do certain work. About the *zos*: they basically use leaves or other things from the bush to do certain work.

Tim: For their *saafèlè*?

Boakai: For their own *saafèlè*.

Tim: The *zo* may be from the Poro or the *kòma*? It does not necessarily have to have Muslim writing inside, right?

Boakai: Yes, but *zo* for the *kòma* is seriously associated with Muslim activities.

Tim: So, are you saying that the *zo* from the *kòma* can operate without [a] Muslim?

Boakai: Can the *zo* from the *kòma* operate without [a] Muslim? Or what are they trying to say. They are trying to make it [a] more cultural something for Muslims, because they don't want to be involved in the Poro society. So they are trying to maintain this almost like a culture.

Tim: Which is the *kòma*?

Boakai: Which is the *kòma*. So in doing the *kòma* they can't do it - absolutely without Muslims. Even when the *kòma* is coming up they can give things. If the *kòma* receives something they can bring - maybe they can even read the Koran. Like this "Salamamadi" or all of those things or anything. So, not that it will be completely now. The *kòma* that I know of, not that it will be completely [joined with Islam] or separated. They believe that it is the Muslim devil. And even if they have other leaves that they will be cooking with, there will still be come Qur'anic verses that will be used for whatever deeds that they are going through.

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SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.17C

BOAKAI YAMAH
Macenta, 6 July 1992

David Conrad: Let me see. I was asking you [this morning, when we walking to work] what the - if there was a difference between *zo* and *soma*, and if it was a regional phenomonem, if the *zo* is the same as *soma*, and, or... What is the relationship to the *suba*? And I was saying that it appears that the definition of *suba* in one place might be different in another place. You can't really depend on people giving the same definitions. For example, *suba* in Mali might be described as one thing, where when you get down to Kankan side or further south they might say that a *suba* is something else. So, Tim was interested in your perspective. What are the *zo* and how are they compared to the *soma*. Are they the same or are they different? If so, in what [way]?

Boakai: Well, according to my own knowledge about *zo* and *soma*, I think they are interchangeably to be used. But a like is some... If they are praising a *zo* they can just... There are songs in Mandingo where they use *soma*. In songs to praise the *zo*. So, [it] is just to me another name for *zo*. And a... On the other side of the *suba* [matter] is the [an] entirely different area. To us here, *suba* normally is associated with people who are involved in evil practices, or sorcery, things like that. [All] they do all is to destroy mainly. People die, or misfortune comes on people. People make farm that really they never got good harvest and all of these they believed that is caused by *suba*. Ladies having many children and [the children are] dying. So, they believe that they have that [suba]. On the contrary, the *zo*, they are there to rescue lives; yet they have power also to - to take life away if they want to. And they can limit the power of *suba*, in our own understanding. So, *suba* is only associated mainly with destructive elements. And *zo* can destroy if necessary or if he wants to. He can also save lives.

David: And that agrees with what I am told about *soma*. That they have the power to counteract the evil sorts of activities of the *suba*.

Boakai: That [is] quite true. That [is] quite true.

Tim: What ethnic groups are you talking about: Gbandi, Loma or Mandingo?

Boakai: Oh, this is I think over [the] board: Gbandi, Mandingo, Loma. [All] are on the line of this. One is all the same.

Tim: You were talking about songs. Songs, songs that praise. You were talking about songs this morning. In certain songs they praise the *zo* by singing about *soma*.

Boakai: Yes. That was a song that is being sung by [the] *kòma* society when it is being held. You know, normally, *kòmas* demonstrate in the Muslim land, which is mainly - is almost considered to be the Muslim devil in many areas. And it is so closely attached to Islam in some instances, so now they keep - or before they keep man... The boys to grow to a certain age and then, they take them in the bush [and] have circumcision. During the circumcision the devil that is acting or the masked dancer... I don't know the right name now.

Tim: What is their name? What language - *kòma*, *nyana*, or what?

Boakai: They will [call] it *kòma*. The one that will be used for demonstrating or controlling the supernatural power. And then, in the night, the ladies will go in the house and the *kòma* will come in the town and they will demonstrate. And one of the songs that

they can even sing is (BY sings): *dato fabana kènètò, dato fabana kènètò*. (Tim: What does that mean?). 'I am going home, when the festival is coming to an end.' Sometimes they say, "I am going home, I am going home and the *zo* or *soma* has taken the old mat to go home." Normally, *zos* or *soma* lay on mats. Something like that.

David: So, okay, what about the difference between male and female sorcerers? Sorcerers. Are you aware of any different terms? Say, a term that describes a female sorcerer as opposed to a male sorcerer?

Boakai: Not to my knowledge, but the - if somebody is a *suba*, whether female or male, they are just *suba*. They are involved in destruction one way or another. If they are *zos* being a woman or man, they are *zos*. They means [that] they can counteract or they can - with *suba*, with anything like evil practices. So, they have power, like I said before, to do whatever they want to [do]. They can kill somebody. They can give jobs. They can take somebody's job away. But *suba* will only take somebody's job away. Like, [the] *suba* will only take life. [It] will not give [protect] life.

[Short discussion between Tim and Boakai that was already covered about the "interchangeability" of the terms *zo* and *soma*]

Boakai: ... *Zo* is the [more] common one [name]. *Soma* sometimes is being used for praises.

David: Highly, highly... Well, [it] is possible, is [it] not possible that *zo* is a derivative of *soma*?, an abbreviated form and with the -

Boakai: That is the way. I will say, in fact, that we don't really use too much of [the word] *soma*. We don't use that too much. We will use *zo*, *zo*, *zo*. That is the name for... I don't know what will be the name you [will] find in English, for *zo*. I think it will just be *zo*, right?

David: Well, I will still translate it the same. I translate *soma* as sorcerer. Okay, sorcerer. Today, I translated... We started translating a text by Varlee Jabateh where he was talking about... He says there were nine great, ah, *sumuso* in Mande, and he said there were nine *nyaga* in Mande. And, so, are you familiar with the term *nyaga*?

Boakai: Ahan, if you say *su-muso*, *su* means 'night.' *Suba* is the... How would you call, maybe around 3:30 [Yamah later added between 2:30-4:00 a.m.] in the morning. People believe by that time that it is very, very dark. Then, that is called *suba*. So, they are only talking about, if you say *su muso*, they are saying 'night woman': one who operates in the night. *Suba*. They are trying to say to us [that she is a] real, real dark-night person. So, the operation that is going on... That is where the name derives from. While [the] *zo*, those are things that they believed... Even like... If they are having a circumcision, the man who does the operation for male or female, are called - that person has to be a *zo*.

David: Oh, I think that is a distinct differentiation between the terms.

Boakai: So if, if with me or any African for that matter, I don't think they will classify *zo* and *suba* as the same something. *Zos* are people who are very respected in the society. They make decisions.

Tim: Even in the daytime?

Boakai: Yes, even in the daytime. Yes. In the daytime they are respected, in the night they are respected. People with problems respect them.

David: Yes, I am not going to say anything [small talk as Jeff Morton walks into the room].

Boakai: People really get sick and they say that the baby that just died in that house is

the baby that I ate. And the shoulder bone that got stuck in my - ah - in my throat; that is what is killing me. You know, and people will say that - those things... So this one are [the] *suba* [who caused these things to happen]. So, the only time they... As soon as they say this, when you are sick, they may not live again. You see, but *zos* can challenge one another. You know, they can try one another. They can challenge one another.

David: Have you seen a *suba* who has never washed, never cleaned? Some of the differentiations we have [is] that, that the greatest *suba*... Was it *suba* we were reading about when - (Jeff: that never washed for fourteen years) - who never washed and cleaned their teeth for fourteen years, because this contributed to his power?

Boakai: A-hun, you can see some of that in this area or among some Loma people too. Because, most of the medicine and other things, they have to put kolanuts, chew kolanuts and waste [urinate] in it. So, brown, they like brown, brown things. So, even the cloth like the one I have over there [a brown hunters shirt that he purchased in N'Zerekore]... Those kind of things. So, everything they deal with... Sometimes the kola nut, and the leaves, everything like that.

Tim: Does the *kòma* and Poro have *zo*?

Boakai: Everybody has *zo*. (Tim: And -) *Kòma*, Poro, Sande, they all have *zo*.

Tim: Does the *kòma* and Poro and Sande have *soma*?

Boakai: *Soma*. [It] is that *soma*... You are speaking Mandingo. But, [when you say] *zo* now, we are speaking English.

David: Boakai is saying again and again [about] *zo*: there is no difference between *zo* and *soma*.

Tim: Do you know of any case where Poro *zo* had communication with *Kòma zo*?

Boakai: No, they will never...

Tim: They will never talk.

Boakai: They will never have something in common too much. They can try one another with medicine. They may try to challenge one another among other things, but they can't, because... If you knew where Paul Chaing [SIM missionary] lived (Jeff: a-hun) in Pòlòwu. Pòlòwu is a Gbandi town, and when [you] just pass Pòlòwu [Liberia] and come [go] to Masabolahun, that is a big Muslim town. If you go further back in Popalahun, that is a big Muslim town. So, Pòlòwu is between them. So, when *kòma* business was very serious in that area, the people in Pòlòwu decided to see the *kòma*. And the *kòma* was to come from Popalahun and go to Masabolahun. This you can ask other people. They will tell you. Especially in Kolahun district area. And then, the Gbandi people said they wanted to see the Mandingo people's devil. So they stood outside... So, they stood there and the *kòma* yelled. [It] yelled. They were all in the town. They said they were not going to hide. And you have to be a member of the *kòma* before you see it. So they remained standing right in Polowu town, and they just heard the sound... While they were hearing the sound very close to them from Popalahun way, they just heard the sound in Masabolahun. The *kòma* had already reached there. And the Gbandi people, up to now, respect the *kòma*. They still look at it somehow as superior. But every *zo* has respect for the other one more than for himself. Anyway, that is just their system.

Tim: You were talking about *saafèlè* the other day, when we saw the *saafèlè* on the chief Kamara [Tènu] shirt. And you were talking about different kinds of *saafèlè*. One was generational [Figure 27].

Boakai: Yes, well, like what he showed us. He told us that it was from his parents and

so on. (Tim: A-hun). But you asked if all *saafèlè* look like this. I said “no.” Some can even be small like this [tomb] and be powerful more than that. Based on what kind of power [is] in it. It depends on who fills it [the horn]. Some can be small. Some can be big. Some can be bigger than that, but it is different. But it depends on who made it. But the Muslim own, I don’t care if they add leaves or whatever, they will put small Koran inside. So, anything [the] *kòma* does, it has small Koran in it. So they believe that it is a Islam devil. They believe that is... The man we interviewed last night [Layi Kèwulèn Kamara; App. 7.16]. He said that the *kòma* business started from Mecca (laughter). So, they believed that is associated with Muslim.

Tim: This is the second time we have been told about that.

Boakai: And then *nyana* (*nyèna*). *Nyana*, they believe that is something to do with devil. So, that is the difference. So, they are not associated. Though *zos*, they are -

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SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.17D

BOAKAI YAMAH
Macenta, 16 July 1992

David: So you, this was what you had to say about the *suba* and night, night time...

Boakai: Yes. Or, I told you when they say *suba*, *suba* is the night. *Suba* is the deep night. I don’t even know, but the... We believed you could call it, maybe, midnight. They called it *suba*. And the *suba* is the deep time when people really get afraid to even get outside of their houses. So, then, the people who practice it, witchcraft, are called *subaya*. So, they are just naming them after that night.

David: I see, I see.

Boakai: So that is why they called them *subaya*. And the people who - because I don’t know about your area, but here, like people are so afraid of darkness and especially at night when you are in the village without any electricity, at 12 o’clock in the night. If you get out, it is really late. So they is [are] only the witchcraft practicers [who] are outdoors at that moment. So they call them *subaya*. That means [it] is on the late nightness.

David: I see. That is what in the tradition... We have Samori being told by someone to meet them at 2 o’clock, 2 o’clock in the morning that is, and wear white cloth and meet with the *genies* at 2 o’clock in the morning. All those things that was happening [to] his, was *subaya*.

Boakai: Yes. Yes. Yes. When he is doing that... All the evil powers are strong in the night, especially after 12:00, 1:00, 2:00, in that time and so on. Sometimes, they even believed that late in the night, if you want to see some *suba*, people who practice *suba*, you need to [take] off all your clothes and be completely naked, and go stand in the middle of the town. And then, if you look out doors for some time you will see some of the *subaya*. But you have to be just as the way you were born. So, all those is just to prove that [what] they believed at that time. So, if you see the people very afraid of the night, [at] time like this [10:30 p.m.] in the evening, you tell somebody to get on the road, no, they don’t believe [do it]. Because the people with witchcraft, the *genie*, are now in

action.

David: All occult practices -

Boakai: Occult practices are now in full action, so people get afraid of the night.

David: Okay. Thank you very much. Okay. Got it. Got it.

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SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.17E

ADAMA TALAWOLE

Macenta, 19 July 1992

Tim: This is Saturday. We think it is July 19, 1992, with Adama Talawole. He was just saying something about *kòma* and Mau.

Adama: Oh, people told us before that Mau was very, very dangerous. In fact, the people who settled there were the Lomas. So [it] is a Loma town, but mainly about *kòma*, that is what they used to, you know - Those are their ancestor's work. Those are what they do in Mau. So, we really have to be afraid of Mau, you know. In fact, people used to be afraid of Mau all the time.

Tim: People from where?

Adama: People from our surroundings here.

Tim: Macenta, Voinjama...

Adama: Voinjama. In fact, to stress [go] all the way down. Sooner [as soon as] you talk about Mau, you know, they say, "Èh, Mau is very bad, you know."

Tim: Are they talking about Loma people or any kind of people.

Adama: Loma people. That is the home of Loma people, Mau.

Tim: We were talking about slavery. Ah, Adama has something to say about Musadu.

Adama: People told us that... Our old men told us that some Mandingo also were sold into slavery. By our own brothers who were stronger, you know, who could capture - who were warriors. [They] could capture Mandingos from the east to carry them as far as the sea coast and sell them into slavery. *Kòlòti*, you know, like the one they used, you know, to spoil their whole body. They just spoiled it. Sometimes they told that - one of my friends told me that you use centipede... Okay, you use it. I mean, you beat it. I mean, you put different-different things inside, you know. And then spiritually you can just put it under your fingernail and then [put] poison on somebody - throw it on somebody. Obviously, that person catches it. I mean, his whole skin will spoil.

Tim: So, you are saying [that] the most of the ideas from the *koliti* is bad?

Adama: Ah, most of it is bad, but there are some, I mean, *zo*, [who] use - you know, to know how to cure people. The real one like *kòlòti* - These are [put] on people to kill them.

Tim: Who told you this?

Adama: Oh, my friends.

Tim: Old friends or young friends.

Adama: Young friends. Young friends. Old people don't tell this one.

Tim: How about *soninge*?

Adama: *Sòningaya* is somebody who doesn't pray God. He does not go to church. I mean, he is just a "kafir." So, you don't call that on any Mandingo man. You don't use that [name] on any Mandingo man, you know... Especially somebody who prays. When you call on him [that name], you [are] false [you lie].

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SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.17F

MAJONGBE MOHAMMED CHÈJAN KROMAH

Macenta, 23 July 1992

Tim: This is Thursday, and it is probably July 23, 1990 [1992], with Chèjan. Can you explain to me the masked dances that you saw in N'Zerekore in 1966 [1965]. You were telling me about that. That was free. That was open [to the public], right? Just say -

Mohammed: You mean, the reception.

Tim: The dancers and the *zos*. The one from Zota.

Mohammed: Yes. As I told you the other day, that from Zota I was small at that time, so I didn't really make a specific remark about it. Anyway, I saw masked dancers. Now, there were about three hundred and sixty-five. They were invited by the government to a big reception in N'Zerekore. It was in the honor of the President of the Republic of Ivory Coast. So we saw many of those dancers. I can say that at least every quarter of N'Zerekore had at least had about four or five [masked dancers]. So, anywhere you used to go you would see them. The short ones and the long ones, and those referred to as female and the ones referred to as males.

Tim: Which one did you draw?

Mohammed: I drew the male. Short one.

Tim: That is the one with the mask, the one you called, you called *nyana*, right?

Mohammed: Yes.

Tim: Which one was the best dancer?

Mohammed: According to those who were awarding them at that time, they say that Zota *nyana* was the best among all the 365 *nyana*. (Tim: Ok). Zota *nyana* was the best.

Tim: Okay. You were telling me about the *kòma* last time as having been some kind of power, right? (Mohammed: Yes). Can you just - And then you also drew a *kòma* dancer. (Mohammed: Yes). Can you explain that to me? What kind of *kòma* dancer did you draw?

Mohammed: You know, the one that I drew is just a dancer that comes at least [to] every Mandingo's village - possessed now [every Mandingo village possesses a *kòma* dancer]. That we can use as a law keeper in the - during the dry season. When they put the law down that nobody should not put fire at a certain time in the day, because, you know, fire shouldn't catch in the town. So, this other dancer I drew is the one that will come in the town and start checking from house to house and probably, when he finds you still cooking after 10 or 11 o'clock... According to the town in the village in which you live, then he might seize your food or waste your food. Or you will be fined by the elders of the town.

Tim: Or he might eat your food...

Mohammed: No, he would not eat it. But the follower that is behind [him], the boys that [are] behind [him], they might take your food and carry [it] to the area where they can dress the *kòma*. Yes, yes, how do you say - èè-èè, how do we call it? They called it, in our town... We called it èèn-èèn, in our side of the Beyla region, we called it that èèh-èèh-èè... We called it "Komoni." Okay. Okay now. I don't know in Kankan. They [may] get another name to give it starting from Kankan all the way to Siguiri. They get some kind of name to give [it].

Tim: Are they all the same kind?

Mohammed: No. You know, they might dress the same way, but the face might be different.

Tim: But, they are somehow related, or not?

Mohammed: Yes, they are all the same. They play the same role, you know. At times he is with a whip. People [are] behind him. You know, when [you] look at it too much, he will run after you and whip you, if he can get you. But if it somebody that can run fast, you know... So, most of the persons that will be chosen will be the best runner in town, at the town - you know. This is the person that they will choose. Okay, so, when any of the young boys that [are] behind him offend or do anything bad to you, the people that [are] around him, when he will run after you and whip you. So, that is how they use it in the town.

Tim: And what is that one called "Komoni?"

Mohammed: Oh, "Komoni." Yes.

Tim: Now, Vase Kamara talked about the, aaa... When Kònsaba was trying to... He [Kònsaba] brought out the *kòma* dancers, and they, and his followers were, what... Can you explain that?

Mohammed: Yes. Okay, now you see the *kòma* is something like this. We never really saw the *kòma*, like myself. I never saw it. Each time, when they say that the *kòma* is coming... Okay, some people might go out and meet [the] people beating the drums and dancing, okay? But you know, it is just some kind of convention for the men in the town, that when they want to say "*kòma* is coming," people will run in the houses. Like the women, or those who have never been initiated. But the real *kòma*, that [one], really, I never laid my eyes on it yet.

Tim: But you have seen the dancer?

Mohammed: Yes, but the other dancers we can see it. That is why it can come in the night and in the day. Okay?

Tim: You are saying there is a difference between the dancer and the real *kòma*?

Mohammed: Yes. This other one, the same way you can see it in the night, the same way it can come in the town in the day, the same dry-season people can use [it] in the enforcement of the law. (Tim: Right). Okay.

Tim: So, could you say that the dancer is the representative of the *kòma*?

Mohammed: Yes. To me, as I know [it], yes.

Tim: Just like the ambassador...

Mohammed: Yes. Okay, as I know, you see.

Tim: So in the Vase's story with Fonngama...

Mohammed: It might be this man... These other dancers... This other dancer and the people who were coming. So when they met the griot, then, I mean, the *kòma* man... Then

he said that “we are going to sleep in the house.”

Tim: Does *kòma* make sound? Have you ever heard *kòma* sound?

Mohammed: Yes, I know the sound.

Tim: How does it sound? Do you know how they make [the] sound?

Mohammed: No, no, I don’t know that (he laughs).

Tim: But you have heard the sound?

Mohammed: I have heard the sound, yes (laughing). That is what I told you, that I never see it before, but it get different sound.

Tim: It can make sound in two different places at the same time, or three different places, or is it always at one place?

Mohammed: Several times. In several places in the same moment, okay? So, that is the problem. (Tim: I see). Okay, we cannot... Let’s say this is the town, okay? They will say that the *kòma* is coming. Maybe the other dancer that I drew, you will see him in the town. When [you] have been initiated you will see it in the town. You may come out and join the people. Okay? But the real sound of the *kòma*, you will hear, you know, somewhere outside of the town. When you hear the sound here, it will not stay long here. You will hear it on the right. You will hear it on this side. (Tim: I see). You will hear it on this side. It will make you confuse, so you would tell me that it is somebody who is running all around to do all of these things?, or maybe even at the same moment? Okay. (Tim: Okay). So, that is the problem.

Tim: So that is the problem. (Mohammed: laughed). You are saying that the mask dancer is not the one making the sound?

Mohammed: No, no, but you can be together. I can be with him, but you can hear the other sound. (Tim: I see). Here, let’s say in the north, let’s say you hear it in the east first. Okay, later on you will hear it somewhere else. Okay, let’s say or let’s say that will be a special place. A forest. Like the time we were in Musadu, [the] old man [Yaya Dole] took us to some forest the other day [to Doofatini, in March 1986]. He said this is the place Zo Musa *Kòma* was, initiating the people, right? (Tim: Yes). Now, okay, if they were still keeping on the time, that is gone. The *mori* business came. Most of the people got out of the *kòma* business. So, if they have to put the *kòma* out in the night, okay, the other dancer - you will see him in town. Okay? When you hear the sound from the forest. Okay? It will not take long [before] you will hear the other sound, you know, from [the] Beyla route, then you will hear the other sound on this side, then you will hear the other sound on the other side. Okay? But they will not do it together. As soon as the other man cries [yells], then it will not take long before you will hear the other one. Something like that.

Tim: What else did Yaya talk about [in our March 1986 interview]? What did Yaya talk about that you remember? When we were on the rocks [Doofatini] and when we were walking about town, [things that we] did not record. What did he talk about at the rock, that you remember?

Mohammed: Oh, yes, okay. When we went in the forest the other day, he showed us a place right before the big rock. He said, “Here, there was a big snake that used to come out.”

Tim: The big snake?

Mohammed: The big snake.

Tim: Did he give you the name of the snake?

Mohammed: Yes, [it] is, how do you call it, the 'python.' Okay, he said [that] the python used to come out and roll around here. And whenever the people were around - okay? After the initiation here, then he showed us another issue right behind the rock. Let's say, on the right side of the rock. Going to the eastern side, you know. He said, but this [is] the place that people can get out. When they get out from here, from this forest, they got out from here and went. They will go to a place where the final ceremony will take place. And this is the place we call - and the area will be called Gbandia. You know, Gbandia today has become Gbana.

Tim: That was - What happened in Gbana?

Mohammed: It was the area that they used to set everyone free, because, when you go for the initiation the like - Now, some Kpelle people can do it in the forest. It means that when you people go in the forest for the initiation, they could stay for at least two or three years. Okay. Before, but this time, they have reduced it to one year, or something like that, you know. So, after you people leave from that place... The place that they will go and set you free [so] that you will go home, because whenever there is an initiation in the forest, people will come from all over. Okay. It is not force that everyone should come from one town. (Tim: Right). People might come from different-different towns, to come and join. Maybe it could [be] two or three hundred people around there, but coming from different families. After the one year or two years before. But this time, they have reduced it at least to six or eight months, or one year at least, you know. So, after the initiation, when they are ready to set you free, in the previous days they used to go somewhere to have a final ceremony. That area was called Gbana, where everybody will be sent free to return home. Okay. So, the Gbanda - Gbanda has now become the Gbana of today. Where you find the village of my friend, like Jalagbèlela, or - or you get [go from] Jalagbèlela you get... Èèh, how [do] you call this other town, èèh... Folaybolidu. You get Folaybolidu and you get [to] the other town too. You know, [those are] just a few of the towns that I know. But you get many-many villages there. You get Jomana and all, in the region of Gbana. Okay,

Tim: What does the word "Gbana" mean? (Mohammed: Gbana). Is that Kpelle or Mandingo?

Mohammed: It is Mandingo.

Tim: What does it mean?

Mohammed: It means that the place that people will settle and have a final ceremony and farewell to one another.

Tim: The word, actually, the word *gbana* itself, if you want to translate that?

Mohammed: Yes, but you see, it might have some kind of ritual meaning. (Tim: I see). You know, Gbana, it has ritual meaning.

Tim: So, according to Yaya who was... What was happening at the rock? What were the people doing at the rock? Who was doing what?

Mohammed: Oh, you know (Tim: When Yaya spoke). When Yaya spoke, [he] said that after the coming of the other tribes, let's say the Mandingo in Musadu; and the Musa being a Kpelle man - So he found out that other people came with some kind of religion which is Islam, so he could not cope with that, you know. So, he tried to make a difference between his people and the other new comers. So, that is why he tried to initiate people from the forest.

Tim: How did he initiate them?

Mohammed: By marking them. (Tim: Oh, he put mark) - marks on their backs. (Tim: Okay). But today, you know, everyone is doing it in his own way. According to Yaya, everything started from that forest.

Tim: Okay, and what was the name - How did he call that forest?

Mohammed: Èè-èèh, *doofatu* (Tim: Okay). Some people say *doofatu* because the *tu* means 'forest, the forest of *doo*.' You know, and in Musadu most of the people will say *doofa kòni*, *doofa kòni*.

Tim: Because of the rock?

Mohammed: No. In the area, you get the small river, the river "*doofa kòni*." Whenever you cross you are around that small river there. And the forest is adjacent to it. So, you are in the area of the *doo*, the initiation.

Tim: What does *kòni* mean?

Mohammed: The river, the small river.

Tim: Okay. Do you... Konsaba was trying to get Foningama with the *kòma* devil, or [the] *kòma* masked dancer, right? (Mohammed: Yes). And they brought... Where do you think they brought... Or, how do you think that [the] *kòma* got there? You know, just your own idea.

Mohammed: With Kònsaba, ah - oh, Kònsaba?

Tim: I mean, just your own idea. He had his own *kòma*. (Mohammed: Ah, ah, Kònsaba). Do you think they had *kòma*? How do you think the *kòma* came in Musadu?

Mohammed: You see, the *kòma* business... Everyone has *kòma*. (Tim: Right). Everyone had *kòma*.

Tim: But do you know where it came from? Do you know where it came from in the beginning? Or [do] you have any idea?

Mohammed: But, what I will tell you [is] that [it was] even in Mecca before, okay? (Tim: Yes). The place they call the Kaaba. (Tim: Right). It was the *kòma* people who were there. Okay? (Tim: I see). Because, the building itself, that black spot [rock] something, [it] was so-so [only] *kòma* inside. So-so medicine. (Tim: I see). Okay. Until [it was] conquered by the Prophet Mohammed... Before they could destroy everything and throw them away. So, everything started from there. But according to most of the narrators, their grandfathers [ancestors] came from Mecca way to come on this side. Go to obviously - You know, the medicine is done by all Africans. Only the Islam came, because our first religion is *kòma* business. Because everyone has possession. In every town you will find at least four or five, or six at least.

Tim: Six what, *kòma*?

Mohammed: *Kòma*, different-different people own this thing. (Tim: Right). [The] only thing was because of religion and it was... And it was the sign of greatness. Okay. But when the people came with the Islam on this side now... And that [was when] most of the people started dropping it. Okay, because the Islam, Muslims would say... Islam will say that [they] don't do *kòma* business. Because when you [get] the *kòma* business you will not be a Muslim man. You will go to hell. Okay. So this [is] our general belief. (Tim: Right). So that is why most of the people turned their back from the *kòma* business, and turned to Muslim.

Tim: Was there a father for the *kòma* business? You just said something about him. Was there an ancestor for the *kòma*? A name you can give, or a family?

Mohammed: For the *kòma* business, yes. But in the Mandingo region, most refer to

Fakoli as one of the best *kòma* men, meaning medicine men. (Tim: I see). Fakoli was the best among all. Okay. Okay. That is what even [they say] anywhere you go, even now. Among people, when you say, “I am a Kromah,” the first thing they will think... They will think about, they will [think] these [the Kromah] are the descendants of the great *kòma* man. Okay. So, they take all Kromahs to [be] medicine men. Okay?

Tim: Ah, what does the name “Fakoli” mean, the exact name? Fakoli. Do you have any idea?

Mohammed: No, I don’t have any idea. I think [that] it might be the man’s real name, Fakoli.

Tim: What does *koli* (*kòli*) mean?

Mohammed: Aan, I don’t know the meaning of *koli*.

Tim: Do you have [the] *koli* name in Mandingo? (Mohammed: No). Or, do you have it in another language. Does it...

Mohammed: The *koli* name is mostly among the Lomas, in Macenta.

Tim: And what does it mean; and what does the word *koli* mean?

Mohammed: I don’t really know, but it must be related to -

Tim: In Kpelle. You know Kpelle, right?

Mohammed: Yes.

Tim: And what does it mean?¹

Mohammed: But the Kpelle people don’t have *koli*. The Loma people get *koli*.

Tim: But you don’t know what it means actually.

Mohammed: No.

Tim: Okay.

Mohammed: But what I must...

Tim: When you [we] were walking around town with Yaya [in March 1986], what were some things that you remember that he talked about, that of course you [we] did not put on the tape when we went to [the] different-different yards. He greet this man...

Mohammed: He introduced [us] to the papay that he could not even see better again [almost blind]. He said this man was his equal, and [that] his ancestor was the people that we sent for... The Sherif that we sent for to come and destroy Zo Musa’s medicine here. He said [that] it was this man’s ancestor that we sent for to come and do the *mori* work.

Tim: What was his name?

Mohammed: No, I don’t know the old man’s name. He only referred to him as a Sherif.

Tim: And the rock business. When he went and dusted off the rock, what happened?

Mohammed: Yes. When he uncovered the rock that was put on the grave of Foningama’s son who violated the law and he ordered to be killed. But he said, “the rock in this place now is not in its initial place. They have changed it.” You know, to this spot. Because it was before the mosque that was here. It was very small. So we try to enlarge the mosque. So we took off the rock and kept it somewhere. Until the new mosque was built. So we came. We laid the rock right down here.

Tim: Did he give the name of the son that he said was killed?

Mohammed: No. No. He didn’t give us the name of the son, but he said that the son was killed because he violated the new law that was made by his father. Okay. This son

¹*Koli* is a Loma word that means ‘leopard.’ Some Maniyaka interchange *sòli* and *koli* for ‘leopard.’

was killed because of that.

Tim: You said something the other day about Nionsamoridu. You said it was hard to get the history there. What was the problem?

Mohammed: Yes. According to the people, they said that Nionsamoridu was a town that was founded by old slaves. And at this date I don't think the people will like to be called "old slaves." And so maybe they will not like to talk about the town, how the town came about.

Tim: What people exactly? What clan? What *jamu*?

Mohammed: Really, ah... But the main people in Nionsamoridu now are the Sware, the Fofana, and... I think, another tribe might be there. But the main people we know about in Nionsamoridu are the Swaray and the Fofana.

Tim: Okay. Are you - You were talking about *suba* as a time of night. Remember when we were translating? (Mohammed: Yes). What time of night is that?, or, what [part] of the morning?

Mohammed: The *suba* is in the period between 5 o'clock and 7 o'clock.

Tim: In the morning? (Mohammed: Yes). Are you familiar with the term *subaya*?

Mohammed: Yes. *Subaya* is the state of be[ing] in witchcraft, you know.

Tim: I mean, what kind of thing goes along with that?

Mohammed: The *subaya*?

Tim: Yes. What do people do? How do they do it? Do you have any idea, because we have run into that word. We have run across that word in other texts - (Mohammed: Yes, of course) - in terms of learning how to translate.

Mohammed: Yes. You know, the *subaya*, the *suba*, it means to our home: the *suba*, it means somebody who is a wicked man that can harm people with medicine. Like, most of the time in the small village, they will say this man is a *suba* man or this woman is a *suba* woman. You know, or, this man eats human beings through the witchcraft. Okay. (Tim: Yes, hun). So, everybody will be afraid of him; saying, "this woman is a *suba* man," or, "this woman is *suba*," or, "this man is *suba*."

Tim: Is he a person that can do good or bad? Or, *suba* is good or bad or is mostly what?

Mohammed: They [have] two types of *suba* that protects its family. Okay. Some people in the small village, some people might be *suba*, but they don't go to nobody else. Nobody can't touch their family. But in the old days, in some of our villages, they will say, "this person died," or, "this person" - some people might be there. They may be losing children every time. Each time, when they get the child.

Tim: Hi Adama [Tarawole], come in.

Mohammed: You know, each time when they get children, or the children might be dying all the time, all the time when you know... So, maybe they will go into consultation. Somebody will say, "yes, there is somebody in your family or somebody around there that [is] eating your children." You know, and then you know that the problem might start in the village. And these people, they call them *suba*. Okay, in some family too, you will see, let us say, the oldest person, let's say your grandmother by your father or your grandmother by your mother. She might be in your yard, and she might be a *suba* also. But she will not let anybody [know]. She wouldn't, because the *suba* business in most of the village is a kind of society. They will say that every year each person has to give in time, you know. So, when you have to give this year, you give [to] somebody. The next

year, the other man gives somebody. You know, something like that. When it gets to you, you have to give also. Okay, now, some of the *suba* too, they might join the society, but not this kind of people. But they are there to defend their family. Okay. So, they wouldn't get anything from you, and your people will not touch anything from them. So, these are the two kind of *suba* we know. (Tim: Okay). The *suba* that harm the other people, and the *suba* that don't do anything. So, they are there to defend their family.

Tim: What about the *soma*?

Mohammed: *Soma* is the *zo* man. To what I know, *soma* is a *zo* man.

Tim: Are they the same?

Mohammed: The same.

Tim: Just different region, different name.

Mohammed: But now, the *zo* too, there are two kind of *zo* [that] might be with medicine. The big medicine man we call *zo*.

Tim: What kind of society?

Mohammed: Any society. If is the women or a man, we can call them *zo* because she deals with medicine, okay? And those who can circumcise too. We call them *zo*. It could be a man or a woman. *Zokè* or *zomuso*. Okay? A-hun, so that is it. If you called somebody *zo* man, it might be a person: even he does not have medicine, he don't get *kòma* [or] anything. Maybe, he [can be] somebody who can initiate the boys. Circumcision, you know. So, the people that perform that, we call them *zo* man. The woman that can do it, we called her *zomuso*. The man can circumcise. We call them *zokè*. Okay? About people with medicine in the small villages. We called them *tuzo*. Okay? They are *zo* also. Because the woman too have *kòma*. Like the man having *kòma*. So you will call the owner *zomuso*, *zomuso*, *zokè* man. Okay?

Tim: Does the woman get dancer too?

Mohammed: I don't know. I don't really know that.

Tim: They have sound [music], woman?

Mohammed: All of them get sound (he laughs). I don't, don't... They don't get no voice. Oh, no, no, no.

Tim: Of course, you have never seen that one, or, or...

Mohammed: Those that have tried to go around the women, they never survived! Yes. That is true. Yes, èèh! Oh, you don't play with that. If to say the women *kòma* is here, the man who will say, "I can go there..." - If you defile [go there], I don't think you can live. You will not live. Yes.

Tim: Oh, I forgot. [I] didn't ask your father this [in our interview with Mustafa Kromah in Macenta, 5 July 1992, Appendix 7.20], if there was any kind of *tana* or taboo for the Kromah.

Mohammed: Oh yes, we get *tana*. You know, the *tana* that we know for the Kromah (Tim: Yes) is like [what] the old man say, like our father said the other day [?]. [He said] that the *tana* business came according to the decisions some time [ago] of the people, but the general taboo of the Kromah is a tree called *jala*. Okay. And the *jala* and the... How [do] you call it? They have some kind of cloth they call... I have forgotten the cloth's name.

Tim: Okay. Any animal?

Mohammed: No, but some Kromah have animals as their taboo. Okay.

Tim: But you don't know what they are?

Mohammed: Yes. They say the ‘leopard.’ Some of the Kromah don’t eat ‘leopard.’

Tim: Is there a special kind of Kromah that has ‘leopard?’

Mohammed: Or, mostly [it] is most of the Kromah. All the Kromah. Because they say, as they were saying the other day, Fran Kamara [Foningama] and Fakoli were having the same taboo. Maybe it derived from there. I personally; what we don’t eat in my family is the viper. Yes, we don’t eat the viper, and we don’t drive by a fire in which they have been putting that stick in called “jala.” Okay? this [is] my *tana* I know.

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.17G

MAJONGBE MOHAMMED CHÈJAN KROMAH

Diakolidu, 28 July 1992

Mohammed: The first *mori* people that were around here, that came around us, they were the marabout. And this is the only work they used to do.

Tim: What kind of work was that? What kind of work did they do?

Mohammed: The work is... What kind of work they used to do. To fix talisman, or to do work the way the old man was talking today. That once in Beyla, there was a chief that [was] planning to come and fight them. So, they went and talk to the *karamogo*. They said, “Somebody is about to fight us, and you should do the work.” And the man said, “Okay. No problem. You must not worry.” He even... He went and did the work in his yard. The *karamogo* was even caught: I mean, the chief, the chief warrior that was about to come attack them was caught - collected by some *genie*, as he said, and brought to town, and got [put] him in front of the people. They shave part of the head, and then turn him loose. So, that was the work. Those were the people that we were depending on before, that we used to call *mori* people. If you get problem, your baby [is] sick or somebody have a sickness that you do not know, you could go to a *karamogo* man. Then they will write on the wooden something [slate], the plate; [and] then wash off the writing. And that water we call it in Mandingo *nasiji*. Maybe it may be wasted on the person, and the person could come to himself. Or, he may drink it. Maybe the stomach complain. Then he will come to himself. So, the *mori* people used to do many work for us, just like that. But now, in this today’s date, the new way of *mori* that come, they condemn all. They said, “that people shouldn’t do it. It is not good.” Whenever [a] *karamogo* man sits to do the work, they will say you are going contrary to the Koran law. So, they [are] trying to stop all these things. So, they have been sabotaging the people until today, you can’t find more [many] *mori* among us. Only few people that will say that I am going by the old route. I am not part of the modern Muslim, you know. Because today’s Muslims, those who hold their hand up when praying, they are trying to put a stop to this thing.

Tim: They cross their arms?

Mohammed: Yes. They are called Wahabiyya. They are saying that nobody should do this kind of work. Because even talisman, you can’t wear talisman because at first our people [wore it] for protection against some sickness or some *genie*; or any other things they used to go to *mori* man. They could fix talisman for them, either for sickness,

anything. Just for protection. Anything that you want. But they [the Wahabbiyya] say, “If you put anything on your body, you have had two gods. So it’s not good.” That is why you can’t see many *karamogo* men again. Otherwise, the *karamogo*’s, their work was to teach the children and to do the work for the people. People would bring all kind of things to them: starting from cow to goat to sheep or even you make your farm you could take two or three bag, you give [them] to the *karamogo* man. The *karamogo* too will go to the some people and say that “the Koran love you this year. The Koran love you.” That person give them many things in that year. That is how people used to do it. All this things they are only trying to trick the people. It is not true. They are lying to the people, and that is not good. Only one-one [a few] *karamogo* that you can see. I am still going by the old laws. They are doing that. And even if you want to visit them now, you will hide your self [go in secret], because you may not [want] people to say, “Oh!, you consulted the *karamogo*. You are not a good Muslim.” You see, yes. So that is the problem that is existing today. You may see in some town today, when you go even [to] a place like Ghanta [Liberia], you will see that there are two groups of Muslims. The Muslims that consider herself to be the Wahabiyya, they will say, “You don’t get involved in *karamogo* work. Don’t do anything.” They have their mosque. The people that do this kind of work, they say that you can still work. They say that God said you should help yourself.

Tim: What kind of mosque is around here? Mosques in Musadu, Diakolidu, Beyla.

Mohammed: You get the mosque right here, right behind us here. They get one mosque there where the people can put their hand down. They can do the *karamogo* work.

Tim: Or they put their hand down?

Mohammed: Yes. They do their *karamogo* work. And Beyla also. Like today, you hear Donzo say that when he go in the mosque... First they were so upset. When you could put your hand up, they could take you and throw you outside. They would not wait to the end of the prayer. Yes. the other mosque right here, right by Zo Donzo house, they can put there hands up. That is their kind of Muslim. Because, even the Beyla people, some of them still do the *mori* business. They still believe in it. Ah-hèn. They still have belief in it. [They] say we can do it. Some people say if you do it, you are not a good Muslim. You see. But I think most of the time today [in] some of the big-big town, even some of the people will say “I can’t pray behind this man because he can write talisman for people.” Yes, some people can say... Even in Monrovia there was the same [thing happening]. The people that having the mosque on Ashmun St. hill are the people that say that talisman are not good. The first imam that was on Benson street used to write talismen for people. And the other one that was on Randall Street, Karamogo Soli, they all used to write talismen for people. Some people were saying, “I will not pray behind that man because he can write talisman for people.” But still, some people can do it. I am saying, among the Fula, all the Fula do it.

Tim: They can do it?

Mohammed: All the Fulas you see. Any Fula man you can see [has] talisman with him (laughing).

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.18

MAMMADI KÈNÈ

Place and dates of interview: Macenta, Guinea, 2 and 23 July 1992

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek and Djobba K. Kamara

Context of interview: Soko Konè (App. 7.15) and Djobba Kamara told me on separate occasions that Mammadi Kènè (l. 284) would be a good person to interview. He was sick when we visited him the first time, but we interviewed him a couple of days later. We ended our first interview prematurely because I ran out of batteries. Mammadi finally agreed to talk to us at the end of the month. We met in his small round one-room mud house in Macenta on both occasions, and one or two of his elderly friends were present for each interview. Mammadi was old at the time, and reportedly died a year later.

Transcribed by: Kèlèti Fofana (Monrovia, 1993)

Translated by: Ali Kromah (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1993) - tape/transcript/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek and Faliku Sanoe (Monrovia, 1993) - transcript/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek and Faliku Sanoe (Monrovia, 1993) - small sections of the transcript

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

Translation note: This translation does not include the short comments that Djobba and I made during the interview, or some of the questions that Djobba asked the speaker. This information would have been included had it influenced what the speaker said.

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MOIDU TENE KROMA AND THE KONO: 706-789

[ANCIENT MISADU: I]
[Kènè ancestor migrates to Misadu]

Djobba: We want you to start talking about Misadu: the way that it started and how it came to be the way that it is today. He asked that you should talk about everything that you can remember that is historical, that you should agree to do this, alright? What is your name?

Mammadi: My name is Mammadi Kènè. (clears throat)

We, we, we...

We came to Misadu.

The person who welcomed us to settle in Misadu...

5 Our ancestor came from our father's town.

That is in Kodowali.

Our ancestor left Felula,

And went to Jèmu.

He left Jèmu and went to Misadu.

10 We did *moi* work.

From there they went to Kobila.

Our ancestor went to Kobila.

They went...

Our grandfather came here to do *moi* work.

15 They left Kolo,

And went to Bala.

They left Bala,

And went to Gbè - Gbèsoba.

They left Gbè,

20 And went to-went to-went to-went to, èh - Singò.

They founded a town near Singò called Jèmu.

They left Jèmu and went and entered...

Eh-èh-èh-èh-èh-èh,

They call the place Singò.

[Kènè ancestor's *lisimu* destroys Zo Misa Kòma's *saafè*]

25 Fumò Dole's older brother Masama came,

And called our ancestor,

To come and protect Misadu.

In this town we were...

Our ancestor was doing *moi* work in the town of Kobila that we were in.

5 'our father's town': = *fasola*, 'in (*la*) father's (*fa*) town (*so*).'

6 Kodowali: Côte d'Ivoire.

8 Jèmu: Diemou.

16 Bala: Barala.

27 'protect' (*dagban*): Also means 'to clean.' *Dagban* is a power made from medicine that is especially used to counter sorcery.

30 He was the most powerful *moi* man.
 [He did] two kinds of work.
 After he finished doing the *moi* work,
 They sent a message to Fèningama.
 The *moilu* of Kòeyāba,
 35 And the three people of Kòeyā,
 They called him.
 They called him [Kènè] to protect Misadu.
 [They] said, “Zo Misa Kòma...”
 [They] said, “Zo Misa Kòma has made the town suffer,
 40 And the *jamana* suffers.”
 Zo Misa Kòma, he was there.
 His *saafè*,
 It used to swallow babies and-and-teenage boys.
 [It only swallowed] males,
 45 Whether they were sheep or goats or chickens.
 It used to jump and jump.
 They say that it would swallow what it saw when it turned around.
 It would swallow whatever it saw.
 He was there.
 50 They said that Misa-Misa-Misa got out of control.
 The babies...
 [They said,] “Do not even think about your babies because it will swallow them.”
 It swallowed human beings and all.
 It swallowed chickens.
 55 It swallowed sheep.
 It swallowed goats.
 Then the *moi* agreed to stop,
 What Misa was doing.
 Ancestor did the work.
 60 They say that ancestor did the work.
Lisimu.
 He made a *lisimu*,
 And gave it to a toad.
 Toad.
 65 The toad jumped - “jakii,” “jakii.”
 He [Kènè] fastened it [the *lisimu*] around the toad’s neck,
 And left the toad.
 The toad jumped near Zo Misa Kòma’s *saafè*.
 Upon seeing it [the toad], the *saafè* chased it.
 70 When it [the *saafè*] swallowed it [the toad],
 It [the *saafè*] immediately burst, “poo!”

34 Kòeyāba: = Koniya Mountain.

35 Elsewhere called ‘strangers.’

58 The *saafè* was doing the destruction, but Musa was controlling the *saafè*.

It [the *lisimu* on the toad] destroyed its [the *saafè*'s] power in that area.
 The man [Zo Misa] said, "Aye!
 Behold, èh-èh - so this is how it is.
 75 You have destroyed my town.
 You came to give me a hard time.
 I can't stay here anymore."

[Zo Misa prepares to leave Misadu]

After that happened he took belongings...
 [He went to] Nyanwulèni creek, Jako creek, èh-èh - Jòn creek.
 80 He poured samples of these creeks into a gourd,

[Zo Misa leaves Misadu and curses Koniya]

And then put the gourd on his shoulder and crossed the creeks.
 He passed Jakodu and went to Jewu.
 Boola is a town under Jewu.
 He looked and saw Misadu.
 85 He said, "*Yèlewulu!*
 We can't live together anymore because you Kòeyā people conspired against me.
 You came and met me here,
 And now you have come and done *moi* work against me.
 You came and troubled me.
 90 I will not stay with you any more because you conspired against me."

[Zo Misa travels to Zota]

They then passed and went to Mabua.
 There are twelve sections in Mabua,
 And Zota is one.
 The *zo* people there - fèing!,
 95 Are involved in *nyana* business and *kòma* business.
 They say...
 They say that [those involved in] *zo* activities and *nyana*,
Nyana does not talk in any other language except Kpelle.
 That is Zota.

[Kènè ancestor retrieves Fèningama's hat]

100 That Zota...
 Our ancestor,

85 'good night' (*ka wili wio*): this is Kpelle. The speaker may be mixing this story with others which say that Zo Musa climbed to the top of Mt. Kanikokela and said "good by" to Foningama and the people of Musadu.

- Was the one who drove Zo Misa Kòma.
 His descendants who are there...
 Not all the Kpelle...
 105 Not all the Kpelle...
 My ancestor...
 My ancestor...
 Everyone in this *jamana* has his own specialty,
 Eh, our ancestor blessed,
 110 Fèningama's,
Wulukili sacrifice.
 Our ancestor blessed him.
 After that,
 His-his-his-his hat,
 115 His *masa* hat...
 When he [Fèningama] was in a gathering...
 [When he was] in a gathering,
 A hawk come from Sòna hills.
 [There were] many birds in those hills...
 120 A big bird in the air...
 When he was sitting among the chiefs,
 It [the hawk] came and snatched the hat from his head, "pooh,"
 And took it away.
 They failed many things to try and get it.
 125 He [Fèningama] got up and said,
 "I am not able [to get my hat].
 Let me go and call my younger brother."
 Then he went and called his younger brother.
 His younger brother came and said, "Is that it?"
 130 That is not hard."
 He said that he would do it.
 He came.
 He did some work and that same hawk came all the way down,
 And put it [the hat] back on his [Fèningama's] head.
 135 He put it back on his head when they were all assembled.
 Our ancestor was the one who did that.

[Kènè ancestor marries Fèningama's daughter Nyamoi]

They protected Nyamoi.
 They [Kènè] took Nyamoi.
 Fèningama Wesama...

118 'hawk' (*wasan*): Assistants said that the *wasan* is part of the hawk family, but they could not be any more specific. Sona hills seems to be Solona or Sinko.

127 'my younger brother': = Kènè.

138 Nyamoi: = Mayāmoi.

- 140 They, they...
 Our ancestor [Fèningama] took Nyamoi and gave her to our grandfather.
 Nyamoi said that she would not sit there [marry him] because she did not know
 the *moi* who had come.
 She did not know the man's place [where he came from],
 So she would not marry that *moi* man.
- 145 She would not go.
 Eh, Faza said, "Ah! My father was the one who gave you [to him].
 If our father gave you [to him],
 Then you must accept my father's word and marry [him] as our father wants.
 I am responsible to build your okra garden,
- 150 Your bitterball garden,
 Whatever you are doing,
 And your bathroom."
 Fanyala was the one who said that.
 Fanyala said, "Is that alright with you?"
- 155 [Nyamoi answered,] "Yes."
 [He replied,] "I will feed you."
 Before she went,
 He went and built the small bathing area in Foe.
 It's name is Famoe.
- 160 The one who built the small bathing area...
 That was the small bathing area that he went,
 And built.
 He said, "I am looking for the old person's food."
 Now that old person's food...
- 165 Nyamoi,
 He used to...
 Eh, the old person [Kènè ancestor] and our grandmother [Nyamoi],
 He used to feed her.

[Fanyala Jomani and the Kènè]

- To say that he came...
- 160 It was not that he came to talk about the matter.
 It was not all of the Kènè.
 The Kènè can explain that history.
 But we were the first *moi* in Misadu.
 When we talk about Fanyala's settlement...
- 165 Fanyala...
 Well, our nephews are the Jomanu.

146 Faza: Or, Fanyala (Fanjala; see l. 184): *jala* = 'lion.' He provided the food, and Nyamoi cooked the food.

158 'small bathing area' (*kiata*): = a small outdoor bathing area surrounded by a fence.

159 Famoe: = Famoila?

But Fanyala settled,
 This Fanyala who...
 Our ancestor and grandmother settled and born us.
 170 Our uncle is Fanyala.
 Fanyala.
 Fanyala's shirt,
 His favorite food,
 His money,
 175 We are the ones who owned them.
 We do all of our own bluffing in Kòeyā.
 We can go anywhere that Fanyala settles.
 That is the way that we can do things.
 You have come to ask me [some things],
 180 And the histories are many.
 I can't say all of them.
 I can't explain all.
 But if the subject is about Nyamoi,
 Fanyala was the one,
 185 Who was our ancestor in Misadu.

[Sacrifices for Kòeyā]

Djobba: What is the name of this town?
Mammadi: There are two names: some, some...
 Fuomuo Kènè, Fuomuo Kènè, Fuomuo Kènè...
Djobba: I want to know how the Konè, èh - the Kènè and the Dole, got connected.
Mammadi: Eh, there were twelve houses of Sumawolo,
 And twelve houses of Donzo.
 190 The twelve Sumawolo houses that they talk about,
 They were the Kènè.
 Eh-èh, the Joma[ni]...
 Eh, the Jomani way is like...
 The Suma[wolo]...
 195 Eh, the Jomani...
 In the Jomani...
 The Kènè are...
 The Dole are...
 He was a Dole, Fuomuo Dole.
 200 His name was Fuomuo Dole.
 The other's name was Fèningama.
 The other's name was Masama [Dole].
 Masama Koe [Koeyā]...
 He used to be,

176 Kòeyā: = Konya.

185 See line 146.

- 205 Masama Koe...
 He used to live up the big mountain [Koniyaba].
 Kòeyã - Kòeyã is named after that.
 His name was given to Kòeyãka.
 Eh, he used to make offerings at the big mountain,
 210 At Kòeyã.
 There were five towns in Kòeyã.
 Masama was the one who made offerings,
 When they had anything to offer.
 They [the people] would give it to him.
 215 He poured the water...
 [He made] an offering to the land.
 That is what he did.
 But it was those three people,
 The real inhabitants of the land who offered sacrifices for the land.

[The Kènè *moi* drives Zo Misa from Misadu]

- 220 Our ancestor came as a stranger.
 They went and called our ancestor to do *moi* work.
 That was Kènè,
 Our ancestor.
 That was...
 225 [Our Kènè ancestor did] that in Misadu.
 It was not done in Kòeyã.
O sèni fê fula la.
 They protected Kolo.
 They protected Bala.
 230 They protected Gbè.
 They went and protected Farana.
 That Farana,
 They swore that they would not harm each other.
 Our ancestor was summoned from Kobila to go to protect Misadu,
 235 And drive Zo Misa Kòma away.

[The twelve Kènè houses]

Djobba: What we want to know is this. You said that there were twelve Kènè

215 'poured the water': The people gave a sacrifice to Masama Dole, and he made a sacrifice for Kòeyã.

218 'those three people': = Fèningama, Foleboi Dole and Koya Masama (= Masama Dole).

228 'protect' (*dagban*): a person prays over a house and hangs a talisman to fend off evil spirits and sorcery.

233 'not harm each other': probably, the residents of Bala would not harm each other in their own town.

houses. We want you to name those twelve houses.
Mammadi: Aye,
 To name the twelve houses?
Djobba: Yes.
Mammadi: Aah, èh, the twelve Sumawolo houses are the Kènè, the Dole, the
 Kuyatè, the Kièlè, and èh-èh-èh...
 Those twelve Sumawolo houses,
 240 The Kièlè...
 Have I mentioned the Kièlè?
Djobba: Un.
Mammadi: Hun?
Djobba: Uhun.
Mammadi: I mentioned the Kènè.
 I mentioned the Dole.
 245 I mentioned the Kuyatè.
 I mentioned the Koesia.
 Alright, èh-èh, èh-èh-èh,
 They were all in Kòlane.
 I have talked about Kòlane.
 250 I have only mentioned seven [names].
 The remaining five names are not in my mind.
 I will stop there.
 Do you want me to talk about your own house business?
 I talked about the issues related to my house.

[The Konè from Dalayan migrate from Beyla to the forest]

Djobba: What about the Konè.
 255 Mammadi: The Konè, ha!
 The Konè came from Dalajan.
 They came from Sangalan.
 The Konè came from Sangalan and-and-and passed and came - road...
 [They went] on this road and came to this bush here.
 260 The others here,
 They-they went to Beyla.
 Those Beyla Konè were...
 They... They were the ones who left Kaima Badjima and went to Wolodu.
 There is a boundary with this Wolodu and Ivory Coast.
 265 Eh, that is the *jamana* of the Konè.
 The other Konè came here from Dalayan.
 They-they left there and went...

256 Dalajan: possibly Dakajalan.

259 'bush': *tu*.

- They-they went to Kolongò.
 From Kolongò they went, èh...
 270 What is the name of your area?
Djobba: Kwadu.
Mammadi: Kwa - èh-èh...
 Kwadu is still behind.
Djobba: Koligblama?
Mammadi: Ka, Kolig, this thing,
 Eh-èh-èh-èh,
 275 This big town here - Gbinikala.
 The *jamana* of Gbinikala.
 They went there.
 They went to that town.
 That is the line between them.
 280 They were the ones...
 They and the Konè came together.
 The Konè are the ones who really know their history.
 I do not know it.
 I left Beyla and came and settled here.
 285 That is why I am here.
 But I can talk about Beyla.
 I know something about the Konè,
 But I can't say everything.

[Fèningama's *wulukili* sacrifice]

- Djobba: Okay, about Fèningama's *wulukili* sacrifice. This *wulukili* sacrifice. What
 is this *wulukili* sacrifice all about?
Mammadi: A-han!
 290 Is that what you are asking me?
 Fèningama, (short laugh)
 Fèningama's *wulukili* sacrifice...
Another speaker: *Bò dala*.
Mammadi: *Wa dala mbè*.
 We are working.
 295 Fèningama's *wulukili*,
 It was - it was...
 When he-he-he established the town...
 It was said...
 They said...

268 Kolongò: this seems to refer to the region Konokòlò, though sounds like the people named Kuranko.

273 Kwadu: or, Koadu, in today's northwest Liberia.

292 *wulukili salaka*: = 'sacrifice (*salaka*) of one (*wa*) thousand (*kili/kèlèn*).'

293 Arabic?

- 300 They said *wulukili-kil-kili-kili*.
 It was called *wakili*,
 Called *wuluki*.
Wa kèlèn, wulu ki.
 So, that is what they said, “Fèningama’s *wulukili* sacrifice.”
- 305 He put everything together in a good way.
 The market...
 The market was full-full-full-full!,
 Just like the market now gets full [in Macenta] on Thursdays.
 They assembled everyone together.
- 310 They stopped the market and everyone laid their hands on the sacrifice.
 They put their hands on the market,
 And made the sacrifice.
 Ah, they made the sacrifice when they put their hands on the sacrifice,
 The sacrifice.
- 315 That is what they called...
 They said, “To get it from God and gave it to us.”
 That is why they say, “Aye, he made a sacrifice called *wulukili*.”
 They said that the *wulukili* that was made with the sacrifice!
 That is what is called, “Fèningama’s *wulukili* sacrifice.”
- 320 It is wrong to say that he made one-one of each.
 The market *masa* assembled everyone,
 And laid their hands on the market,
 And made it a sacrifice.
 They offered it to the *moe* people.
- 325 That is the meaning of the *wulukili* sacrifice.
 That is what it was about.

[Fèningama executes one of his sons for violating a law]

- His son.
 His son they talk about...
 His son who violated the law.
- 330 His nineteen sons.
 His son who violated the law.
 The law that he made, to say,
 “Oh, if something happens this way...”
 Now, when we were at Lasana Chèwulèn’s funeral like that,
- 335 If anyone did [violated] this [law],
 This is the penalty that you will pay...
 If you do not [pay the penalty] you will die because of the law.

310 Everyone stretched their hands in the direction of the sacrifice. Those closest to the sacrifice put their hands on the sacrifice. People put hands over shoulders etc.

321 ‘market *masa*’: The man who organized and ran the market. The speaker seems to be saying that the market was surrounded so that everyone would witness the ceremony.

His son violated the law and he [Fèningama] killed him.
 That is what happened.
Djobba: Can you remember that son's name?
 340 Mammadi: I-I can't remember that son's name.
Djobba: Can you remember the law that was made?
Mammadi: What!
 There is not a law like that on the earth.
 Fèningama said,
 He said,
 345 Anything that he said...
 [He said,] "This can't happen.
 If you do it,
 If you break it,
 I will kill you.
 350 If - if you...
 If you violate the law,
 I will kill you."
 Loma...
 The Loma made that as the law of the *doo*.
Djobba: What was that law?
 355 Mammadi: They made a law and said that anyone who broke it would be killed.
 They made a law and said that no one should violate it.
 Even in this town here,
 The chief only jails the people who break the law.
 They won't put you in jail if you don't violate the law, right?
 360 If they make laws that say, "Don't do this,"
 They catch you and put you in jail if you break it.

[Fèningama's *wulukili* sacrifice]

Djobba: Eh, this *wulukili* sacrifice is *wa kèlèn* (one thousand), right?
Mammadi: It is *wa kèlèn*.
Djobba: Alright. Did he set everything one-by-one?
Mammadi: He got everything and gave them to the *masa* one-by-one,
 So he would lay his hands on it.
 365 He said, "The *wulukili* sacrifice..."
Djobba: So, he did not set down one thousand?
Mammadi: No, he did not get one thousand of everything.
Djobba: He just collected some items and said that they were *wulukili*?
Mammadi: There!
 Eh, *wa kèlèn*.
 When he counted one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten,
 370 He said...

354 *doo*: = initiation society.

367 'There!': French, *voilà*.

He said, "That is *wuluki*."
Wa kèlèn was called *wulukili*,
 Eh, in the African language.
 In our own name,
 375 In the discussion.
 To say *wulukili*,
 He made the market ground his *wulukili* sacrifice.
 That is what I know about that.

[Fèningama's brother Kònsaba]

Djobba: What about the history of Kònsaba.
Mammadi: Kònsaba and Fèningama separated in Jèmu,
 380 Jèmu.
 Aan.
 They separated in Jèmu.
 The first son was Kònsaba.
 The one next to him was Fèningama.
 385 Fèningama,
 Fèningama went to Koinya.
 Eh-èh-èh - Kònsaba,
 Kònsaba went to,
 He remained in Gbè.
 390 He went...
 He - he went to Jolaningbè.
 He went to Mau.
 He went all the way down to the end of that [river?] until he reached the ocean.
 Kònsaba.
 395 Kònsaba stayed on this side.
 He is older than all of the other Jomani.
 He was the first son.
Djobba: Did he and Fèningama have the same father?
Mammadi: Fèningama?
 They had the same father,
 400 But they did not have the same mother.
 They had the same father,
 But the first son was...
 He was the first one born before him-him-him [Fèningama].
 They did not have the same mother,
 405 But they had the same father.
 He [Kònsaba] was the first one who was born.
 His next one was Fèningama - Fèningama - Fèningama.

391 Jolaningbè: 'white (*gbè*) trader (*jolan/jula*).'

393-409 'No, Kònsaba': Speaker acknowledged a mistake. Kònsaba stayed on this side (e.g. Gbè), and Fèningama was the one who went down to the ocean as some other oral traditions claim (Ch. 8).

Kònsaba...

Djobba: What does Kònsaba mean? What does Kònsaba mean?

Mammadi: Kònsaba?

Djobba: Uhum.

410 Mammadi: In the African language,

Djobba: Uhum.

Eh, oh, he was Malaka.

Malaka.

He left the land of Malaka and came.

[Fèningama, the son of Fakoli's daughter Dama]

Djobba: And how did Fèningama get his name?

Mammadi: You mean Fèningama?

Djobba: What does it mean? How did he get it?

415 Mammadi: Do you mean, how did he get it?

Djobba: Yes, Fèningama.

Mammadi: I am coming to that.

When they said, "You should select a *kundi*,

You should select a *kundi*."

The person who selected the *kundi* was-was-was, Fakoli.

420 Fakoli's sister from the same mother was-was-was,

Eh-èh - Fèningama ['s mother].

Eh, this woman born Fèningama.

He came from her,

And they [the Kromah] were the ones who raised Fèningama.

425 Their sister's child...

Their sister's child was Fèningama.

Djobba: What does the name mean?

Mammadi: That is what I am saying now, Fakoli.

Djobba: Fakoli's sister... What was the name of the daughter who born
Fèningama? What was her name?

Mammadi: Eh-èh, I don't know her name.

Oh! Dama, Dama, Dama, Dama, Dama.

430 Her name was Dama.

Djobba: Hun.

Mammadi: Ahan.

[Zo Misa and the *doo*]

Djobba: Okay, what about Zo Misa. How did Zo Misa get the name was given to

420 'sister' (*badèn muso*): 'mother's girl child.'

429 Fakoli is a praise name for the Kromah in Konya, so it is difficult to tell if Mammadi Kènè implied if this Fakoli was an earlier or later Kromah. He was probably an earlier Fakoli, given that the references to Dama are themselves early (Ch. 7). The speaker also said Dèma for Dama (l. 485).

him?

Mammadi: Zo Misa, Zo Misa-ba?

Djobba: Uhun.

Mammadi: Zo Misa was a *zo*.

He was-was, èh-èh-èh-èh...

435 He cut people's backs like in the *doo*,
Like what the Loma and Kpelle and the...
Eh-èh-èh,

[Like] the way they fix their *doo*.

They go in the *doo* to mark their backs and fix their *doo*.

440 When human beings violate the *doo*...
They will kill you if you violate the *doo*.

[Slavery and peace]

Tim: Was there any slavery at that time?

Djobba: Was there any slavery at that time?

Mammadi: Aah!

Djobba: Was there any slavery among themselves?

Mammadi: Ah, the clans that we have talked about did not have slavery.
There was not any war at that time.

[Fèningama fights and replaces Fakoli as chief]

445 War came after that.
They prepared for war and then went and fought each other.
That is what happened everywhere down here.
If you...

If you see Fèningama,
450 You will see that he captured this country by fighting wars.
Nobody could challenge him.
They said, "This is our *masa*."
Eh, if this is chief said, "Hun, you sit here."

You would sit there.
455 You would sit there.
You would sit there.
The young Jomani [Fèningama]...
That is how the country passed from Fakoli to Fèningama.
[Fakoli said,] "You are the one who should feed me now..

460 You are my sister's son.
You are the one who should feed me now.
I am not working any more.
You should bring the proceeds to me if you wage war.

440 'When human beings violate the [law of the] *doo*': In part, to reveal the secret?

- You should bring the proceeds to me if you wage war.
 465 You can't...
 One thing that you can't claim is anything that you see which has an owner,
 That belongs to someone else.
 This is a serious matter.
 It is serious.
- 470 This is very serious.
 We are the ones who can settle the case.
 You can't judge that.
 We give everything else to you.
Djobba: Who gave the goods to who?
Mammadi: Eh, Fèningama, èh, this, èh, Fakoli.
- 475 Fakoli was the one who passed the goods to Fèningama.
 [He was] the ancestor of the Kromah...
Djobba: Un?
Mammadi: [He was] the ancestor of the Kromah...
 Ahan.
Djobba: You said that their sister's son was Fèningama, right?
Mammadi: The one who was the sister's son was...
- 480 He [Fakoli] reared Fèningama.
Djobba: Where did he rear him? Wasn't he [Fèningama] his [Fakoli's] child?
Mammadi: He was not his child.
 Ha!
 His mother...
 His sister's child...
- 485 Dèma Kromah's child was Fakoli.
Djobba: Fakoli's daughter was Dama Kromah?
Mammadi: Aan!
Djobba: She was his daughter?
Mammadi: She was his daughter.
 She was his daughter.
 Fakoli,
- 490 Fakoli's sister?
 His mother's child...
 His mother's sister...
 Her child was Fèningama.
Djobba: His sister.
Mammadi: His own child.
Djobba: His sister?

466 No looting!
 475 The speaker made a mistake. Foningama passed the goods to Fakoli.
 485 Djobba used the word *badènmuso* or 'mother's girl child' or 'daughter' in his following question. The speaker said that Dèma or Dama was Fakoli's sister and daughter at different places.
 487 'child': *dènmuso*.
 490-493 This exchange was a little confusing during the interview.

495 Mammadi: His sister's child.
 Their sister's child who became very unruly.
 He [Fakoli] trained him [Fèningama] like his child.
 [He said,] "Is this not my grandchild."
 I am the one who is training him.

500 I will do everything that I am able to do.
 My *masaya*...
 I will give everything to him first.
 [Fakoli said to Fèningama,] "You travel around the *jamana*.
 That is the story about Fèningama.

505 His-his-his uncles were the Kromah.
 His mother...
 His mother -
 His sister's child was-was Fèningama!
 He [Fakoli] is the one who raised Fèningama.

510 He gave him the *masaya*.
 He gave him the quiver and the arrows.
 He [Fakoli] then took the land and put it in his [Fèningama] care.
 He [Fèningama] could do anything he wanted to do.
 When he [Fèningama] went and fought,

515 He [Fakoli] would collect the proceeds.
Djobba: He gave some to Fakoli?
Mammadi: When he brought everything,
 He would place it in front of Fakoli.
 Fakoli would then take his share.
Djobba: But he [Fèningama] was the *masa*?
Mammadi: The *masaya* was with him.

520 The *masaya* was with him.
 That is what Fèningama was doing.
 Ahan!
 But Fakoli was the one who gave it [the chieftaincy] to him.
 Fakoli's sister...

[Zo Misa's background and involvement with *nyana* and *kòma*]

Djobba: What was Zo Misa's group?

525 Mammadi: Zo Misa,
 Zo Misa's group is not known.

495 Foningama's sister's child.
 511 'the quiver and arrows': a cliché for a warrior and chieftaincy.
 512 'He then took the land and put it in his care': Literally, 'he took the name of the land and gave it to him.'
 516-517 Fèningama showed that he respected Fakoli [the Kromah] and that he was "under" Fakoli by bringing all of the booty to Fakoli. Yet, Foningama had most of the physical power and was the chief.
 525 In Djobba's previous question, he said *si* for 'group.'

He changed and became Kpelle.
 Kpelle, èh-èh...
 That is what Zo Misa was.
 530 Eh, he-they...
 The one that they call Bama, Bama...
 Zo Misa Kòma was a Bama.
 Zo Misa Kòma was making medicine when he fixed his own thing:
 The *nyana* business,
 535 *Kòma* business.
 He was involved in everything that people did,
 Eh-èh-èh, because he was stubborn.

[Zo Misa, Fèningama and the founding of Misadu]

Djobba: What kind of people were in Misadu itself?
Mammadi: In Misadu?
Djobba: Uhum.
Mammadi: I am saying that the person who established the town was
 Fèningama.
Djobba: All of them were Maniya.
 540 Mammadi: They were all Maniya.
 He was Maniya.
 There were only a few Mènya people.
 It was Mènya.
 There were no other people there except for Zo Misa Kòma, and he was a Bama.
Djobba: How was it? Where there any Maniya names with Zo Musa?
 545 Mammadi: In Zo Misa's name?
Djobba: Yes, were the Maniya there. What kind of name was Zo Misa?
Mammadi: Oh, he was the citizen of the land.
Djobba: He asked which Maniya came first and settled with Zo Misa.
Mammadi: [Did he] ask who brought Zo Misa or who drove him?
Djobba: No, no, who brought... Who brought him?
Mammadi: He-he went to establish the town there.
 In fact,
 550 He was not in the town of Misadu itself.
 It was not where the town is presently located.
 He was by Nyanwulèni creek.
 He settled by the creek.
 If you cross the creek,
 555 You will cross the Jòn [Dion] [creek] and...

531 Bama is a shortened form of the clan name Bambgana (Conrad 1984:45,51). The Bama are equivalent to the Kanè, Dole and Sumaworo in parts of Upper Guinea.

533 'medicine' (*basi*): here and elsewhere.

546 'citizen': *duulèn*.

- Eh, he used to catch crabfish.
 He used to catch fish in this area.
 He was living in the valley.
 Fèningama came.
 560 Fèningama, Folomo Dole, Koyan Masuma [Dole],
 They came together and established Misadu.
 Misadu's founding...
 He [Zo Misa] used to...
 Misa used to come from somewhere and cross...
 565 He used to cross the river.

[Zo Misa's destructive *saafê*]

- He came with his *saafê*.
 That *saafê*, èh-èh-èh-èh...
 The children, èh-èh-èh-èh...
 Chickens, èh-èh-èh-èh...
 570 Sheep, goats...
 It [the *saafê*] came and swallowed them.
 It would even swallow babies if you forgot them.

[Kènè ancestor destroys Zo Misa's *saafê*]

- They said, "Ha! This is not good for us.
 We have to find a way to protect Misadu."
 575 That is why they called our ancestor.
 He went and did the work.
 The *saafê* burst,
 And the *saafê*'s power was destroyed.

[Zo Misa prepares to leave Misadu]

- Then he [Zo Misa] got a gourd,
 580 A gourd - a gourd - a gourd...
 They usually put liquor in it during the early times.
 He then brought it down.
 He took part of the Nyanwulèni creek,
 Part of Jòn creek....
Djobba: Those names that you called. How was it? Were there any slaves?
 585 Mammadi: There were no slaves at that time.

556 'crabfish': the Maniyakā word is *kibafaa*.

560 Koyan Wasama: = Masama Dole (l. 26, 202).

581 'liquor:' a cliché for a non-Muslim activity.

584 Jòn: Dion.

[Zo Misa the zo]

Djobba: He asked, “What did Zo Misa do for a job?”

Mammadi: He made medicine.

He used to pick medicine.

Djobba: He did not do anything else except make medicine?

Mammadi: He did *zo* work.

[Fèningama the noble]

Djobba: What about Fèningama? What was his job?

Mammadi: Fèningama was a noble.

590 Fèningama was a noble.

Fakoli was a...

Fakoli was a very strong man.

His sister’s child was...

His sister’s child was Fèningama.

595 He was not a slave.

Fakoli was not a slave.

Fèningama was not a slave.

Eh, Folomo Dole was not a slave.

[The Kènè ancestor, Fèningama’s *moi*]

Djobba: How did the Kènè come to know Fèningama?

Mammadi: [They came] to know him well because his *moi* was a Kènè.

[Fèningama’s death]

Djobba: What happened to Fèningama? Did he die or get lost? What happened to him?

600 Mammadi: Ka! Fèningama?

Djobba: Yes.

Mammadi: He died.

Djobba: Where?

Mammadi: Misadu.

Djobba: Where is his dead body buried?

Mammadi: Ha, I don’t know the area.

[WOMEN WARRIORS]

Djobba: Have you ever heard of a woman who became a *masa* in the Manding history? Have you ever heard of that?

589 ‘noble’: *horon*.

Mammadi: Eh-èh, there?
Djobba: Anywhere.
 605 Mammadi: Aah, to make a woman a *masa*, to make a woman a *masa*...
 That only happened in Sierra Leone.
Djobba: That did not happen in Guinea?
Mammadi: I did not see that...

* * *

[ANCIENT MISADU: II]
 [Fèningama and Folomo Dole]

Djobba: How did Fèningama get to Misadu? Did he come and make friends with
 the people, or did he come and fight? How did he come?
Mammadi: I said that his host was this person,
 The real-real person who...
 640 Fèningama, Folomo Dole, and Koyan Masama,
 Were the ones who uprooted the stumps of Misadu.
 Fèningama, èh, the Kromah...
 These Kromah here...
 The Kromah's child was Fèningama.

[White person in Misadu]

Djobba: Do you know about any white man who went to Misadu during our
 grandfather's time?
 645 Mammadi: I heard that some white people came from America... [END FIRST
 SESSION]

[July 23, 1992: completing the interview]

[The Jomani elephant taboo]

Djobba: We want to know which people have an elephant taboo. Who has the
 elephant taboo?
Mammadi: Eh, the people who have the elephant taboo are the...
 Ah, they talk...
 The *jamana* they are talking about is, èh, Gbè,
 Gbè *jamana*.
 650 The Jomanu in Gbè,

604 Questions like the one that Djobba asked relate to my quest to see if the Maniyaka had any memory of the Portuguese accounts about a woman named Macarico or Mabete who led an army from the interior region of Mandi (or Konya-Mani) to the coast (Ch. 8). None of the informants recalled a woman who resembled the one in the oral histories that the Portuguese collected.

645 'white people': perhaps a reference to the Americo-Liberian traveler Benjamin Anderson (1870/1971; 1912/1971).

- Are separated from Fèningama.
 The Jomanu in Gbè,
 Their taboo is the elephant.
 They can't eat elephant.
- 655 They are the Jomanu.
 All of you are Jomani.
 But it is...
 They are [from] the first child [Kònsaba].
 He is the first.
- 660 They were the ones who were born before Fèningama.
 Fèningama left when they came to establish Misadu.
 They started to go to Gbè.
 Their taboo is the elephant.
 That is, èh-èh-èh-èh...
- 665 What is this thing's name?
 That is Gbèsoba,
 Gbè *jamana*,
 To go to Balala.
 The Jomanu from there to Tuba.
- 670 Tuba, Tuba *jamana*.
 The Jomani there,
 They have the elephant taboo.
 From there to Julagbèninò,
 The Jomanu,
- 675 Their taboo is the elephant.
 From Julagbèninò to -
 Eh-èh - Gèlè,
 Their taboo is the elephant.
 From Gèlè to Jafoba,
- 680 The taboo is the elephant,
 For the Jomanu.
Djobba: Why do they have an elephant taboo?
Mammadi: The reason why they have an elephant taboo...
 That came from...
 That came from...
- 685 The real source,
 I don't know.
 I don't know.

[Fèningama gets his leopard taboo from the Kromah]

Fèningama, his taboo was leopard.
 Leopard.

677 Gèlè: probably Gbè.

679 Jafoba: or, Mano.

- 690 But, he did not get his taboo just like that.
 He got it from his uncles who were the Kromah.
 This Bakari Kromah here...
 This Bakari Kromah here,
 His grandfather,
 695 Was the one who had a leopard taboo.
 His sister's child was Fèningama.
 Fèningama was...
 The Jomanu in this country...
 The Jomanu in this country,
 700 Got their leopard taboo from their uncles.
 His sister's child...
 The reason why we have our taboo now...
 We say that this is our taboo...
 [The Kromah said,] "You [Jomani] came,
 705 And you got such-and such taboo [leopard] from us...
 That is how their taboo came...

* * *

[MOIDU TENE KROMA AND THE KONO]

- Djobba: Do you know anything about the Kònò people?
Mammadi: A-haaan.
 The Kodè were in Misadu.
 The Kònò were in Misadu,
 But a war was fought and all the Kònò were driven from -
 Beyla,
 Misadu - the town of Misadu.
 750 The Kònò were the ones who were in that *jamana*.
 But, when the war was fought,
 They were driven away.
 The Kònò were pushed, and they came to Kònòkòlò.
 Excuse, Kònòkòlò here.
 755 The Kònò stayed there and started to come towards Kwadu here.
 They stayed there and then crossed the river to Liberia.
 That is what I know about the Kònò.
Djobba: Who were the first people in Misadu? Misadu. Were they... Who
 established that town?
Mammadi: Eh, they were not...
 The town...
 760 They were the very first ones there.

692 Bakari Kromah: Speaking of Fata Bakari Kromah, who was also the *kabila kundi* of the Kromah there in Macenta.

694 'his grandfather': probably a reference to Fakoli.

Misadu was established after that.
Djobba: I do not understand yet. Was there a town that they [Kònò?] left from
before the Manding went to Misadu?
Mammadi: A-haaa.
The Kònò were the ones who were there.
Eh, when the Kònò were there,
765 Eh-èh-èh-èh, [in] Misadu,
They were driven away when a war came.
The Kònò...
They [the Manding] came and pushed them [Kònò] all the way to this *jamana*.
They pushed them all the way down to Kwadu here.
Djobba: Who fought them?
770 Mammadi: The Mènya.
Ha, the Mènya.
Djobba: But you don't know the *masa* who came?
Mammadi: Hè-ah!
The *masa* who chased them here?
Djobba: [Who chased them] here from Misadu.
Mammadi: They left Misadu and came here.
775 Eh, I don't know his name.
Fèningama became the *masa*.
[He] became the *masa* then [after they left].
He settled there.
Djobba: But he did not drive them?
Mammadi: He did not drive them away.
780 They had already been driven away before he came.
He did not drive them away.
He did not drive them away.
Djobba: Ha, where did they go after they left Kwadu?
Mammadi: They went down to Liberia.
Eh, I did not hear that they were,
785 Eh-èh, town, èh...
[They went] to Sefadu where diamonds are dug.
Those Kònò are the ones in that area,
Sefadu.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.19

TÈNU KAMA KAMARA

Place and dates of interview: Macenta, Guinea, 2 and 4 July 1992

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek and Djobba K. Kamara, with Boakai Yamah

Context of interview: Djobba Kamara introduced me to Tènu Kamã Kamara. Tènu Kamã is from Womadu, and is the chief of all the Kamara in southeast Guinea west of the Fon-Going Mountains in Buse, Konokòlò, Koligblama, Waziama, Douama, Koadu and Gboni.¹ Tènu Kamã was a strong man, perhaps in his early-sixties, at the time of the interview, and seemed willing to explain anything that we asked (Figure 20). He narrated his testimony forcefully, and did not hesitate in very many places unlike many others who were interviewed. We interviewed him two separate times because we started the first interview so late in the first afternoon (about 5:30 p.m). We sat in Djobba Kamara's small living room on both occasions. The only other persons present besides Tènu Kamã, Djobba, myself and Boakai Yamah were Tènu Kamã's grandson Soli (l. 592) and Djobba's wife Watta Sanoe who occasionally passed by to go into another room. Djobba's living quarters were attached to other rooms in the same building, and it was easy for people in the other room to hear Tènu Kamã talk if they wished to do so. Tènu Kamã seemed to be unhindered when he spoke. Though a Muslim, he seemed to be more involved in traditional Maniyaka culture than most of the other people who were interviewed. After the interview, he showed us the horses tail, sword and *saafè* that he

¹Djobba Kamara, personal communication, May 2002; see l. 562; App. 7.16, l. 228-30.

inherited when he became chief.

Transcribed by: Boakai Yamah, with Ansumana Cissé and Amara Cissé (Monrovia, 1992)

Translated by: Boakai Yamah, with Ansumana Cissé and Amara Cissé (Monrovia, 1992)

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek & Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1993) - transcript/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Monrovia, 1995) - tape/translation

Special note of thanks: Boakai Yama, Ansumana Cissé and Amara Cissé are to be especially thanked for completing the transcript and the first draft of this translation in Monrovia in November and December of 1992. They did this work during the height of the NPFL's attack on Monrovia that started on October 15. I flew with my family to Côte d'Ivoire five days after "Operation Octopus" began, and returned two and one-half months later. I arrived to find that Boakai and these men had completed this interview and had started to work on others.

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[ANCIENT MISADU: I] [Foningama and Fakoli's daughter's medicine pots]

- Tènu Kamã: Today,
I am talking with Djobba Kamara,
And the white man who came.
I am going to explain the story about our ancestor,
5 Foningamãba,
To my *badèn* Djobba Kamara.
Foningama,
Was a son of Fakoli's daughter.
Fakoli,
10 He lived in Mande.
He sired two daughters there.
One of his daughters was named Maligbè Dama.
The other was named Kawa Dama.
Our ancestor Jomangulu,
15 Asked for one of his daughters,
So they gave one of them to him.
God made that possible.
That he gave her to him.
She never had a child.
20 The child that she born was *kòlòti*.
They gave the other one [daughter] to him.
She also did not born a child.
The child she had was *kòlòti*.
The two girls had two big pots.
25 One was the dying pot of one of the girls,
And the other was the dying pot of the other girl.
God made it possible one night...

5 Foningamaba: 'big Foningama' or 'important Foningama.'

12 Maligbè (Moligbè): = 'white/bright (*gbè*) Mali.'

13 Vase Kamara (App. 7.6) for stories about Makula Dama Soba Kromah. Kawa: = 'rock.'

14 Jomangulu: = 'short (*kulu*) Joma.' This can also be said Joma Kulu, but the Maniyaka often soften their /k's/ and change /k/ to /ŋ/. Another example where this consonant shift works is with Tumãningèmè (Tumani Kèmè) and Foningama (Foni Kama).

20 *kòlòti*: powerful medicine associated with sorcery.

24 'two big pots': *dā-ba fila si*.

- God sent a metal chain down and placed it,
Around the neck of the pots.
- 30 Those pots...
At dawn,
Fakoli said,
“You my daughters,
Tie a rope on a pot,
35 And pull on it [the rope].
The pot will belong to the persons who can get the pots on their side.
The pot that they had was wonderful.
Ha! It [the pot] became *dawali*.
They were not dye pots any more.
- 40 They were medicine pots.
The women tied a rope around them.
The men tied a rope around them.
After they tied that [the ropes] around them,
It [the rope] cut,
45 And [the pots] fell on the men’s side.
That is how the men came to own the pot.
That was the pot that Fakoli had.
Foningama became a strong person,
Because of that pot.

[Leopard and elephant taboos]

- 50 Our ancestor’s name was Jomangulu.
Our ancestor...
Our taboo was the elephant,
But Fakoli himself,
He had a leopard taboo.
- 55 His taboo was a leopard.

28 ‘metal chain’: *jòlòkò*. Assistants said that this metal chain was perhaps one-half inches in diameter, big enough to pull a car.

29 ‘pots’: *dawulu*.

36 ‘persons’: The competition was between men and women, not between the two daughters (see I. 30-34).

37 ‘wonderful’ (*mòlimafinba*): ‘big (*ba*) wonder (*mòlimafin*).’ They were amazed that God sent these pots from above.

38 *dawali*: = ‘sorcery’ or ‘occult.’ *Dawali* derives from the Bamanakā word *dabali*. One assistant said that the pots themselves became *dawali*. The *dawali* was the power associated with the medicine, pots and ropes etc. The speaker began by talking about two pots, but ended up only talking about one.

40 ‘medicine (*jò*) pot (*da*).’ *Jò* probably = ‘ritual object/statue/idol,’ but one assistant disagreed.

41 ‘rope’ (*jusufala*): = rope made from palm branches that are commonly used to make fishing nets etc.

52-53 ‘elephant’ (*sama*): Many other traditions also claim that the Kamara who migrated from Mali to Mau and Gbè had an ‘elephant’ *tana*, and that the Foningama who went to Musadu switched his taboo from elephant to leopard (Ch. 7).

- He told Foningama,
 “Your mother,
 Who gave birth to you,
 Has died.
- 60 You never saw your mother.
 Your father is also dead.
 Your father’s children,
 Are,
 Kònsaba,
- 65 And Fangolono.
 You [Foningama],
 Are younger.
 You should stay with us until you get older.”
 He stayed in the care of his brother.
- 70 They were his family,
 And they fed him for some time.
 Fakoli’s children trained him.
 He became an adult.
 He became an adult.
- 75 During that time,
 They sacrificed a cow.
 They told him, “Go to your father’s so they can give your share [of the cow] to
 you.”
 He went there.
 The people of Kònsaba and Bala said,
- 80 “Your taboo is leopard,
 And our taboo is elephant.
 Go to the place where you got your taboo to receive your share.”
 Kònsaba’s people’s portion,
 Became the chest.
- 85 [Kònsaba said], “Our portion is the chest.
 But if you see that we have the thigh...”
 He [Foningama] cried and went to Fakoli.
 Fakoli said, “Calm down.
 That is nothing.
- 90 My small portion is the thigh.
 Here, take it.”
 Foningama’s descendant [said], “The thigh that you see with us,

68 The Kromah raised Foningama.

69 ‘his brother’: = Fakoli.

79 Kònsaba: = Foningama’s older brother (l. 64), and Balaka (Barala) were related to Kònsaba.

82 Taboos or social-economic-political relationships were sometimes more important than biological links formed through clan membership as in this instance.

91 The Foningama-Kamara now get the Kromah thigh.

93 Kamè: Kromah or a lineage of the Kromah associated with Tumāningèmè (Tumani Kèmè).

Came from our Kamè ancestor,
Fakoli.

[MANE HISTORY]
[Sumawolo, Foningama and Fakoli's medicine]

- 95 As that was taking place,
In Mane...
Eh, Sumawolo Kanè,
Fought and conquered Mande.
He performed many powerful deeds.
- 100 At the same time,
The Masale ancestor Sunyata,
Took power.
My ancestor Foningama,
Became his first "Prime Minister."
- 105 His grandfather Fakoli had given all of his followers to him [Foningama].
He fixed a medicine shirt and gave it to him.
He fixed a hawk-hat,
And placed it on his head.
[Then he said], "That is how I am going to leave you."
- 110 His grandfather [Fakoli] gave all of his *dawali* to him.
He said, "That is how I am going to leave you."

[Sunyata challenges Foningama with a bow and arrow]

- Then, Sunya[ta] began to fight.
He said to ancestor Foningama, "I want you to help me fight."
Ancestor Foningama said, "My hand is under it."
- 115 I will help you fight."
He said, "You said that I must help you fight.
Let us go and do it."
They went.
An unfinished hoe that a blacksmith made,
- 120 Was placed on a cotton tree.
He [Sunyata] said to Foningama, "If you can fight with me,
Then hit it."
He [Foningama] shot the arrow from his bow,
And hit the iron.
- 125 His arrow passed through the hoe head and stuck into the tree.
Sunyata then placed seven unfinished hoes together,
And put them on the cotton tree.

96 Mane: Mande, or the Manden.

106 'medicine (*basiya*) shirt (*fani*).'

107 'hawk (*gbengeni*) hat (*fula*):' or 'hat shaped like a hawk.' This hat may have been a mask.

Then he said, "Faan."
His arrow passed,
130 Through the seven hoe heads,
And stuck into the tree.
The arrow then went all the way through the cotton tree.
He said, "If God agrees, if you, Foningama,
Do not misuse yourself,
135 Then God may give you power.

[Foningama becomes a threat to Sunyata]

While that was going on,
Foningama succeeded when he went to the warfront.
He was gaining power.
When he was becoming powerful,
140 They went to Sunyata and said,
"Ah, the small Jomani who you encouraged,
Is becoming powerful.
When he becomes powerful tomorrow,
He will turn against you.
145 You better do something."

[Old woman warns Foningama to flee]

There was one old lady present.
She went and told Foningama.
[She said], "May God make the earth better for you,
Where you are now.
150 May God make you successful on earth.
May God make you successful on earth.
But you better leave because a conspiracy is being formed,
Against you.
You should go hide.
155 They are after you,
Because you are becoming too powerful."

[Foningama flees from Sibi through a hole and his brother Kamanjan praises him]

After that happened,
Foningama left.
He went,
160 He went to Sibi.
In the valley of Sibi,

134 'do not misuse yourself': = act wisely. Sunjata considered Foningama a threat.

There was a road.
 He had to escape,
 And leave that place.
 165 He went to the top of the hill before the people could see him,
 So people couldn't follow him.
 Then he went there and stood up,
 And performed three amazing acts.
 After doing three amazing things,
 170 God opened the earth,
 Under him.
 Foningama,
 He went down the hole.
 His *badèn* went and saw him.
 175 He asked, "Who is that?
 Is that Foningama?"
 He praised him.
 That is the place where they called him,
 Kamājan.
 180 [He said], "Kamā's *jèli*,
 Small Kamā,
 Kamā of the valley,
 Small Kamā.
 That is what happened,
 185 In Sibi valley,
 Because of his power.
 God gave him that respect.

[ANCIENT MISADU: II]
 [Foningama travels to Jèmu]

He left,
 He went to Jèmu.
 190 He went and settled in Jèmu.
 He sired some children there.
 Those children,
 Who were there...
 While that was going on,
 195 They came and cut sand.
 They said that he should get up,
 And go to where the sun sets.
 He rose,

180 Kama's *jèli*: a *funé* (l. 1400-1408).

[Brothers conspire against Foningama in Gbèsoba]

- And went to Gbèsoba.
200 He met his brothers from the same mother.
He said, "I have come to God and come to the Messenger and come to you my
brothers.
I have come to settle with you,
So we can be doing the same thing.
Perhaps God will give us power."
205 He stayed there,
And they conspired [against him].
After they conspired against him,
They dug a hole,
That was three men deep.
210 They dug a big hole,
And placed a cow skin over the hole.
That is why we Jomandi,
Do not sit down quickly,
When we are offered a seat.
215 The Jomani have not rushed to sit down when offered a seat,
Since that day.
His *jèli* who was with him,
Said,
"Father, don't sit down yet.
220 Let me go check it.
They have put many things in the hole."
The *jèli* pressed his hand on the stool,
And the stool fell into the hole.
They covered the hole.
225 They placed two of the stool's legs at the edge of the hole,
And placed the other two legs over the hole [on the skin].
When he went and pushed it [the stool], it fell into the hole.
Foningama pulled his sword from his sheath,
And rushed towards them.
230 His *jèli* said,
"Stop!"
Calm down Foningama!
This is not the end,
Of the world.

206 'they': Kònsaba.

208 'three men' (*kèlu sawa*): = 'three (*sawa*) men (*kè*) [plural] (*lu*).⁷ Boakai Yamah said that he saw the Maninka dig a well in the town of Baro near Kankan that was *kèlu kèlèn* or 'one man' deep. They measured the man from his feet to the length of his outstretched arm (about eight feet). In other words, Tènu Kamā Kamara was saying that this hole was nearly twenty-five feet deep.

217 'His *jèli*': presumably, a Masare (l. 976).

235 **Let's go to a new place,
To the *jamana* of Gbè.**

[Foningama and his *jèli* go to Mau]

**The Baayo people,
Went that day,
And the Mau people went for them.**
240 **Those people of Bala went.**
We call them,
The 'owners of the gun.'
They live in Kodowali.
The Jomani in Kodowali,
245 They come from Gbèsoba.
He left that place.

[Foningama begins journey to Misadu]

The diviners did some checking for him.
[They said], "The place you are going is a town,
By a big river,
250 Where the sun sets.
God will give you peace when you reach there."
He left.
He got up and went.

[The founding of Misadu]

There were three citizens in Misadu,
255 And three strangers.
That is what happened in Misadu.
Tumāningèmè, Flemo Dole, Sani Sayon,
They were in Misadu.
They founded Misadu,
260 When they went to Misadu.
That was a fishing place.
The *mori* who are talked about...
I have mentioned their names.
They owned someone [Misa] who went fishing there.
265 He dried the fish that he [caught] and took them back to the top of the mountain
[where the others lived].

242 'owners of the gun' (*mòfa-tilu*): 'owner (*ti*) [plural] (*lu*) of the gun (*mòfa*).² Also 'warriors.'

243 Kodowali: = Côte d'Ivoire.

245 Gbèsoba: = 'big (*ba*) town (*so*) of Gbè.'

254 'citizens' (*duulèn*): 'people of the ground/land.'

[They said], “Ah,
 We don’t get fresh fish,
 And our own person is the one who is killing the fish.
 We have to move closer to that place.”
 270 They settled there,
 After they moved closer to that place.
 That is the place,
 They we call Misadu.

[Foningama arrives in Misadu]

Ancestor Foningama came.
 275 He came and settled there.
 Who became his host?
 It was Fèmo Dole.
 Fèmo Dole took him,
 And presented him,
 280 To Tumāningèmè.
 Tumāningèmè said, “He is my nephew.
 He is the son of Va Nyafè’s daughter.
 Let us place our hand under him.”
 They discussed the matter with Sani Sayon.
 285 He also put his ten fingers out.
 He said, “I agree to it.”
 That is how they were sitting.

[Zo Misa Kòma’s *saafè*]

Zo Misa Kòma came.
 After that happened,
 290 Sèlefu [Sefu] Talhata came.
 Zo Misa Kòma became,
 A zo.
 He had a *saafè*,
 That was taking everything,
 295 In the town.
 It swallowed calves when it saw them.
 It swallowed sheep when it saw them.

268 ‘killing the fish’ (*jè fa la*): ‘killing (*fa*) the (*la*) fish (*jè*).’ This is a common expression in Liberian English that means ‘catch the fish.’

283 ‘Let us place our hand under him’: = ‘Let us accept him.’

290 Sèlifu: Sefu later on. Also, Sirleaf or Sherif. See Fisher (1971:ix-x) and Seku Sirleaf’s story (App. 5.1). For more on this story, see l. 383ff.

292 zo: probably from *soma*. A medical practitioner who deals with the occult.

293 See Appendix M for a discussion of *saafèlu*.

It swallowed goats when it saw them.
 It even [swallowed] small child who could walk,
 300 When it reached them.
 He [Zo Misa] made our people frustrated.

[Layi Kanè summoned to confront Zo Misa's *saafè*]

He [Tumāningèmè] took the matter to his neighbors [the Jomani].
 He said, "You, Foningama, you have to help us with this."
 Then he,
 305 Called Fila Layi [Kanè].
 [He said], "You Fila Layi,
 Come help me.
 There is a *zo* man who has settled with us.
 He spoils everything that is in front of us and behind us,
 310 And we are not able to drive him away.
 Come help us."
 When Fila Layi came,
 He went to Misadu.

[Fila Layi shows his power to an arrogant Foningama]

He greeted them.
 315 Ancestor Foningama did not get up and shake his hand.
 Fila Layi showed some of his power.
 He directed a pigeon,
 To land on Foningama's hat,
 That had all the *dawali*.
 320 It snatched the hat and carried it away into the sky.
 Everyone yelled and said, "Eh, Foningama, you have suffered!"
 This is what his neighbors said:
 Sani Sayon, Tumāningèmè and Fèmo Dole.
 They said, "What you did was not right.
 325 You called the *mori*,
 But you never greeted him."
 He [Foningama] asked the *mori* to forgive him.
 God agreed,
 Because of the way that he asked for forgiveness.

301 'frustrated' (*lògbènenà*): Assistants originally translated *lògbènenà* - 'embarrass.' They said, however, that embarrassment involved an element of shame, and that *lògbènenà* does not imply shame.

305 Layi: derives from *alhaji* (*haji*), the title given to someone who goes on a pilgrimage (*haji*) to Mecca. Many are given this name without ever having gone to Mecca. The point of the story is that this Fila Layi was a powerful Muslim *mori* and a Kanè (l. 744).

317 'pigeon' (*bibi*): This is the same type of hat that Fakoli is said to have given the earlier Foningama of the Sunjata era (l. 1069). Tènu Kamā telescoped both Foningama's into one person.

330 Then the *moi* directed the pigeon to bring his hat back down to him.

[Fila Layi destroys Zo Misa's *saafèlè*]

He [Foningama] said, "I am sure that you will be able to do the work,
That I called you for.

I called you to do something about Zo Misa Kòma.

Zo Misa Kòma is destroying everything in front of us and behind us.

335 Since you have come we want you to do something about that."

Fila Layi wrote a *sèvèli* [talisman],

And tied it around the neck of a frog.

Zo Misa Kòma's *saafè* took it,

And the *saafè* exploded.

340 Then Zo Misa Kòma,

Pieced the *saafè* back together,

And put it in that horn.

[Zo Misa takes some water from Koniya and moves to Zota]

He took some water from Nèkòlò creek.

He took some water from Jòn creek.

345 He took some water from Jakòli creek.

He took some water from Manyamoi well.

He took that water,

To the top of a mountain.

That is the mountain,

350 That is called Kanikoke.

He called the secret name of that place in Kpelle.

The names are there,

But we have more work to do.

Ah, that is what he did.

355 Zo Misa Kòma went down and settled.

The name of that place is Zota.

337 Other accounts say that Zo Musa's *saafè* 'swallowed' the frog with the 'writing' that was tied to its neck.

341 'pieced': Zo Musa apparently reconstructed the horn. 'Put it in that horn': Zo Musa put whatever came out of the horn (*lisimu?*) back into the horn.

346 Manyamoi: or Mayāmoi, Foningama's daughter in other accounts.

351 'secret name of the place': Another alleged secret was the name of Zo Musa's *saafè* (Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8).

352 'The names are there': Tènu Kamā may or may not have known these names.

353 'but we have more work to do': Tènu Kamā was avoiding or bypassing the subject, and wanted to continue on with the next episode.

355 'went down': talking about the southern direction that Zo Musa traveled.

356 Zota: = 'zo's town (*ta*)' in Kpelle. Zo Musa's founding or settling in Zota is widely attested in Maniyaka, Konor and Kpelle accounts (Ch. 6).

[The Sware bless Foningama's *wulukèlin* sacrifice]

Before peace came to ancestor Foningama,
Ancestor Foningama made a *wulukèlin* sacrifice.
They said that he should make a *wulukèlin* sacrifice if he wanted to become great.
360 He brought one hundred of everything,
And put them together.
That was the *wulukèlin* sacrifice.
When he made the *wulukèlin* sacrifice...
He gave the sacrifice that he made,
365 To the Sware.
The Sware came to eat our sacrifice,
In Misadu.

[The Sware still waiting in Nyusumodu for Foningama's banana seeds]

After doing that,
They ate a banana.
370 They said, "What kind of banana is this?
Does it have seeds?"
[Foningama replied], "You people can settle here [for a while].
When the banana produced seeds,
We will give you some of the seeds,
375 So you can take them,
And grow them in your own land.
After that happens,
You will have bananas."
They are still waiting for those banana seeds up to today.
380 They are in Nyusumodu.
They never left.
That is what we are talking about.

358 *wulukèlin*: derives from *wakèlèn*, and means 'one (*wuli/wa*) thousand (*ki/kèlèn*).

365 Sware: This explains how and when the Sware came to Musadu or Konya-Mani. Foningama gave the *wulukèlin* sacrifice to the Sware so they could help him become great. Tènu Kamā did not specifically say that the Sware were the ones who initially told Foningama to make a *wulukèlin* sacrifice.

368-382 Foningama apparently did not want the Sware, the people who helped him become powerful, to leave, so he tempted them to stay by telling them to wait for banana seeds. Many other oral sources give different versions of the same story (Ch. 7).

380 Nyusumodu: = Nionsamoridu.

382 *Namasa* refers to the common *Musa sapientum*, the sweet dwarf banana or *Musa nana* that does not bear seeds, or the *Musa schweinfurthii* or "wild" seed-bearing banana (Dalziel 1937:467-470; Burkill 1997:224-233). One wonders if this story says anything about the history of bananas. The clerics were not surprised that Foningama gave them bananas, but that he gave them bananas that bore seeds. Does this mean that the wild banana was introduced after the common sweet banana and dwarf banana? If the original emphasis was not on the wild banana but on bananas in general, might the sudden introduction of this crop be a cliché that marks the beginning of a wet period? Bananas need at least "40"-100" of rain per year to grow (Church 1980:116).

[Foningama's daughter Saweka marries Sefu Talata and has three sons]

- This Friday evening,
In the presence of people today...
- 385 Foningama stayed there,
And sired Sa Yala, Sa Wusu, Sa Weka.
That Sa Weka,
Sefu Talata said,
That they,
- 390 Should give Sa Weka to him when he came.
Ancestor [Foningama] said, "I have already given her to Fèmo Dole.
Fèmo Dole said, "You, Foningama, are more concerned about your name.
If you agree,
Then give your child to him."
- 395 They gave the child to Sefu Talata.
She gave birth to Sefu Yala.
She gave birth to Sefu Misa.
She gave birth to Sefu Asumana.
Those are the Sefu who we talk about today,
- 400 As the Dole Kamāna Sefu.
Those Sefu,
Some are in, èh - Misadu,
They are in Beyla,
Ha, èh-èh - they are in the Koniya area.
The Sefu who were there,
- 405 Were the first child [Jala] of Sefu Talata.
The one next to him,
Was Sefu Misa,
And they [his descendants] are in Konokòlò.
The last one,
- 410 Was Sefu Asumana,
And they are in Bakèdu.
He [Talata] took the war gun,
And gave it to the [Sefu Yala] people of Beyla.
He said, "You people should take after your uncles [the Kamara]."
- 415 He took the ratan basket and gave it to Sefu Misa,
To make some business,
And work for the home.

386 Sa-yala: This is Fanyala (l. 443). Sa was apparently the mother of these sons.

396 Yala: = Jala.

398 Asumana: Also Ansu, Ansumana, Usman and Uthman.

400 Dole seems to have been added to his name because the promised suitor of Sa Weka, Fèmoò Dole, allowed Sefu Talata to marry her.

404-425 The descendants of Sefu Jala should be the warriors; the descendants of Sefu Misa should be the traders; and the descendants of Usman should be the clerics. Seku Sirleaf (App. 5.1) assigned identical roles for Jala, Misa and Asumana.

He took the Koran and gave it to his youngest child.
 He was Sefu Asumana.
 420 He said, "You should be the one among my children who is educated.
 Whenever one fails,
 The other should support him."
 The educated [Sefu] were the people of Bakèdu.
 After doing that,
 425 When he had done that...

[Fila Layi takes care of Talata's children]

As he [Talata] was leaving,
 He called Fila Layi.
 "You Fila Layi,
 430 I am going to Tumutu.
 I am leaving my children in your care,
 Whether dead or alive,
 Until Judgment Day.
 Please take care of them."
 435 This is the reason why you see that,
 The descendants of Fila Layi,
 And the Sefu,
 Take care of each other,
 And don't offend each other.
 440 They do *mori* work for each other.
 That is where this started from.

[FONINGAMA'S DESCENDANTS]
 [Fanyala Jomani's descendants]

When they told ancestor Foningama...
 Saya [Sa Yala] is the one called Fanyala.
 He was the first son.
 445 Sawusu,
 Was,
 The one who went,
 Eh - down from Beyla,
 And went and settled in Kwanga,
 450 And went to Ziama land.
 The Loma and Mèniya are both there.
 That is all about that.
 Those Fanya left Misadu,
 And went down,

420 'educated:' as a noted Muslim or *mori*, to learn how to speak and read Arabic.

430 Tumutu: = Timbuktu.

- 455 To the ocean.
That is where the descendants of Fanya live.
I have told you about the right hand and the left hand.
That Fanya,
His first son,
460 He was Fandawulèn.
Fandawulèn,
His descendants are in Simanu.
He sired Sonuwusu,
And Sonuwusu sired,
The people of San - Sanveledu.
465 He sired Fama.
He sired Sòna Kamara.
He sired Sòna Sima.
He sired Jalakèn.
The people of Jalakèn are in Damano.
470 Ha, the descendants of Fama,
Are in Jomanu.
Sòna Kamã, Sòna Sima,
His descendants are in Malodala.
They are in,
475 Eh - Lanzedu and Jimèdu.
All of them are in Sanangoloni.
That is where they are.
That is the location of our ancestor's,
Grave.
480 The place where our ancestor settled is called Jalakèndu.
That is close to Fònu and Koodu.
That is where he settled.
Ancestor Fanyala,
His body was also never found.

[Foningama's death and Fanyala's greed]

- 485 When the time came for Foningama to die,
He got up.
He put some money around his neck,

457 'I have told you about the right hand and the left hand': = 'I have explained everything' or 'covered the major points.'

460 Fandawulèn: = 'red/bright (*wulèn*). Fanda may have been his mother's name.

464 Sanveledu: Saulèn (l. 2567).

465-468 Sonu Wusu's sons.

471 Jomanu (Jomandu): Near Macenta.

473 Malodala: Mònòda (l. 2581).

476 Sanangoloni: An important market town in Sumandu, southeast of Damaro.

And placed some gold around his neck.
 He rose and went north.
 490 Fanya followed him.
 After he went a ways he turned around and saw Fanya behind him.
 After he went further ahead he looked back and saw Fanya.
 He said [to himself], "Wait, if Fanyala is following me for my money,
 I will soon know.
 495 If he is following me because he loves me as his father,
 I will soon know."
 He went to a cool place and sat down.
 He gathered the gold and money,
 That was around his neck,
 500 And placed them on the path.
 Then he went,
 And hid.
 When Fanyala reached there...
 When ancestor Fanyala reached there,
 505 He took the gold and money.
 He turned away from his father,
 And came back.
 He [Foningama] said, "This child was following me for money.
 He was not following me because he loved me as his father."
 510 He went up to Kankan,
 To the Falamani river,
 And our ancestor died.
 His body was never found.
 He went to that river.
 515 No Jomani can eat fish from that river.
 The Falamani river,
 That is in Kankan,
 Our ancestor Foningama,
 Ended his activities at Falamani river.
 520 That is that...

* * *

[ANCIENT MISADU: III]
 [Fila Layi Kanè tells Foningama to sacrifice a red deer]

715 The children of Foningama...

504-509 According to this story, Fanyala inherited Foningama's wealth and power, and emerged as his father's successor.

511-152 For similar accounts about Foningama's end, see Chapter 8.

- Fila Layi said that a red deer should be sacrificed.
 He used a red deer,
 To make his sacrifice.
 He said, “Foningama’s sacrifice that I talked about...
 720 It will be accepted through it.
 Up to today,
 No Jomani can kill a red deer.
 The reason why,
 It is hard to get a red deer,
 725 Because of Foningama’s sacrifice.
 That was the one,
 They put their hands on,
 And made as a sacrifice for Foningama.
 God will give power to Foningama in any *jamana* where the red deer cries.
 730 When they released the red deer,
 It went to the place where the sun sets,
 And went all the way to the ocean.
 So, you will see the descendants of Foningama ruling,
 Wherever you see the red deer.
 735 If any of them have changed,
 Then those are the changes.
 The ones that were not changed,
 Will never be changed.
 That is my talk this evening.
 740 That is it.

[Fakoli’s daughters]

- Djobba: You said that two of the children became *kòlòti*.
Tènu Kamã: Uum.
Djobba: How did that happen.
Tènu Kamã: The two children who became *kòlòti*,
 They were the daughters of Fakoli.
 The *kiba* business came from that.
 745 They gave the two girls,
 To Jomagulu.
 The way that they said, “Jomani, Jomani...”
 They think...

[Joma submits to the “good person”]

They say that our ancestor [Joma] put a rope around his neck,

716 ‘red deer’ (*kòwulèn*): This is a small red deer that grows only a little bigger than a goat. For more about this story, see l. 1016-1040.

744 *kiba*: = only the most powerful women have this kind of sorcery.

- 750 And then he went and presented himself to the good person.
 The good person had not died during his time.
 They say, that is why they call us “Jomani.”
 That is not how the Jomani name came.
 Our ancestor who put a rope around his neck...
 755 He was called “Lawalu who submitted.”
 Jomã *dèn* (Joma child).
 Our ancestor’s name was Joma.
 They called him “Jomagulu” (short Joma).
 The *jèli* called him “Jomajan” (tall Joma).
 760 That is how the Jomani business came about - Jomã *dèn*.
 That is where it came from.

[Foningama and Foni Yama]

- The Jomani business...
 [It is] just like they say “Foningama.”
 The way that the Foningama business came about,
 765 The Fula joke about it.
 They say that our ancestor went into a granary,
 That was used to store food.
 Our ancestor was born at the time that people used to beat *foni*.
 Then they said, “Aye, Foni Yama.”
 770 That is the system that the Loma have.
 When a Loma person is born at a farm kitchen,
 They say “Kota.”
 They say “Zandewòni.”
 775 That is the Loma system.
 Our ancestor’s mother’s name was Foni Yama.
 Up to today,
 In our house,
 Those who were the people related to Foningama,
 780 Were the people of Bulò.
 Foni Yama who was there,
 They call the child she born - Foni Yama Juku.
 Foni Yama Juku’s child,

750 “good person”: this seems to be a reference to the Prophet Muhammed.

755 “Lawalu who repented”: *tube* Lawalu.

758-59 Joma was presumably short, but the *jèli* flattered him by saying that he was tall. People who were short and had other physical abnormalities were considered to have greater potential to become sorcerers (see Conrad 1992:155-162).

771 ‘farm kitchen’: *toda*.

772 *kota*: ‘farm kitchen’ (in Loma?). See line 1168.

774 *Zandewòni*: = ‘Sande (*zande*) bird (*wòni*).’ See line 1170.

776 Foni Yama: = ‘shell/husk (*yama*) [on the] *fonio*.’ See Blama Fofana’s song “Koni Yama” (App. 9.1).

Ma Muyan,
 785 Was born next to the field.
 That is how the Foni Yama business came about.
 But those who do not know say that they chased Foningama,
 And that he went into the granary in the land of Fula.
 That is a lie.

[Maligbè Dama, Kawa Dama, Foningama's medicine and "Jomaya"]

790 Fakoli's two daughters,
 They were *kiba*,
 And they detected Foningama's sign.
 They said that they should set a èh, pot,
 For him.
 795 They saw his sign before he was born.
 They said,
 That one child would be born,
 From the descendants of Fakoli.
 His name would fill the earth and the sky,
 800 And it would not finish - hum!
 Until the earth was torn apart like a piece of cloth.
 The first child who was born,
 Was Maligbè Dama.
 The child she born...
 805 When they said it was *kòlòti*...
 When she was pregnant,
 When she delivered,
 She delivered a piece of clay.
 They saw clay in her stomach.
 810 It was not a child.
 The clay was the *dawali*,
 Which ancestor Foningama had.
 Her [younger] sister,
 Was also given to...
 815 The child that she born...
 A *saafè* came,
 From her stomach.
 Those two,
 They were ancestor Foningama's,
 820 *Dawali*.
 Before they gave her to Foni Yama...

793 'set a pot': = a pot used to make medicine.

795 'sign': = *missalu*.

799 'his name would fill the earth and sky': Everyone would come to know about him.

808 'piece of clay': = *mòòsòn*.

Before Foni Yama sired Foningama...
 After Foningama was born,
 He used to put the piece of clay,
 825 And the *saafê* in the pocket of his warrior's shirt that had been made.
 When he yelled at someone,
 A gun would fall from a person's hand if he was holding a gun.
 That is why the Jomani yell.
 That is the way that the Jomani shout.
 830 When our ancestor Joma beat his chest,
 It sounded like a drum beating.
 God gave power to the Jomani.
 They said,
 "Jomaya."
 835 That is how we got the Jomaya name.
 But people who are not informed,
 Mix the talk,
 And say something that is not true.
 Foningama's *dawali* came from Fakoli's two daughters:
 840 Maligbè Dama and Kawa Dama.
 Even when we used to take the *kòma*,
 When the person who used to take the *kòma* said,
 "Okay, group of young men,"
 Then the group would say, "Maligbè Dama and Kawa Dama."
 845 That is how that came about.
 Those [the clay and *saafê*] were the two things that stayed with Foningama.
 Then they got involved in the *kòma* business.
 After Foningama died, they put the things in the *kòma* pot.
 It became the powerful medicine for the *kòma*.
 850 When Foningama fought,
 No bullet could go through him,
 No knife could go through him,
 No *kòlòti* could defeat him.
 This was because of the clay,
 855 And the *saafê*,
 Which were born by both of his grandmothers.
 The two children who were born...
 His *dawali* was in those two children.
Djobba: What is *kiba*?
Tènu Kamā: *Kiba* is a woman who changes into a man.
 860 She does things that men do.
Djobba: But is she a complete woman?

831 'drum' (*tabule*): This kind of drum is used in some areas at mosques to call people to prayer.
 This or the *tabala* was also supposedly "the royal ceremonial drum, one of the insignia of Muslim
 kingship" (Niane 1980:89, n. 24).

834 Jomaya: = 'the act (*ya*) of Joma,' or 'acting like Joma.'

- Tènu Kamã: She is a complete woman,
 Who has become a big *zo*.
 When those *kiba*,
 Fakoli's daughter's,
 865 Set the rice on the fire,
 She would take the little pot and place it over her mother's pot.
 Maligbè Dama used to do that.
 Her mother's pot would not boil,
 But hers [Maligbè Dama's] would get done.
 870 Her *foni* would get cooked sooner,
 But her mother's would not come to a boil.
 She could take it from the fire,
 And set it down.
 That is why they called her *kiba*.
 875 This was also true with Maligbè Dama.
 When her mother set the soft rice on the fire,
 She would place her [own pot] on her mother's pot.
 Her mother's pot would be very cold,
 But her [pot] that was over her mother's would boil,
 880 And be ready.
 Her mother's [soft rice] would still not be done.
 She [Maligbè] gave that to her father.
 People were afraid of those two girls for that reason.
 One placed her [pot] and the other placed her [pot] [down?] and said they were
 going to die.
 885 Dye was never used in those pots because,
 They became medicine.
 Foningama's warrior shirt was put in that pot.
 Nothing could overpower Foningama because he had those two women,
 His hat,
 890 His shirt.
 He depended on the pot.
 All of the Jomani histories do not know this.
 Ancestor Foningama got all of his power from that [pot].
Djobba: Was the dye that they used in that pot real?
Tènu Kamã: The real dye that we used to have,
 895 Is what was put in the pot,
 To make cloth black.
 But they never had real dye.
 They set the empty pot...
 Things were put in the pot before daybreak,
 900 But no one knew.

886 'warrior shirt': = *lami*.

891 'pot': The pots and the *saafè* were the source of Foningama's sorcery, and were used to make the medicine for his shirt and hat.

They [Maligbè Dama and Kawa Dama] said, “This is my dye pot.”
 They put plenty *jò*,
 And many dangerous things in the pot.
Djobba: All of Foningama’s things were in that pot?
Tènu Kamā: All of Foningama’s things were in that pot.

[*Mòyan* and *kòma Kòma*]

- Djobba: What is *mòyòn*?
 905 Tènu Kamā: That is, èh - medicine,
 That hunters burn.
 It is many things.
 It is not a special medicine.
 Everyone has a different kind.
 910 When they put *mòyòn* in the fire,
 To work against an animal,
 The animal will come out [of the hole],
 When the smoke reaches it.
Djobba: What about *kòma komo*?
Tènu Kamā: *Kòma komo*?
 915 They used to make all kinds of medicine -
 Strong medicine,
 And it in the *kòma komo* basket.
 They say “*kòma komo*.”
 They tie the *kòma* head,
 920 And tie *fuu* on it,
 And then they dance with it.
 They only used to put the very-very strong medicine,
 In the *kòma komo*.
 Even some members of the *kòma*,
 925 Would die,
 If they touched it.
 People would even die,
 If the medicine was thrown up in the air.

[Foningama replaces his elephant taboo for Fakoli’s leopard taboo]

Djobba: You said that some people have the elephant taboo, while others have the

902 *jò*: Said to be an old term for ‘medicine.’

903 ‘dangerous things’ (*malama fèn*): = could be knives and guns etc.

914 *kòma komo*: *Kòma komo* is a basket made out of ratan or bamboo strips which is smeared with cow dung and then dried. Items related to the *kòma* are then placed in the basket. The basket is usually set in a special place in the room.

919 *kòma* ‘head’: perhaps a mask.

920 *fuu*: = a cream colored fiber made from a palm tree or passava tree which grows in the swamp.

- leopard taboo. How did the Jomani get those?
Tènu Kamã: The Kònsaba clan was...
- 930 All the Jomani used to have the elephant [taboo].
 Nothing is bigger than the Jomani.
 The Jomani is bigger than anything.
 You should not eat anything that is your size.
 People would say, "You are not supposed to eat anything that is your size."
- 935 Good.
 Our ancestor Foningama,
 Was a child of his ancestor [Fakoli],
 Who said, "I can't eat leopard."
 When he was growing up he [Foningama] also said, "I can't eat leopard."
- 940 He [Foningama] had appeared in dreams and when divination work was being
 done.
 His brother dreamed about him.
 Because they hated him they said,
 "You have rejected the elephant taboo.
 [You have] said that you can eat elephant,
- 945 But that you can't eat leopard.
 So, you are saying that we are not the same."
 They hated him for that reason.
 If Foningama had not been strong,
 He would have become nothing,
- 950 Because of that taboo business,
 Because of the leopard.
 The source of his power was the leopard.
 He would get all kinds of power when he dreamed about the leopard.
 When he belched on someone,
- 955 That person would immediately defecate.

[Fakoli, the source of Foningama's *dawili*]

Djobba: You said that Foningama was a *dawali* person. Who gave him that
dawali?

- Tènu Kamã: His ancestor Fakoli.
 That day,
 His mother - his grandmother who?
 Maligbè Dama, Kawa Dama, Fakoli...
- 960 One woman - two women,
 And his grandfather Fakoli.
 The three of them had *dawali*,
 And he [Foningama] grew up to become a young man.

935 'Good' (*bon*): French, here and elsewhere.

940 'divination work' (*duukòtò*): 'Cutting sand.'

954 'belched': symbolic of a leopard's growl or roar.

[Nafadima, Tabu Kamara, and Foningama's *jèli*]

Djobba: At one time you said that an old lady told Fakoli, I mean Foningama...

Tènu Kamā: Uum.

Djobba: What was the name of that old lady?

965 Tènu Kamā: That old lady,
Her name was Nafadima.

Nafadima was the one who said that.

Djobba: You also said that some of Foningama's brothers praised him when he
passed through the earth. What was the name of his brother?

Tènu Kamā: He was the one who they call Tabu Kamara.

Sibi Kamara went there now to the land of Sibi.

970 When they say Kamara,
They will ask whether it was Tabu Kamara or Sibi Kamara.
Since he praised him, he became Tabu Kamara.
We became the Sibi Kamara [Foningama].

Djobba: You also said that when they finished plotting [against Foningama], that
his *jèli* went and touched the seat to see if it was good. What was that *jèli*'s
name?

Tènu Kamā: The name of that *jèli* was...

975 I have to think about his name,
But they were Masale.
They were Masale *jèli*.
He followed Foningama wherever he went.

[Misa and the founding of Misadu]

Djobba: You said that Foningama and his followers lived on the top of a
mountain, and that someone used to go fishing for them, dry the fish, and
bring it back. Who was catching the fish?

Tènu Kamā: Sani Sayon, Tumāningèmè, Fèmo Dole,

980 They were on top of the mountain,
And their slave's name,
It was Misa.

He would go fishing,
Dry the fish,

985 And take the dry fish to them.
They said, "Eh, he is fishing at the Jòn river.
We have to go follow the young man.
We own the fish and we own that person.
He catches the fish.

966 Nafadima: = Fatumata.

971 Tabu Kamara: a *funé* (l. 1400-1408).

974 *jèli*: Vase Kamala said that Foningama's *jèli* in this part of the story was a Kuyateh (App.

- 990 We don't see him and we don't see the fish when it is fresh.
 We only see the dry fish.
 We have to move closer."
Djobba: Who was catching the fish?
Tènu Kamã: Misa.
 Sani Sayon, Fèmo Dole, Tumãningèmè,
 995 They were living on top of the mountain.
 They were the ones who owned Misa,
 And Misa was the one they sent.
 It was a long distance from where they lived to the river.
 The fish were caught in the Dion.
 1000 He caught the fish and dried them on a èh - *ghalan*,
 That he built,
 He then loaded the dried fish on his head,
 And took them to his slave fathers.
 After he caught the fish they would say,
 1005 "We don't see fresh fish.
 We only see dried fish.
 We have to go closer."
 Then they went there and settled.
 They called the place where they dry the fish "Misadu."
 1010 It was named after Misa.
 They did not give the town a new name but said,
 "We have gone to Misa's land."
 Everyone called the place Misadu.
 Since the place was blessed,
 1015 The three people were also blessed.
 The place called Misadu became a town.

[The division in Misadu]

- The division was done at Misadu.
 Everyone was divided there.
 Whoever now...
 1020 It was related,
 To Foningama's descendants.
 That is where the division was done.
 Some people went to where the sun rises,
 Some people went to there the sun sets.
 1025 Some people went to the right,
 And some people went to the left.

992 End of Tape 1, Side A.

1001 *ghalan*: = A grill-like apparatus made out of strips of wood. Fire to make smoke was placed under this grill. Metal racks have largely replaced wood in present times.

1012 Misadu: 'Misa's land.' For more on the division, see lines 715-740.

When his advice came to say...
He left a message,
When he realized that he was about to go [die].

[Laws, Foningama's sons executed, the Fofana sacrifice, the Fofana-Kamara *lasili*]

- 1030 The sixteen children that have been talked about...
Some laws were passed,
That no one should cause trouble.
You should not cause trouble with your mouth.
You should not cause trouble with your hands.
- 1035 You should not fight in the market.
Twelve laws were counted.
They said, "Those are the laws.
If anybody breaks any of the laws,
They will be killed."
- 1040 That is how Foningama's children got involved in the laws.
Four sons of my ancestor Foningama broke the law.
Each time one broke it [a law],
He was killed.
As time passed,
- 1045 One of his sons broke a law.
He was caught and taken to the killing ground.
They and Kòlòsia Fofana met.
He [Fofana] asked, "What happened Jomani?
What is going to happen?"
- 1050 They said, "We are going to kill the person who broke the law."
He brought one cow and said,
"This is a substitution for the Jomani family.
You people should not kill him."
He went to ancestor Foningama and said,
- 1055 "I accept the law that you passed, but these are my Jomani."
If all [your sons] are left [killed] in war...
Eh-èh, because of the law, will that be right?
He said, "Here is one cow.
Here is the substitution."
- 1060 They took my ancestor from the human killing field,

1046 'killing ground' (*faa gbelela*): See also line 1060. There is an "execution ground" behind the mosque in Musadu where many people are said to have been killed in the past (Baba Dole 1992, App. 7.30; Fig. 57).

1047 For other stories of how a cow was substituted so Foningama's other sons would not be killed, see Chapter 8.

1055 'You are my Jomani': Did a relationship between the Fofana and Jomani already exist, perhaps a joking relationship (*sanangu*)? Nonetheless, the willingness of the Fofana to help the Jomani in this instance seems to have established a more serious link between the two clans.

1059 'substitution': = *fèlekulu*.

And cut the cow's neck.
 If you see the Jomani,
 When the law business is mentioned,
 They always say, "Bring the substitute.
 1065 Bring the substitute."
 That is how that began.
 That is why we and the Fofana are *lasisi*.
Djobba: Did the Fofana provide the cow?
Tènu Kamã: The Fofana were the ones who provided the cow.

[Foniṅgama's daughter Manyamoi marries Fila Layi]

Djobba: You said that they called Fila Layi to come and destroy the *saafè*. What
 was Fila Layi's clan?
Tènu Kamã: He was a Kanè.
 1070 The woman who gave him his name was Fila Layi, Mori Layi.
 Ancestor Foniṅgama gave the woman Manyamoi to him as the kola nut.
 The Kanè child that Manyamoi born,
 They are the Manyamoi clan.
 The descendants of Manyamoi are here.
 1075 The people of Gbaladu came from them.
 The descendants of Fakani came from them.
 The descendants of Manyamoi came from them.
 They are the same Kanè.

[Foniṅgama's *wulukèlin* sacrifice]

Djobba: How was the *wulukèlin* sacrifice made?
Tènu Kamã: The *wulukèlin* sacrifice included,
 1080 Everything that they had in the land at the time:
 Cows, sheep, goats, horses, food -
 All things that a human could think of.
 They said that he should sacrifice one hundred of each thing.
 The Sware ancestor was called to do that.
 1085 They gave the sacrifice to him.
 When you see our sacrifice...
 When the Sware offend us,
 We can't do something too bad to them.

1061 Was the speaker referring to the decapitation of Foniṅgama's sons?

1071 Manyamoi: = also Mayamòò. See lines 2655-2665.

1088 Tènu Kamã added that the Kamara cannot treat the Sware badly because their ancestor accepted and blessed Foniṅgama's sacrifice. When a cleric or sorcerer blesses a sacrifice that makes the giver of the sacrifice more powerful, people associate the way that the said person uses his or her newfound power with the cleric who made it possible for the individual to attain that extra power. If the recipient of the power employs his or her newfound power to benefit society, the people will praise the person and cleric. If the power is used to create havoc, the populace will castigate the individual and the

- They accepted ancestor Foningama's sacrifice.
 1090 We still enjoy the blessing that they offered.
Djobba: So, *wulukèlin* means one hundred of each thing?
Tènu Kamā: They intended to offer one hundred of each item during the *wulukèlin* sacrifice.
 "Wakèlèn" (one thousand) was called "*wukilī*" in our old language.

[Foningama's sixteen children]

- Djobba: How many children did Foningama have?
Tènu Kamā: Foningama had sixteen sons.
Djobba: Can you tell their names?
 1095 Tènu Kamā: No.
Djobba: But can you name a few?
Tènu Kamā: Yes.
 The clan of Kònsaba.
 The people of Bala.
 Eh, the people of Siyabadu.
 1100 The people in Kòsadu clan,
 Are the descendants of Fanyagbe.
 There are also the Fanya people.
 That is what I know about that.
 Most of them have died.
 1105 Most of them were not successful...

* * *

[ANCIENT MISADU: IV]
 [The Maniyaka, the Loma and secret societies]

- Djobba: You said that some of our ancestors from the same mother settled in some Loma towns. Are the Loma who you mentioned part of our brothers, or are they Maniya who went and settled there?
Tènu Kamā: The Maniya who went and settled became changed.
 It was the war that changed them,
 1130 Because the Loma and Maniya participated in the *do* business before.
 They changed because they benefitted from it.
 Some of them left and are at Bokeza.

cleric. Tènu Kamā seemed to be saying that even though Foningama or his descendants later used their power to harm their subjects, people should not treat the Sware poorly because of what the Kamara did.

1098 Bala: probably Barala.

1100 Fanyagba: = 'bright/light skinned (*gbè/gba*) Fanya.'

1130 Since the Maniyaka and Loma are now only respectively associated with *kòma* and *nyana*, the early Maniyaka may have been members of the *nyana* with the Loma. Some Maniyaka may have remained with the Loma and *nyana*, unlike many of their Maniyaka kinpeople who left the *nyana*.

Djobba: Did they accept the Maniya or the Loma?

Tènu Kamã: They accepted the Loma,

And they accepted the Maniya.

1135 When their children go into the *kènè*, the do it like the Maniya.

They are buried the same way that the Manding bury.

That is how it is done.

The way we were made [with *kòma*?],

They are more involved in the *doo* business [than the Maniya],

1140 But they are not as involved in the *doo* business as the Loma.

They can be *masa*,

But their *zo* people are not as strong.

[The laws of Misadu]

Djobba: Can you tell us some of the laws that they made in Misadu? To mention some things that they couldn't do, or some things that they could do.

Tènu Kamã: Twelve laws were made.

A person should not beat a woman on the farm.

1145 A person should not close a door and beat a woman.

A person should not use iron against someone.

A person should not use a gun against someone.

A person should not beat a pregnant women.

A person should not attack someone in the market.

1150 A person should not fight someone who was in a tree.

A person should not fight someone who was on a roof.

A person should not have sexual intercourse with a pregnant woman.

A person should not weaken a baby that was not his.

Ah, those were the laws that were made.

1155 You [also] should not call your sibling a bastard.

You should not talk about how your sibling was born.

If you talked about how your sibling was born,

[They] would take a knife and cut you.

A person should not say that.

1145 The speaker seems to be saying that if a woman was being beaten in a room where the door was closed, then no one would be able to enter and defend her. This law and some others (see below) seem to have tried to strengthened the position of women, babies and defenseless people.

1146 'use iron': Idea of prohibiting someone from chasing another person with a knife or cutlass etc.

1148 'A person should not beat a pregnant woman': Vase Kamala similarly said that one law stated that one could not make a baby die who was in the mother's womb (App. 7.6).

1150-1151 This law seems to suggest that a person should allow the person he was fighting to defend himself; throwing rocks or shooting at defenseless people in trees or on roofs would be an unfair advantage for the person standing on the ground.

1153 'A person should not weaken a baby that is not his': This maybe related to the Manding belief that a baby will get sick if his or her mother has sexual intercourse while the mother is still breast feeding.

- 1160 If a person fought his big brother to beat him,
Then he violated the law.
If a person attacked his father to beat him,
Then he violated the law. [...]

[Foningama and Foni Yama]

- Djobba: Please explain how the Foningama business came about.
Tènu Kamã: How did the Foningama business come about?
1165 Whenever a child was born in the old days...
The Loma still have that system today.
When a baby is born on the farm,
They call the child “Kota.”
When a baby is born when they are having *kènè*,
1170 They call the child “Zandewòni.”
That was the practice of the first people.
The child could be named after the place that it was born,
Until he/she got old and got an official name.
Foningama...
1175 His mother Foni Yama was born,
Where they beat the *foni*.
His mother was pregnant,
When they went to beat the *foni*.
His father’s granary was packed,
1180 When they went to beat the *foni*.
She began to have labor pains,
While they were beating the *foni*.
They stopped beating the *foni*,
When he was born and said,
1185 “Aye, Foni Yama has come.”
They added Foni Yama to Foningama.
His name is also Kamã,
But they said “Foni Yama” at the place where they were doing the *foni*
business.
They added his mother’s name.

[Zo Misa, the Kpelle, and early Koniya history]

Djobba: He (Tim) asked, “Who were the first Many who went to the land

1168 *kota*: = ‘farm kitchen.’ See line 772.
1170 *zandewòni*: see line 774.
1175 Foni Yama: = ‘foni chaffings (*yama*).’
1186 ‘They added Foni Yama to Foningama’: Foningama was first named Foni Yama Kamã. The speaker is implying that “yama” eventually fell out of use. *yama/nyama*: = the ‘dirt’ or ‘chaff’ from the *foni* seed (see App. G).

- of Koniya?”
- 1190 Tènu Kamã: In the land of Koniya?
 We were the ones.
 We were the ones in Koniya:
 The Sefu Talata clan,
 The Jomani clan.
- 1195 We were the same ones in Koniya.
 Goniya...
 Zo Misa Kòma said, “Goniya.”
 “Koniya” was named after them [the Kpelle].
 When Zo Misa Kòma was going he gave them...
- 1200 That is that.
 He named one area,
 Jewu.
 He named another area,
 Kanikoke.
- 1205 He talked about Goniya and named Goniya.
 All of those are Kpelle.
 I don’t know the meaning of them, but that is where they came from.
Djobba: Where did they come from?
Tènu Kamã: Misadu.
Djobba: No. Where did they come from before they reached Koniya?
Tènu Kamã: It was the same Misadu.
- 1210 When our ancestor came down,
 They and the people came down.
 Those were the ones.

[Zo Misa and the *kòma* society]

- Djobba: What does Zo Misa Kòma mean?
Tènu Kamã: He was a *zo*.
 He owned *kòma*.
- 1215 His name was Misa.
 They called him Zo Misa Kòma because that was the kind of work that he was
 involved in.
 They added his work to his name,
 Like the way you people talk about journalists.
 That was the meaning.

[Zo Misa’s medicine and his *saafè*]

- Djobba: What kind of job did Zo Misa Kòma do?
 1220 Tènu Kamã: He used to kill people with medicine.

1214 ‘he owned *kòma*’: According to the assistants, this meant that Zo Musa had the knowledge, power, medicine and accouterments associated with *kòma*, and that he was a member of the Kòma society.

Pregnant women...

He used to kill pregnant women,

By opening their stomachs and seeing the baby inside.

Those were the things that he used to do.

Djobba: Zo Musa...

1225 Tènu Kamã: Zo Misa used to cut the throat of young babies.

He used to cut their throats with his medicine.

Foningama saw that [and said,] "This person is not a good neighbor.

We must send him away,

But they can't compete with him because he has bad medicine.

1230 They can't compete with him in war."

That was when they called the *moe*.

The *moe* came.

They worked and ruined his *saafê*.

All of his *dawali* was in that one *saafê*.

Djobba: How did he make the *saafê*?

1235 Tènu Kamã: The *saafê*.

They made it from the horn,

That was on the sheep's head.

All kinds of medicine was used to make the *saafê*.

Djobba: Who made it?

Tènu Kamã: Zo Misa Kòma was the one who fixed it,

1240 Eh, and put it in the *saafê*.

That *saafê* used to walk like a person.

Djobba: He made the *saafê* himself?

Tènu Kamã: He was the one who fixed the *saafê* for himself.

Just like the way that people are born with *dawali*.

Ah, like the people who the white people call "scientists."

1245 They were African "scientists."

When they go to bed and imagine things,

It becomes be good for them when they do those things.

That was the kind of scientist that he was.

When he imagined evil things,

1250 He used to make medicine and then do them.

It was not possible for most other people to do that.

Those are special people.

Djobba: Who did Zo Misa work for?

Tènu Kamã: Zo Misa did not work for anybody.

He was Loma.

1255 Kpelle, Loma...

He was Kpelle,

But he had the most important things that the Loma had.

1234 The *dawali* in the *saafê* was the source of his power.

1244 'scientist': = *savanu*.

- He was the *kundi* of the *zo* people.
 He was his own clan [head],
 1260 He was his own *jamana* [chief].
Djobba: Did he do any other job beside *kôma* business? Did he do any other work?
Tènu Kamã: He did not do anything new.
 He was just killing people like that.
 He never did any kind of job.
 He killed any *masa* that he did not like.
 1265 All of the *zo* people were afraid of him.
 All of the *masa*'s in the land were afraid of him.
 No *zo* could make medicine and compete against him.
 They brought a special *moe* against him.
Djobba: Who caught fish for the people?
Tènu Kamã: Misa.
Djobba: Was that the same Misa?
 1270 Tènu Kamã: No, he was not the same one.

[Loma and Kpelle slaves]

Djobba: Was that a new one or a different one? Was there ever any slavery in Misadu?
Tènu Kamã: There was slavery.
Djobba: Who were the slaves?
Tènu Kamã: The Loma, the Kpelle,
 Were the slaves in our land.

[Foningama the warrior]

- Djobba: What was Foningama's job?
Tènu Kamã: War.
 1275 He was a war *masa*.
Djobba: How did he go to Misadu?
Tènu Kamã: He was a strong young man when we went.
 He went with his *jèli*.
Djobba: What was his *jèli*'s name?
Tènu Kamã: I don't remember his *jèli*'s name, but he was a Masale.
Djobba: Did he have a *mori* with him, or did he reach there before he called a *mori*?

1270 Tènu Kamã was saying that the Musa who founded Musadu and the Musa with the *saafê* were two different people. Most informants claim that they were the same person (Ch. 4).

[The three citizens and four strangers of Misadu]

- Tènu Kamã: When he entered, Zo Misa Kòma followed.
- 1280 Misadu,
There were three citizens and four strangers.
Tumãningèmè, Sani Sayon, Fèmo Dole,
They were the citizens there.
There was a fisherman who fished.
- 1285 It was that fisherman whose name was Misa.
He used to go and catch fish in the Dion river.
That slave,
God made it possible,
When he fished...
- 1290 [They said,] “The only fish that we see is dry fish.”
They got up and went closer.
They went and settled there.
Even when Fila Layi went and closed the mouth of the crocodile...
The crocodile used to come in the river.
- 1295 Crocodiles no longer caught people there.
The Dion river was full of crocodiles.
That is how they went to Misadu.
Foningama went there,
Zo Misa Kòma went and challenged Foningama’s activities at the entrance of
Foningama’s door.
- 1300 The work that he used to do to his people...
The *saafè* used to kill them.
While that was happening,
Sefu Talata came.
He joined them making them three persons.
- 1305 He came to do *moe* work.
He called Fila Layi.
That made them four persons.
That is how there became four.
There were three citizens of Misadu,
- 1310 And four strangers.
Those were the four strangers.
Misadu became great from that time on...

1279-1312 ‘he:’ Foningama. Here, in essence, is the way that the speaker divided the major eras of Musadu’s early history: 1) Musa the fisherman who found Musadu; 2) the entry of the next Manding immigrants or the ‘three citizens’ - Tumaningèmè, Sani Sayon and Fèmo Dole; 3) Foningama who came with his *jèli*; 4) Zo Musa the Kòma who started to cause trouble; 4) and Sefu Talata and Fila Layi Kanè who were summoned to make medicine and destroy Zo Musa’s *saafè*.

1293 ‘crocodile’: = *bama*.

1310 The four strangers in this schema were Foningama, Sefu Talata, Fila Layi Kanè and Zo Musa the Kòma.

* * *

[MISCELLANEOUS]
[*Funé* origins]

- Djobba: How did the *funé* business begin?
1400 Tènu Kamã: The *funé*,
They are Jomani.
They became *funé* when they praised us.
They said, “We are *nyamakala*.
We have become *funé*,
1405 But we are all from one man and one woman.
Djobba: Where did all of that take place? Which town or *jamana*?
Tènu Kamã: That happened in Sibi,
In the valley at Sibi.
That is where the *jèli* business came from.
Those are the Masale.
1410 They are our elder brothers.
Just like the way you and I are.
If you are a powerful person,
And your big brother Blama who is a chief,
Praises you,
1415 He will say, “I have become yours.”
That is the same we gave ourselves to the Buse people.
We said, “We have become your fighters,
And you have become the war chiefs.”
That is like if you like someone and you somehow give yourself to him.
1420 That is the way it is.
These are the kinds of things that are in the world.
It is time to eat.
Tim: Let him go eat. Today is July 4th [2nd], right? I am just testing this.
Djobba: This is the first question.
Tènu Kamã: Turn it [the tape recorder] off...

* * *

1400-1422 For other aspects of this *funé* origin story, see lines 134-187 and lines 968-973.
1402 ‘They’: The Tabu Kamara. ‘us’: Foningama, Kamãjan (l. 139-187, 964-973). The *funé* were Jomani.
1403 *nyamakala*: = ‘piece/handle (*kala*) of dirt (*nyama*).’ This could also be translated: ‘We have become a piece of dirt.’
1409 The Masale (Masare) or Keita are usually nobles, not *jèli*. The apparent claim that the Masale were *jèli* needs to be examined further.

[The coming of Islam]

Djobba: What about Islam?

Tènu Kamã: How did Islam come to our nation?

There were *mori* (Muslims) here.

2655 The family of Famoli and the Talawole,
Were *mori*.

The Mayã family from Misadu,
Were *mori*.

The Fawubala,
2660 Were *mori*.
The Mayan *mori* family,
Were living...

The people of Gbaladu...
Everyone settled there.

2665 That is where Kotugwèna is.
Those were the *moi* areas.
They were our *moi*.

The war of the Kònò people that was in this land,
The kind of work that they did,

2670 They put it in the sand.
They went and scattered sand in the swamp.
The Kònò went to Angle,
Because [the sand] became driver ants and drove them.
Moliya came from Misadu and went down.

2675 But what made it better understood,
Were the traders who went to different lands.
They brought Islam,
Besides the few *mori* who were here:

The Kanè, the Talawole, the Kòma [Koloma/Kromah], and the Cissé.

2680 They were the *moi* here.
The Fofana,

They were *moi* here.

The Kanè *jèli*,

They were *moi* here.

2685 We called them the Masale.

Those were the people who did the *moliya* for this land.
They were the *moi* we had in this land.

2655 Famoli: Fila Layi Kanè (l. 1069).

2657 'The Mayã family': The Kanè, who married Foningama's daughter Manyamoi or Mayãmoi (l. 1070-1077).

2684 'The Kanè *jèli*:' Kanèjilu.

[Islam and *kòma*]

- But the *moliya* was not very strong at that time.
They used to work for the war *masa*'s.
- 2690 To do *moliya* for them,
To make *nyāyini* for their wars.
They made protection and put it on the people,
Who joined the fighters.
They made protection and put it on the ones,
- 2695 Who were war chiefs.
They were not part of the *kòma* business.
Now, the Jomani,
And some of their nephews,
Were involved in the *kòma* business.
- 2700 They continued to change us little by little.
They stopped the drinking business,
And abolished the practice of making sacrifices to the medicine pot.
They condemned the *kòma*.
Before *moiya* (Islam) became popular...
- 2705 *Moiya* came to this our land...
It came down here from Misadu.

[CONCLUSION]

[The chief's of Fafini Kamā's line]

- Djobba: Here is a personal question. You know that you are a chief. How did you become a *masa*?
- Tènu Kamā: How did I become a *masa*?
This *masaya* is inherited.
The position of *masa* is in our house.
- 2710 I am the thirteenth *masa*.
Djobba: Who was the first?
Tènu Kamā: The first was our ancestor Fafinin Gamā.
His son Dòbò, he became *masa*.
Dòbò's son Bòngò Kamā, he became a *masa*.
Bòngò Kamā's son Kanya, he became a *masa*.
- 2715 Kanya Kamā, he became a *masa*.
His son Koegbili became a *masa*.
Konu Mavi, he became a *masa*.
Kanya Kèkula, he became a *masa*.
Maya, he became a *masa*.
- 2720 Maya Sengbe, he became a *masa*.
Jongbè Kamā, he became a *masa*.
Nyanle Kèkula, he became a *masa*.
Tènu Kamā, he became a *masa*.
Saa Koligbili became a *masa*.

2725 Makula Amara became a *masa*.
I Tènu Kamã,
I sit in this place...

* * *

[Saji, Fanyala, Foningama's sacrifice, Saji's wild-cat taboo]

All of the ancestors who have been mentioned were descendants of Foningama.
I am sitting in the place of those ancestors today.
When they set me down...
2790 I have some of the things that they gave me.
If you want me to go and get them,
I will go.
The sacrifice that Foningama made...
When he grew up,
2795 He gave a blessing to Fandawulèn.
He led the world.
He took the *masaya*,
And gave it to his young child,
Fanyala.
2800 He is our ancestor.
He ruled the land.
God made that *masaya*.
The blessing of that sacrifice,
Went to Gbangunò Saji.
2805 Gbangunò Saji boasted,
And said that the *wulukèlin* sacrifice that Foningama made,
That the blessing was for,
The people of Gbèyedu.
All of the Jomani rejected him,
2810 For that reason.
If you see that Samori defeated him, that was the reason.
None of his brothers from one mother supported him,
Even when he started the war.
2815 He said that the taboo of the Jomani was the wild-cat,
But his own taboo was the leopard.
That is what he told the Jomani,
And he boasted.
All of the Jomani came together.
2820 They said,

2790 'some of the things': The fly whisk and the *saafè*.

2810 Why? The blessing only went to a *mansa*? Was the nineteenth century warrior Saji Kamara not in the 'route' or lineage being blessed?

2815 'wild-cat' (*wolosan*): Bigger than a house cat but much smaller than a lion or leopard.

That he said,
 That the blessing of ancestor Foniṅgama,
 Had gone to him [Saji].
 That is why they turned against him.
 2825 They looked at each other and then laughed.
 He pointed the spear up in the air,
 Then thrust it into the ground.
 He said that Foniṅgama's sacrifice,
 Went to the house of Gbeyadu.
 2830 That is why you see that the Jomani clan rejected them.
 Aimami used *nyāyini* to defeat him.
 The *aimami*'s *nyāyini* worked on him because of what he said.
 [Saji said,] "Ah, the blessing of Foniṅgama's sacrifice came on me."
 When he [Foniṅgama] left,
 2835 [The blessing of] Foniṅgama's sacrifice went to our ancestors,
 Fanya and Semāfila.
 That Semāfila,
 I come from his route.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.20

MUSTAFA KROMAH

Place and date of interview: Macenta, Guinea, 5 July 1992

Context of interview: Mustafa Kromah was a well-known hunter-zo in Konya-Mani and eastern Buse who was probably in his late-fifties at the time of the interview. Mustafa lived in Mamolodu, but also spent time in Watafélédu where some of his family lived. Kromah received some of his medicine training in Gbè. Gbè is reputedly a renown medicine area, and is the place where Foningama's brother Kònsaba is said to have settled. I first met Mr. Kromah in Watafélédu in 1986 when his son, Majongbè Mohammed Chèjan, took me to Guinea. From Watafélédu, Mustafa took us to Musadu where we interviewed Yaya Dole.

I interviewed Mustafa Kromah in Macenta in 1992. Present were Djobba Kamara, his son Chèjan, Boakai Yamah and Mammadi Kanjan Kamara. Kromah confused some of the names and events in some stories, and seems to have tried to insert a couple of stories that he remembered from Yaya Dole's interview. Part of his interview thus seems to provide a good example of feedback; the way that details get forgotten, distorted, and placed out of context when transmitted from one speaker to the next. Nonetheless, Kromah did offer some valuable information that is unique from anything else that was said.

Translated into English by: Majongbè Mohammed Chèjan Kromah (Macenta, 1992)

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek and Majongbè Mohammed Kromah (Macenta, 1992)

Checked by: Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1992) - tape/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

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[God's greatness]

Mustafa: This is the story of Fèngama.
It is God who helps everyone in his work.
God created the sky and the earth,
And there is no one like him.

5 Fèngama.

[Fèngama's sons executed for breaking a law]

At that time that people were too serious about their laws.
Fèngama sired four sons.
The first of his four sons died,
Because he broke the law when the path was being cleared.
10 He broke the law when the path was being cleared.
The people said that he should be killed.
He was executed on the spot where the path was cleared.
The battle started after the path was cleared.
There was a lot of fighting - wu-wu-wu-wu-wu,
15 When the battle started,
He fought other Manding chiefs.

[Fèngama's *fadèn* fails to kill Fèngama]

There was a time when he did not trust anyone.
He decided to move to Misadu near one of his half-brothers.
He said, "I have come to settle near here."
20 At that time,
His [Fèngama's] wife was pregnant [for Fasona Bala].
His *fadèn*,
Dug a big hole in the house.
They said, "Ah, the big person [Fèngama] has come."
25 They assembled all the people of the town,
And lay a sheep skin,
Across the hole.
Everyone shouted, "Jomani man,
Come sit here!
30 Come sit here!
Come sit here!
Father, sit down here!
You are the man who will take care of the land!
Come sit here!"
35 He said, "Eh!
All the big people are sitting on the ground.
Should a boy like me sit down among you here on the sheep skin?
I should not sit down on this skin."
Someone had told him what was happening.
40 He started to put one of his feet on the skin.
When his foot began to go into the hole,
He jumped away.

6-12 Note the similarity between the story that Kromah told in these lines and one about the path that a Loma chief told in 1936 (App. 1.1).

18 half-brothers: Usually identified as Kònsaba.

- After he moved away from the hole,
He said,
“Aaaah,
45 You people, èh -
You people of Misadu,
Is this what you are doing?
You have plotted against me.
If I had fallen in the hole,
50 Then you would have done whatever you wished to do to me.
But I did not fall in the hole.
If one of you thinks that you can defeat me,
Then come get me.
Come chase me.”

[Fèngama wills his hat to his son]

- 55 He went,
To his pregnant wife,
And gave her the hat,
In her hand,
That he was wearing.
60 He said, “When this son becomes a man,
Let him wear this hat.
Let him wear this hat.
This is what I give to him as an inheritance.
The hat will protect him from anything.
65 He will not be defeated in battle.”

[Fèngama settles in Gbè and drives the Loma away]

- He left,
And walked a long time - wu-wu-wu-wu.
Then he met a *moi* man.
After talking with him,
70 He said, “Fèngama, if you want to settle somewhere,
And become successful in life,
And become successful in life,
You must walk a lot.
When you find a mountain,
75 When you find a mountain,
Where two rivers meet,
You should settle there.

48 Misadu: Vase Kamala said that this happened in Diemou (App. 7.6).

64 ‘The hat will protect him from anything’: The idea that no knife, bullet, arrow or spear could kill him. In Liberian English, this is called “gun-proof” or “knife-proof” etc.

- You should settle there.”
 He said, “Okay.”
- 80 He went and walked for a long time.
 At that time,
 The Loma were living in the land of Misadu.
 After he walked for a long time - wu-wu-wu-wu-wu,
 He decided to settle,
- 85 Where the Loma were living.
 The liar went to the Loma man whose name was N’Ze-Ze.
 N’Ze.
 N’Ze was the Loma man who was living there.
 They told him, “Ah!, are you living here?”
- 90 Fèngama has come for you.
 He will cut your heads off by tomorrow.”
 They all fled from the area and left him there.
 Whenever he went to a town,
 Nobody would be there.
- 95 When he did not find anyone at a town he would say,
 “Ha!
 Nobody is here.”
 The people would say, “They told us that you have come to kill.
 That is why everyone has run away.”
- 100 Then he said, “I want to settle here.
 There was a Loma man who said,
 “We did not say that you should not settle here,
 But you are a *masa* who kills people.
 If we let you settle here,
- 105 You will kill us.
 He said, “No, I am looking for a place to settle.”
 Then the Loma man said, “You may settle here.”
 Then he settled there,
 And became established.
- 110 The Loma man never got comfortable,
 So he left.
 That is why they name the mountain near where they were living,
 Gbè Siŋ-Siŋ.
 That is the mountain east of Gbè.

86 When asked if “N’Ze” was a Loma name, Valentin Vydrine wrote: “In the modern Looma, there are no prenasalized consonants, so N’Ze does not sound like a Looma name. But the prenasalized consonants can be reconstructed for the Proto-Loma; so, if the personage is reported to exist some two or three hundred years ago, he may be Looma” (personal communication, 1 July 1997).

90 Fèngama: Or, Kònsaba.

103 ‘chief who kills people’ (*masa mòò fa*): ‘chief (*masa*) [who] kills (*fa*) people (*mòò*).’

112 Gbè Siŋ-Siŋ: = ‘feet.’ They settled at the base or foot of the mountain in Gbè.

[Fèngama's four sons]

- 115 After spending some time there,
He rose,
He went back to see his *fadènlù*.
They plotted against him by trying to get him to put his foot into a hole.
He said, "Ah, what can I do now?"
- 120 He had already sired four sons.
Fasona Bala,
He was the first son.
Fasona Bala said, "Ah, we will not remain here."
He rose,
- 125 And came down on this side.
That is why the people of this region are called the Fasona.
They are descendants of Fasona Bala.
In this Gbana,
One of his sons,
- 130 Was Fawan.
He settled in an area where food was scarce.
In Gbana,
Only *fonio* was grown there.
There is not plenty of grass there.
- 135 That was the land of Gbana.
Fasona Bala,
The older brother,
Rose and came down to the land of Konokòlò.
I don't remember his clan,
- 140 But in the region of Konokòlò,
The Jomanu are his descendants.

[Kònsaba's descendants in Mau]

- Kònsaba said, "Hum! I am not going anywhere.
One can't run away from your father's home and go to other people's home."
He went up, èh -
- 145 He went up to Mau.
They are the descendants of Kònsaba.
They are called the Jomandi.
They lived in that region.

121 Fasona: = Fasu or Fèsu.

130 Fawan: Not a Manding name; perhaps Loma.

[Fèngama and the ‘white man’ in Misadu]

- Fèngama...
150 God, who is God?
Things are many.
People plotted against him everywhere.
Up to the time that your grandfather,
Eh-èh - the American, right?
155 You grandfather came and sat down.
The cotton tree that he sat under is still there.
He sat there.
He sat there.
After that,
160 Fèngama,
Fought in many places.
He fought in many lands.

[The Kònè-Fula relationship and the division]

- The people,
Said that they should gather,
165 So they could divide into clans.
During that meeting,
All the people sat in their own seats,
But the Fula man came late because he had spread sand on the ground.
Everyone went,
170 Leaving the Fula man.
He said, “Ah! Everyone has gone.
I will have to travel back alone.”
Then the Kònè man came.
[He asked,] “What happened?”
175 [He replied,] “Ah, we consulted our sand-cutter.
They said that everyone should go where the clans will be divided,
And all the people have gone ahead of us.
What will we do?”
“Let’s go together.”
180 “I will take you there.”
“What is your clan?”
He said, “I am a Kònè.”
He took care of the Fula man - fulululululu,
Until they reached the meeting site.

153 ‘grandfather’: probably Benjamin Anderson, the Americo-Liberian who walked from Monrovia to Musadu in 1868 and 1874.

155 ‘sat’ (sɪ): Originally translated ‘camped.’ Anderson did not write about this.

168 ‘spread sand on the ground’: The Fulbe man was a diviner was “cutting sand.”

185 When they reached,
 The division was over.
 They told the Kònè man,
 “You and the Fula are together because you took care of him.”
 That is why they say, “The Kònè and his Fula.
 190 The Kònè and his Fula.”
 It started from that day.

[Fèngama and Fakoli]

This Fèngama,
 Fèngama’s youngest brother was Fakoli.
 If you see that the taboo of Fakoli is leopard,
 195 And his *tana* is viper,
 Fakoli is our ancestor.
 He is our ancestor.
 Bilayi Kromah,
 He is our ancestor.
 200 The Dayon,
 Are next to the Kromah.
 The Kamè,
 Are the third.
 They didn’t cooperate very much with one another,
 205 When they did their *zo* work.
 The Kamè cooperate more with each other than the Dayon.
 The Kromah cooperate more with each other than the Dayon.
 That is how it happened.
 That is all I know about that history...

* * *

[Fèngama’s hat and parents?]

Boakai: You said that Fèngama had a hat that he wore, and that no one could be
 defeated in battle when the hat was worn. Who made that hat? Who made
 that hat for Fèngama?

240 Mustafa: I don’t know who the person was.
 I don’t know who fixed the hat.

189 Did the Kònè and Fulbe develop a special relationship in this case?
 193 Fakoli (the Kromah) was Fèngama’s ‘uncle’ in most accounts. Foningama’s mother is said to
 have been a Kromah (Ch. 7).
 194-95 ‘leopard’: = *wala*. ‘viper’: = *tulusa*.
 205 ‘zo work’ (*zoyalô*): lit. ‘in (*lô*) the *zo* business/activity (*ya*).’
 206 ‘cooperate’: = there is more unity and respect among the Kamè lineages than the Dayon. The
 Kamè may also accord more respect to their ancestors than the Dayon.

Boakai: Do you know the name of Fèngama's father or mother?

Mustafa: No!

I don't know his mother's name,

And I don't know his father's name...

* * *

[Zo Masa Kòma's *saafèlè*]

Mohammed: Father, they told us that Fèngama sired sixteen sons, and that his son...

Mustafa: Zo Masa Kòma. [...]

Zo Masa Kòma was driven out because of a conspiracy.

Mohammed: They said that he founded Misadu.

Mustafa: Wait.

255 Zo Masa Kòma settled in Misadu.

He was not good for the *mue* people.

He had a big *saafèlè*.

He sent the *saafèlè*,

To get snuff from people.

260 He would say, "Go tell this person to give me some tobacco."

The people would put it in,

And it would take the snuff back to Zo Masa Kòma.

Then he would put it in his mouth.

Whenever it came across a child,

265 It would swallow the child.

The *saafèlè*,

The sheep horn (*saakèle*) that it is made from,

It would swallow a child when it met a child.

There were some Kana people.

270 There were some Kana people.

When it bothered them,

They said, "Ah!

This thing is bothering us a lot."

[Kònsaba conspires against Fèngama]

He had returned to his brother.

275 He said, "My brother [Kònsaba],

I have come to settle near you in Misadu.

When you go to war and you are victorious,

Come back to your brothers.

That is why I am here."

269 Kana: = Kanè (Kanate, Kande, Kante).

274-338 Mustafa confused Foniŋgama, Kònsaba and Zo Musa in these stories.

280 They [Kònsaba] said, “Ah!
 Brother, we are very happy.
 You are welcome.”
 They went and dug a hole,
 Like the one they had dug for Fèngama.
 285 They put a drummer in the hole.
 He was told not to beat the drum when they asked,
 Zo Kòma...
 “If Zo Masa Kòma settles here it will be good.”
 He was told not to beat the drum because he had caused too much trouble for
 them.
 290 “But if we say that it will not be good for him to settle here,
 That he should go somewhere else,
 Then beat the drum - ‘do-do-do.’”
 When Zo Masa Kòma [Fèngama] was meeting with his brothers,
 They said, “Brother, we are very pleased that you are coming to settle with us.
 295 But we want to go and ask our father’s hole,
 And we are going to make a sacrifice.
 If the sacrifice is successful,
 You will settle here.
 But if it is not successful,
 300 While it is our father’s hole...
 After they said that,
 They went and sacrificed a kola nut at the edge of the hole.
 They asked, “You, our father’s land,
 Zo Masa Kòma [Fèngama] has returned home and come to settle here.
 305 He has come to settle near us.
 We are asking you to talk.
 Land, talk.
 Will it be good for him,
 Today and tomorrow,
 310 If he settles here?”
 Zo Masa, come here.
 The land did not talk.
 “You, our father’s hole.
 Our brother Zo Masa Kòma has decided to settle here,
 315 But there is a land in which he was born and a land in which he will be
 prosperous.

288 Zo Masa: rather, Foningama.

290 Mustafa mixed elements of his stories about Foningama’s encounter with Kònsaba, and Zo Musa in Musadu.

303 ‘ask our father’s land’: Perhaps their father’s spirit was in the hole or cave. That might be the place where their father made sacrifices, so they would go there to make sacrifices to get advice, communicate and obtain blessings. If someone was going to come and settle, they would have to make a sacrifice to find out if it would be acceptable for them to stay.

Since our brother Zo Masa Kòma [Fèngama] is old and adventurous,
 Will it be good for him to find somewhere else to go settle?
 Talk if that is correct.”
 The drummer beat, “do-do-do.”
 320 Then he said, “Ha!”
 The repeated the question.
 “Our father’s hole,
 Our brother Zo Masa Kòma [Fèngama] has come to settle here and we were all
 born here.
 If it will be good for him to settle here today and tomorrow,
 325 Then talk.
 The land did not talk.
 Our father’s hole,
 Kònsaba [Fèngama] has come from around the *jamana*,
 And he wants to settle here.
 330 If that will not be good for him,
 Today and tomorrow,
 And he should go somewhere else.
 We will still be brothers.
 But talk if he should go somewhere else.”
 335 The drum beat.
 They repeated this three times.
 After that they told Kònsaba [Fèngama], “That is your answer.”
 He said, “Ha! I agree.”

[The *moi* destroy Zo Masa’s *saafèlè*]

Kònsaba [Zo Masa],
 340 Was sitting.
 He sent the *saafèlè* - fuuuuuuu,
 Around to ask people for tobacco.
 The *saafèlè* went around.
 The *moi* people did some work and tied it on the frog.
 345 He put it in the frog,
 And it lay down for the great *saafèlè*.
 When the great *saafèlè* swallowed the frog,
 It spoiled.
 The *saafèlè* spoiled.
 350 Zo Masa Kòma said, “Hum, I will not stay here much longer.
 The only thing that I had in my pocket spoiled.
 I must go somewhere else and settle.

345 ‘in the frog’: He either supposedly put the talisman in the mouth of the frog, or the frog swallowed the talisman.

[Zo Masa leaves Misadu and travels to Zota]

- Now he left,
And followed his pregnant wife.
355 The pregnant woman went with him.
His other wife said, "I will take you half-way,
Because I can't walk the whole way."
They went to the Sanwu river.
When they reached the Sanwu river,
360 She said, "Ah, I will stop here."
Masa asked her, "You are going to stop here?"
[She said], "Yes, I will stop here."
Then he said, "Alright.
I will go.
365 If I find a good place,
I will send for you."
The river that she stopped near became known as the Sanwu river.
When they left that area,
The pregnant woman was carrying a mortar pestle (*kuan*).
370 After a while the pregnant woman said, "Eh!
I am tired of carrying this pestle."
So she laid it down.
The river that she laid it near,
Became known as the Kuan.
375 He went and slept in Nionsamoridu before they went to the big mountain.
When they reached the top of the mountain,
God helped her and she gave birth to a child.
Kònsaba said, "Ah!"
Eh, Zo Masa Kòma said, "Ah! God.
380 My wife give birth on top of this mountain,
But there is no water here.
God, please give me some water.
God created a pool of water for them.
The people still drink that water today.
385 A calabash spoon is on the water.
A palm tree is also there.
If the palm tree is dead,
That happened during Seku Turé's time...
In fact, the palm tree is still there.
390 Zo Masa Kòma,
Rose and went down,
And went to Zota.

358 Sanwu: located between Beyla and Nionsamoridu, near Pialò.

375 'big mountain': Kanikokela (l. 400).

383 'God': *Masa*, though Allah everywhere else.

He went and settled there and founded a town called Zota.
 The Talawole people are there.
 395 The Talawole people are there.
 That is all that I know about Zo Masa Kòma.
 The water and the palm tree are still there,
 Even today.
 People still drink from the water.
 400 They are on the mountain called Kanikokela.
 It is the Kanikoke that is on the Kankan road.
 But the road is not there any more.
 The road leading to Gbonodu passes there.
 There is a curve around the mountain,
 405 And a *Gbèn* tree is there.
 The water is on the left-hand side.
 That is all that I know about it.

[Fèngama's name]

Mohammed: What does the name Foningama mean? Where did that name come from?
Mustafa: Fèngama is his clan name,
 Like one can say - Kromah.
 410 That is his clan name.
 That is why people call him Fèngama.
Chèjan: What was his real name?
Mustafa: I do not know what his real name was,
 But everyone called him Fèngama.
 But Fèngama is a clan name.
 415 Fèngama is the name for Jomanu,
 Like when they say that Fofana is a clan name for Donzo.
 That is why he is called Fèngama.
 He is a Jomanu.
 Fèngamaba, Fèngamaba, Fèngamaba.
 420 You should know that the *jèli* give this name to these people.

[The Dole in Misadu]

Boakai: Who were the first people in Koniya?
Mustafa: Hum?
Boakai: Who were the first people in Koniya? Who were the first people who settled in Koniya?
Mustafa: (long pause) Who were the first people to settle in Koniya?
Mohammed: Ahan.

419 Fèngamaba: 'big Fèngama.'

Mustafa: The ancestors of the men that hosted us,
Those people,
425 They were the ancestors of the man who hosted us -
Mohammed: The Dole.
Mustafa: Yes, the Dole.

[Zo Masa the Kpelle man]

Mohammed: What was Zo Masa's ethnic group? Maniya or Kpelle?

Mustafa: What?

Tim: Zo Musa.

Mustafa: Zo Masa Kòma?

Tim: Yes.

Mustafa: Zo Masa Kòma?

Tim: Yes.

Mustafa: He was Kpelle.

[Slavery and warfare]

Boakai: Was there slavery at that time?

430 Mustafa: Aaaayi!

There were plenty,

Especially when there was a lot of fighting.

Many people were getting killed during the fighting.

Boakai: Who were some slaves? Who was the chief slave? Who were some of the
slave families?

Mustafa: There was no specific slave or a family slave.

435 Slaves were captured in battle.

The enemy that you captured became your slave.

That was not one side of the society.

Slaves were not specifically taken.

Even as we are now,

440 When we go to battle and someone is captured he becomes your slave.

When the person gets someone he becomes his slave.

If Mammadi gets one he would become his slave.

If Bakari gets one he would become his slave. [...]

[The first Muslims: Fomo Dole and Tumaningèmè]

Boakai: Who were the first people to become Muslim?

Mustafa: The people who I can remember were Fomo Dole and Tumaningèmè.

445 I don't remember the name of the other.

Boakai: Do you know anything about Tumaningèmè?

423 'the man that hosted us': Speaking of Yaya Dole who hosted the speaker, Mohammed Chèjan and myself in Musadu in 1986 (App. 7.8).

Mustafa: He was the small brother of the Kromah.
 He was a Kamè.
 His clan was Kamè.
 These people went to his *doo kòò*,
 450 Where he was marking people.

[Fèngama: the warrior and his *jèli*]

Boakai: What kind of job did Fèngama do?
Mustafa: He was a fighter, a fighter.
 He killed human beings.
Boakai: What was his *jèli*'s name?
Mustafa: Fèngama's *jèli*?
 God knows the truth.
 455 I don't know who his *jèli* were,
 But he had *jèli*.

[Zo Masa's *saafèlè*]

Boakai: What kind of *saafèlè* did Zo Masa have?
Mustafa: The horn of a sheep.
 The horn of a sheep.
 Do you know sheep?
 460 Yes, his horn.

[The law in Misadu]

Boakai: Did they make any law?
Mustafa: The law.
 The law,
 The law that the people could settle...
 I told you that the first son of Fèngama died when the road was being cleaned.

[Fèngama's end]

Boakai: What happened to Fèngama at the end?
 465 Mustafa: At the end,
 The white people captured him.
 The white people.

449 'these people': the Kamè or Kromah, referring to Tim Geysbeek (Bakari Kromah) and the speaker's son Chèjan.

450 *doo kòò*: Yaya Dole took the speaker, Chèjan and myself to a small hilly area outside of Musadu in 1986. The name of the area is Doofatini. Yaya attributed the scarification in this area to Zo Musa, not Tumanigèmè.

457-58 'the horn of a sheep': *saa ji kèle* (l. 457) and *saa kèle* (l. 458).

465-68 Did Mustafa confuse Foniḡama with the French capture of Samori Turé?

The white people captured him.

[*Jèlilu*]

Boakai: Who are the *jèli* in the Koniya and Buse?

Mustafa: There are no specific leaders for the *jèli*,

470 Nor are there any groups of people especially classified as *jèli*.

Just as we are in this town now,

The person who will be following flattering you wherever you go will be your *jèli*.

Boakai: Why would he become a *jèli*?

Mustafa: A *jèli* is someone who says, "You are better than me."

Or he says, "I am inferior to you."

475 That is how people become *jèli*.

[The five towns of Koniya]

Mammadi: What are the name of the five towns of Koniya?

Mustafa: The five towns of Koniya?

Mohammed: Aan.

Mustafa: Beyla, Dukulela, Misadu, Tulela and Diakolidu.

Boakai: Are there others?

Mustafa: That is all that I can remember.

There are many other towns in Koniya,

480 But the five major towns are the ones that I called.

[The coming of Islam]

Boakai: How did Islam (*Simaya*) come on this side?

Mustafa: The Muslim towns,

The first *moe* towns were Tabila, Beyla, Misadu, Dukulela, and Nyusumòdu.

Those are the first *moe* towns.

Mohammed: Where is Tabila?

Mustafa: Tabila is located behind Beyla between Dabadu and èh - Jalagbèlèla.

Boakai: How did the *moi*ya come into our land?

485 Mustafa (laughed): The first *moi* towns are those that I just called.

There are many *moi* towns today,

But these five towns were the very first.

They all may have mosques today,

But they are the very first *moi* towns.

[Zo Masa's *saafèlè* that killed]

Boakai: What does the name Zo Masa Kòma mean, or, how did he get his name?

469 'leaders': *kundilu*.

476 'five towns of Koniya': *Koniya so luulu*.

490 Mustafa: His name was Misa.
When he became a zo,
That was when that name was added - Zo Masa Kòma.
What is your name?
Boakai: Boakai.
Mustafa: Ah! Like people would say Zo Boakai.
Boakai: What kind of zo was he?
495 Mustafa: Ka! Can't you see that his *saafèlè* was killing people?
He was a killer.
He also cured people if he failed to kill them.
Boakai: When they say *kòma*, what is *kòma*? What is the meaning?
Mustafa: I don't know about that.
I don't know any meaning to tell you.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.21

FATA MUSA KIÈLÈ (KUYATEH)

Place and date of interview: Douama-Sobala, Guinea, 12 July 1992

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek and Makula Mammadi Kromah

Context of interview: Fata Musa Kièlè was the former chief of Douama who I first interviewed in 1990. He said that he was seventy years old at the time of this interview (l. 708). He was physically strong and had a good voice. Mammadi and I interviewed him by lantern in the living room of his house from 10:00 - 10:45 p.m. As in his first interview, Fata Musa spoke confidently and without hesitation. His father was Alhaji Minata Musa Kièlè, the old *jèli* whom we interviewed in 1990. Two young men entered the room during the interview.

Transcribed by: Kèlèti Fofana (Monrovia, 1993)

Translated by: Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Faliku Sanoe; Tim Geysbeek and Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

Translation note: Tim Geysbeek usually asked the questions, and Mammadi Kromah translated them into Maniyakã. This transcript does not include Geysbeek's questions unless they give some insight into the topic or the interview situation.

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[THE KIÈLÈ AND KUYATE]

Mammadi: What is the relationship between the Kuyateh and Kièlè.

Musa: The Kuyatè and Kièlè - Liberia...

Liberia.

They are in Liberia.

The Kièlè.

- 5 Good, the Kuyateh are in Guinea here and Mali.
 They are in the *jamana* of Mande.
 But they came to Liberia through Kwadu and Douama.
 It was the same man,
 Who sired all of them.
- 10 The Kièlè are in Liberia.
 They all came from here but they are Kuyatè.
 They are all one.
 They are all one.
 But the difference between the Kièlè and Kuyatè,
- 15 Good, was made on that side,
 On the Liberia side [Bakèdu].
 Their ancestor came from Douama.
 They used to call their ancestor Kuyatè,
 But they called him Bala Kièlè when he reached there.

5 'Good' (*bon*): French, here and throughout the text. The Kièlè and Kuyateh are the same.

20 That is why they call them Kièlè now.

[ANCIENT MISADU: I]
[Foningama flees from Sibi to Wasolon through a hill]

Mande.

I am going to start talking about the ancestors of Mande now,
About Foningama.

Foningama came from Sibi.

25 Foningama, his father's name was Falan [Faran] Kamara.

He was in Mande *jamana*.

Falan Kamara, he sired Foningama.

He sired many sons.

Foningama's descendants in Sibi...

30 There were some Kamara in Sibi in Mali.

They waged war against Foningama and his descendants.

His name was not Foningama.

His name was Kamã.

There was a hill in Sibi.

35 When they chased him during a battle,

He climbed to the top of Sibi hill.

He hid from them in the hill.

We are not just talking about the hill.

That hill is still there.

40 Foningama went into the hill.

Kamã went into the hill.

He disappeared from his *fadèn*.

They stayed in the *jamana* of Sibi.

He went through Sibi mountain,

45 Came out,

And reached to Sigidi.

He left Sigidi,

And went to Wasolon.

[The Wasolon people and the Fula name "Foningama"]

When he reached the Fula in Wasolon, they put him inside,
50 A *fonio* granary.

He was placed in the *foni* granary.

That is where Kamã was.

Now the *masa* in that place said, "I have a stranger."

He gathered the people of town together and said,

31 'descendants' (*boloji*): = literally, 'hand (*bolo*) extended down (*ji*).'

46 Sigidi: = Siguiri.

- 55 “You all come and see the stranger.”
He then came out and he was sitting.
Kamã was sitting down.
Good.
The Wosolon people and the Fula said,
60 “Kaa, is this the man that you talked about,
The man who has *fonì* on his head?”
Then they began to call him Foningama.

[Foningama has a son in Kankan]

- Foningama.
He stayed there at Kankan,
65 And had a son.
They are the Kamara of Kankan.
He waged more war and went further down.

[KAMARA MIGRATIONS]
[Foningama's sons Fanyala and Seeblama]

- As he was going down he got to Kòniya.
When he reached Misadu,
70 He settled there.
He began to fight the Kpelle.
He began to fight the Kpelle in Kòniya.
He had two sons while he was doing that.
The first one's name was Fanyala.
75 His name was Jala.
He was the first son.
The next one to him was See Blama.
He sired See Blama and Jala.
They continued to fight.
80 As time passed,
Jala's home became Simanu.
He left Simanu,
And went and settled in Konokòlò.
He went on that side...

* * *

74 'first' (*premier*): Said in French.

75 Jala: = 'lion.'

[ANCIENT MISADU: II]
[Zo Musa Kòma founds Misadu]

Mammadi: He asked if you know anything about Zo Musa Kòma?

Musa: Eh, Misadu?

Mammadi: Uhun.

- What I know about Zo Masa Kòma,
185 I will not talk long about that.
I don't know much about that,
About Misadu.
Zo Musa Kòma was living in Misadu.
He was Foningama's stranger father.
190 He was Kpelle,
But they made him pray.
They changed Zo Musa Kòma's name and said "Misa."
That was after they made him pray.
It was that Misa who founded Misadu.
195 He was Foningama's stranger father in Misadu.
All of the descendants of the Kòniya people used to go to Misadu.
Foningama went and met them there.
He came and met the Kpelle.
They had established Misadu.
200 Zo Masa Kòma was living in Misadu.
They made him pray.
They named him Misa.
He founded Misadu.
That is how Misadu's name came.
205 That is what I know about that.

[The Fula, *fonio*, and the origin of the name "Foningama"]

Mammadi: He asked how Foningama's name came. What does it mean?

Musa: His name was Kamã.

His name was Kamã.

- When he fled from his father's children,
And went to Wasolon,
210 They put him in a *fon*i granary.
They hid him.
He told the Fula, "I am fleeing from war."
That is where the Foningama business began.
They put him in the *fon*i granary.
215 When they brought him out they put him in the center [of town].
I have already said this today.

189 'stranger father': *jèti*.

- When they brought him out and set him in the center,
 He had *foni* chaff on his face when the people were called.
 He [the chief] said, "I have a stranger.
 220 Here he is."
 The people said, "Ah.
 The *foni* chaff on Foni Kamã."
 That is how the Foningama business came about.
 But his name was Kamã.
 225 Somebody in the audience: Foni Kamã.
Musa: Foni Kamã.
 The *foni* chaff was on that person.
 Now Foni Kama,
 That is how he got the name Foningama.
 230 Foningama's father's name was Falan Gamala [Kamara].
 He lived in the *jamana* of Manden.
 He had many sons.
 They drove his son away.
 They knew that route.
 235 He came to the forest.
 Some of them live in Kankan,
 And some came to the forest.
 That is how the Foningama business came about.
 Foni Kamã.
 240 This was because he had *foni* seed on his head.
 That is why they called him Foningama.
 That was just a praise name.
 If not that...
 The Kamara,
 245 The father of all them was Falan Gamala.
 His name was Kamã,
 But they changed his name to Foni Kamã because of the *foni* seed.
 That is why they said, "The one with the *foni* seed..."
 That is how the Foningama business came about.

[Kònsaba?]

- Tim: Do you know about Kònsaba?
 250 Musa: Kònsaba?
Tim: Yes.
Musa: I don't know.

235 'forest': *tu*.

[The meaning of Zo Musa Kòma's name?]

Mammadi: What does Zo Musa Kòma mean?

Musa: I don't know.

Zo Musa Kòma's name,

I don't know anything about that.

255 My education did not reach that far.

[Foningama the warrior: from Sibi to Misadu]

Mammadi: What kind of work did Foningama do?

Musa: He was a warrior.

Foningama ran away from war,

From his home,

From their home in Sibi.

260 Do you understand?

They drove him away.

He was not able to compete with his *fadèn*.

Since they saw that God had made him great,

That he would become a *masa* and that he would become prosperous,

265 His *fadèn* drove him away.

After he fled,

He went to the Fula.

He went to Kankan.

He had one son in Kankan.

270 They are in Kankan today.

They are the Kamara of Kankan.

He came further south,

And prepared for war.

He also became *masa*.

275 He went to Kòniya.

The place he went to was Misadu.

That is where the division was done.

Mammadi: How did he gain power?

Musa: He got power,

Through war.

280 Let's say,

Maybe if God helps you,

You may become powerful if you are a strong fighter.

Or, you may have good luck,

And things will be good.

285 When God lets you win in war,

Then you will get power.

He did not get powerful any other way.

During those days of the black man,

The whites had never come.

290 He who overcame the next person became the *masa*.

[Fonɔŋgama and the leopard taboo]

Mammadi: The taboos, the taboos of the people. Will you tell us something about
Fonɔŋgama clans - something about their taboos? What were their taboos?
What were the taboos of the other people? Can you tell us some of those
things?

Musa: Everything is being talked here.

Speaking about the Kamara,

Their taboo is leopard.

Ha, their taboo is leopard.

295 They can't eat leopard.

They take their oaths over the leopard,

Not over the lion.

That is their taboo.

For all of Fonɔŋgama's descendants,

300 That is their taboo.

That is their taboo.

That is what I know about their taboo.

That is the leopard.

That is what we call it, leopard.

305 They say, "leopard meat."

They can say, "If I do this,"

They can swear by the leopard.

[The Kièlè taboos]

Mammadi: Elephant?

Musa: Ah, for the people who have the elephant taboo,
I don't know.

Mammadi: What is the taboo of the Kièlè?

310 Musa: What are their taboos?

They have many different taboos.

Some of their taboos are crocodile.

The Kièlè.

The Kuyatè's taboos is crocodile.

315 Do you understand?

Among the Kièlè,

There are many differences,

But all of them are descendants of ancestor Surakata,

And their taboo is crocodile.

293 'leopard': *sòli*.

312 'crocodile': *bama*.

320 Those of us who are here who are Muslims (*mori*).
 The only taboo we have is dog and *jufaa*.
 That is our taboo.
 But those in Liberia,
 Their taboo is crocodile and *kana*.
 325 They can't eat that.
 The people in Liberia,
 The people they call the Kièlè,
 Whose clan name is also Kuyateh,
 Their taboo is crocodile.
 330 There is a story about how they got that taboo.
 Their ancestors were fleeing from war.
 They fled and saw a big river in Bisa.
 Good, but the taboo business that came to them,
 Whenever something that people eat treats them bad,
 335 That will be their taboo.
 They got on the back of a crocodile and went.
 They got away from the people who were chasing them,
 But could not cross the river.
 Now they are called "Bama."
 340 They are the *bama*.
 That is how they became *bama*.
 Good.
Kana and the crocodile are the same.
 Some of them have the *kana* taboo.
 345 The *kana* and the crocodile resemble each other.
 But the dog is the taboo for us in Douama.
 We can't eat dog.
 We can't eat *jufaa*.
 That happened because of the *mori*...

* * *

[ANCIENT MISADU: III]
 [Zo Masa forced to pray]

Mammadi: He asked how this town was established. How was this town
 established? He wants you to talk about that.

Tim: Misadu.

Mammadi: Misadu or here?

Tim: Misadu.

Mammadi: He is asking how Misadu was established.

Musa: He wants to know how Misadu was founded.

321 *jufaa*: an animal that dies without having its throat cut first.

332 Bisa: This word is very hard to hear. It could also be Busa or Misa[du].

- I don't know how Misadu was founded.
- 505 What I know about is when Foningama reached there.
 But what I was told about the beginning...
 Eh, the Zo Misa Kòma that he [Tim] mentioned,
 Eh, he [Foningama] was the one who made him [Zo Musa] pray.
 They called him Musa when he prayed.
- 510 Do you understand?
 I have already said that today.
 They called him Misa.
 Zo Masa Kòma founded Misadu.
 He was Kpelle.
- 515 When Foningama got there,
 Many Kòniya people were there.
 The *mori* went there.
 They were the ones who named Zo Masa Kòma - Misa.
 It was his generation that went.
- 520 It was his generation that went and settled in Kpelle land.
 They said, "We want to leave Misadu.
 We want to leave the land of Kòniya."
 That was because they and the Kòniya people could not tolerate each other.
 [They said], "We will leave.
- 525 They pray and we do not pray.
 We will leave Kòniya."
 Those are the people that they call the Kòniya people.
 That is how Misadu was founded.
 The people of Zo Masa Kò's time established Misadu.
- 530 They called him Misa when he prayed.
 He founded Misadu.
 They are the Kòniya people who are here today.
 Their clans are there,
 But the town was established by the Kpelle.
- 535 Foningama...
 Eh, Misadu was founded,
 A long time ago.
 I do not know when that took place,
 But one of our elders once told us that Misadu was established about six hundred
 years ago.
- 540 I heard that from the mouth of the people,
 But I don't know the difference from one to the other...

516 'Koniya people': Maniyaka.

[ISLAM, SLAVERY AND LAWS]
[The coming of Islam]

Mammadi: He asked how Islam came to this land.
Musa: There was no Islam here before.
The Islam that is here came from up.
This forest area that you see,
The Jomani were warriors and *mori*.
600 When they came,
They came from Sibi.
They brought Islam with them.
They came to Mande *jamana* with Islam.
But when they went from Mande to Kankan to Misadu,
605 And came to places like this.
That was the time that our ancestor came from Misadu.
They brought Islam into this forest region.
Islam came here from Kòniya, from Misadu.
Islam started from the north and came down.
610 It came from Kulòngò on down.
But Islam was in this forest area.
What was happening here was that people were fighting each other.
The Mandingo and Loma who were here did not pray.
We ourselves came in this town.
615 The few Muslims who were here were our ancestors.
Islam came here from the north.

[Slavery and warfare]

Tim: Did you ask about slavery?
Mammadi: He said “slavery.” I don’t know if I have asked that question today.
How did slavery come?
Musa: Whoever was captured by someone else would be that person’s slave.
They used to capture human beings and sell them.
When humans were captured,
620 You could buy them.
The person that you bought would be your slave.
Do you understand?
Why did slavery come?
When they fought war,
625 They used to capture 2000 or 3000 people.
When you captured 2000 or 3000 people,
And you did not have any food or anything else.
Then you could sell some of your captives to purchase food.

605 ‘places like this’: the forest (l. 488).

That was because you did not have any money.
630 They used humans to buy food and buy fish and buy salt,
And used them to marry a woman.
If you could get that kind of person,
That he/she would be your slave...

* * *

[Town messengers]

Mammadi: He asked if Foningama ever had his own law in the land that the
people were supposed to obey. Like if a *masa* said that something should
not be done.
Musa: Yes, that happened.
Foningama...
Foningama made his laws.
645 Foningama never went into the forest himself.
He was only in Misadu and further north in Kankan.
But his children who came here had a law.
They had a law.
The one word that used to be here in Douama was the same one in Kwadu...
650 The *masa* who was there...
The *masa* had a saying.
They said, "If I am sending a messenger, say, to Gbinikala,
The *masa* who was over there would have to see something from the *masa* the
messenger was representing.
The thing that was identified could be a knife or ring or any other item that both
chiefs knew about.
655 The *masa* would give that thing to a young adult.
When he went to the chief of Gbinikala he would say, "This is it.
This is it."
The item might be a knife or ring or bracelet.
That was the law that the chiefs had.
660 The white people had not come at that time,
But that was their law.
They used to pass a law.
They said, "No one should do this.
If you do this,
You will pay this amount."
665 They used to have a law like that.
The white people had not come at that time.
All of the chiefs used to meet together to fix the land.
The *masa*'s used to do that before the white man came.

642-704 The speaker either did not understand the question about Foningama's laws, or he did not know and attempted to provide a vague answer.

- The white people brought the *jamanati* business.
- 670 The *masa*'s stopped doing those things because they rested.
 They also passed a law about fire,
 That the only one should light a fire,
 That the *masa*'s did that.
 The old *masa*'s followed those laws,
 675 Before the time of the white people.
 Good.
 They made the *masa*'s...
 They made the *jamanati* business.
 That was happening when the white people came.
- 680 But the *masa*'s of Douama *jamana*,
 And Koigblama *jamana*,
 And Kwadu *jamana*
 Used to send messengers between them.
 When the messenger left here and went to Konisèdu and had to sleep,
 685 He would say, "The Douama chief said that I should greet you.
 This is the item from his hand.
 I am going to Lassaou."
 He would also give a message,
 And the messenger would go see the *masa* of Lassaou.
- 690 If the messenger met the big chief from Macenta, he would show the item in
 his hand.
 He would say, the *masa* of Douama said that I should come and greet you.
 This is what I came for."
 When that happened and he saw the item, he would say,
 "I know the person who owns this."
- 695 That is what used to happen.
 The laws that Foningama passed,
 They never reached here and did not go any further than Kòniya, Kankan, and
 other places up that way.
 But his child who came to this forest,
- 700 Starting from Tinikoro...
 Eh - Konikoro and Malou and Koigblama and Douama,
 There were messengers between those towns.
 All *masa*'s had a law.
 That was that.

669 *jamanati*: = 'regional (*jamana*) owner (*ti*).'

670 'rested': = died.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.22

ANSUMANA JABATE

Place and date of interview: Douama-Sobala, Guinea, 12 July 1992

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek and Makula Mammadi Kromah

Context of interview: We met Ansumana in the early evening. Several men, women and children were present for the interview. One person interjected himself into the interview a few times, but I did not get his name. Ansumana said that he did not know the answer to some of the questions that were asked. These were usually followed by laughter, indicating that he probably did not want to talk about those subjects. Ansumana was the leader of the old men in Douama-Sobala, which is a government appointed position (see l. 2-3). He might have been in his seventies at the time of the interview.

Transcribed by: Adama Talawole (Macenta, 1992)

Translated by: Adama Talawole (Macenta, 1992)

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek and Adama Talawole (Macenta, 1992) - transcript/translation

Checked by: Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1992) - tape/transcript/translation

Checked by: Boakai Yamah and Tim Geysbeek (Monrovia, 1992) - tape/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

Translation note: As is the pattern with many other interviews, Mammadi asked questions in Maniyakã that I relayed to him in English. In some cases, on this tape, I did not record some of the questions that I asked him. The transcript does not include the questions that I asked unless they are important for helping to understand the flow of questioning and the narrator's discussion.

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[ANCIENT MISADU: I]

[Hunters, warriors, and Muslims migrate from Misadu to the forest]

After the people were divided [from Mande],
Everyone came down.
190 Everyone who was up came down.
We came down with everyone else.
We came from there.
Our ancestor came down,
And settled in Misadu.
195 When the people were divided,
Half of them,
Were sent to the forest here.
Awa, everyone in this forest came from Misadu.
Those like the Maninga,
200 And the Jomani,
And others,
Came from Misadu.
People traveling from Misadu came here.
Everyone came and settled here.
205 Some are Fòningama’s descendants.
That is how Fòningama came.
Fòningama came as a hunter.

199 Maninga (Maninka): ‘people (*ka*) of Mani’ or ‘Mani people.’

Everyone who you see here came because they were hunters.
 Some came because of war,
 210 And others came because they were hunting.
 They settled here.
 Awa, they settled here.
 All the people who are called Muslims,
 Came down.
 215 All the Maninga came down.
 We encountered the Loma when we came down.
 This *jamana* belongs to the Loma.
 The Maninga came with force.
 The Jomani,
 220 The Talawole,
 The Kromah,
 Met the Loma here as they moved here,
 Into this area.
 All of the Maninga,
 225 Those who are referred to as Maniya,
 From Maniya land,
 All came from Misadu.
 Everyone came here and settled.
 All of our ancestors came from Misadu and settled here.
 230 However, after the division in Mande...
 We originally came from Mande.
 Our clan left Mande and came here.
 Everyone in that group came because of war.
 Our ancestor came because of war.
 235 The way that our ancestors settled...
 But all...

* * *

[Fòningama: hunter and *fonio* farmer]

Mammadi: You said that Fòningama was a hunter. He was hunting. Where did he
 die?
Ansumana: Fòningama?
 295 I don't know where.
Mammadi: Where was he hunting?
Ansumana: I said he came...
 Awa, he came from Mande.
 [He] came down here.
 Awa, Fòningama came as a hunter.
 300 Fòningama.
 If you hear Fòningama,
 His name was Joma.

They said, "Joma!"
 When he came down,
 305 They said,
 "Eh, the Jomani who has a different face.
 If I want to explain that...
 Let's stop there.
Mammadi: Explain.
Ansumana: No, hen,
 310 Let's stop there.
 That is what I want to say about that,
 So let's stop there.
 About the Jomani,
 Let me stop there.
Someone in the audience: That is what he knows.
 315 Ansumana: Huum.
 That is the end of what I know.
 I was asked about your ancestor, right?
Mammadi: Yes.
Ansumana: It is our mouth that has talked about many different things,
 And how we came down.
 320 It is said that all of us descended,
 From Mande,
 In this world.
 I said, "Mande's first town,
 Mande's last town."
 325 All of us came from Mande.
 I said that your ancestor came down,
 Eh, and went to Misadu.
 Anyone you see will say that he is from Misadu.
 That is because everyone came and settled somewhere.
 330 No one in this *jamana*...
 Everyone came their own way.
 When you hear someone ask, "Where is your farm's boundary?"
 [If] you go there first...
 Fòningama came to this *jamana* first.
 335 He came and settled and brushed the land,
 Before anyone else came here.
 Trading is also like that.
 The first trader will go and settles somewhere,

307 'the Jomani who has a different face': For some reason, the speaker did not want to explain how Foningama got *fonio* on his face after he passed through the mountain. The Fulbe found him on the other side, and that is how Foni became part of his name (Ch. 3). The speaker did his best not to put any ill light on the Jomani or Kamara. The Jomani are the chiefs of the town, and some Jomani probably sat in on the interview.

308 'If I want to explain that': The *fonio* story.

- And another will follow him.
 340 That is how people came down.
 That is how our ancestor came down.
Mammadi: How did Fòningama get his name? What is Fòningama? What is
 Jomani?
Ansumana: What does Jomani mean?
 Jomani, Jomani.
 The Jomanu,
 345 Their ancestor, his name was Joma.
 But because of the way that people talk,
 Awa, èh, the children he sired...
 He sired three sons.
 He sired three sons.
 350 He remained in hiding.
 He was hunting,
 And his three sons followed him.
 After he sired three children,
 They said "Joma."
 355 His sons farmed.
 They went hunting.
 At first,
 You know,
 No houses were built.
 360 Everyone was on the farm.
 Anyone who went to a certain place...
 We were told that there were no trees starting from here going up.
 The land was bare from here,
 Up to the savanna.
 365 That is why everyone came down to hunt.
 You settled wherever you went and stayed.
 There were no towns,
 That is why everyone went to settle.
 That is why Fòningama came down.
 370 They said that Joma and Joma's children came down.
 Joma and his children.
 They sired three sons.
 He sired those three sons after he came down.
 Those three sons stayed there,
 375 Saying that Fòningama had come down.
 Fòningama,
 He ploughed *fonio*.
 Fòningama was named because he ploughed *fonio*.
 His name was Joma.

358 'first' (*premier*): French.

364 'savanna': *gbèkan*.

380 He ploughed *fonio*.
 He came when *fonio* was being harvested.
 He could harvest *fonio* quickly.
 They said, "Ah, Va Joma and his children came down.
 He harvests quickly."
 385 He came and met his uncles,
 The Kromah.
 They were the people who he came and met.
 Do you understand?
 He came and met them when people were coming down from Mande.
 390 Awa, he said, "Uncle," because Fakoli was the *masa* in Mande.
 The person who was his nephew was the Jomani.
 While harvesting...
 He could harvest *fonio* quickly.
 They said, "Joma and his children have come."
 395 Awa, èh, is this a Jomani?
 He is harvesting *fonio* quickly."
 He [Kromah] replied, "He is my nephew.
 He is not a Jomani,
 But his name is Foni Kali."
 400 They said "Fòningama (Foni Kama)."
 You see?
 Awa, that is how the Jomani came down.
 They came down.
 That is the way that the Jomani came down.
 405 I talked about his three sons who were born.

[Fòningama's three sons meet "the good man"]

It is said that of the three sons who were sired,
 One was blind,
 One had a limp,
 And the other was deaf.
 410 [Fòningama said], "If these are our children,
 Let me travel with them.
 We are suffering.
 He was a hunter while they were suffering.
 A good man was also traveling.
 415 They heard about him when they were traveling.
 They said about the good man who was coming, "He is coming."
 He said, "Let me hide my children.
 I have heard that the trees and stones are submitting.
 Everyone is dancing for him.

399 Foni Kali: = 'harvesting (*kali*) *fonio*.'

420 He must not come and meet us here.
 Let me hide my people.”
 He went and hid them in a cave.
 They remained in the cave until the good man came.
 He [the good man] met his [Fòningama’s] children.
 425 He [Fòningama] and his wife were still hiding in the cave.
 His children said that they were not going,
 But they were going to stay there.
 He came and met the three sons.
 He and his wife remained in the cave.
 430 He said, “Child, where is your father?”
 They said, “Aa, our father is not here.”
 He replied, “Go and call your father.”
 He beat the limp son a little and said,
 “Go and call your father.”
 435 He rose and stood on his feet and walked to his father.
 He said, “Father, a man came and said that you should come.”
 “I-I-I,” he said, “What man...”
 He said, “He is a good man.
 He said you should come.”
 440 He replied, “You are not going to sit near me.”
 He [Fòningama] sent his son behind him.
 After a while the [good] man said, “The man did not come.”
 He beat the blind son a little,
 And he received his eyesight.
 445 He said, “Go and call your father.”
 He went and called his father.
 He said, “Father, a man came and said - haaan!
 He is fearful but he said that you should come.”
 His father said, “Ah,
 450 You were blind,
 And you came?”
 He said, “Hummm.”
 Then he said, “You go behind me.”
 So he went and sat behind him.
 455 He threw a rock at the limp man and said, “Rise.
 Go and tell your father to come.
 He got up and went to Fòningama who was in the valley under the rock.
 He said, “Father, the man who came said that you should come.”
 “Oooh,” he said, “Praise God.”
 460 He said, “My three sons have gotten up.”

455 The speaker said that he already healed the son who was crippled, so he probably meant the deaf son. In Maniyakā, ‘deaf’ is *tologbèlìq*. Someone who cannot speak is called a *boobo*. While most *boobolu* are deaf, some deaf people can speak (Djobba Kamara, personal communication).

The person who made him get up...
He [Fòningama] said, "I will go and see that good man."

[Fòningama submits to "the good man;" "Jomani" origin]]

- He rose and went to the good man.
Then he said, "I submit to you.
465 I submitted and my three sons have become mature.
I submit."
Now, the Jomani say that they own the Gbè.
They were the first to repent.
It is said that the Jomani were the first people to submit to the good man,
470 When they came down.
When you hear them talk about Fòningama,
That is where he came from.
When you hear "the Jomaninu,"
Joma dènu,
475 We say "Jomaninu."
That is how the history begins.

[The Jomani, Masale, and Talawole establish their boundaries]

- Fòningama descended from there.
Fòningama came down.
Fòningama traveled and traveled,
480 And settled in Misadu.
He came,
And made one farm here,
And one garden there.
That is because every country has its own medicine.
485 When you go somewhere you know the name of that place.
If you leave here and go to Kankan,
They will tell you that the Konè moved there at one time.
If you leave here and go to Kulòngò,
Awa, they will tell you that the Konè once moved there.
490 The Masale have their own land there.
The Talawole have their own land there.
The Jomani have their own land.
Whenever you reach somewhere first,

461 Arabic.

469 The speaker seems to be implying that the Jomani were the first Muslims to migrate to this southern area. 'good (*nyumana*) man (*mòò*)': This seems to be a reference to the Prophet Muhammed.

473-475 *Joman deninu*: = 'Joman's children (*deni*) /plural/ (*nu*).'
Jomaninu/Jomani is a contraction *Joman deninu/Jomanu*.

484 'medicine': *basi*.

You will be asked about your boundary.
 495 Where is your boundary?
 That is how people came to the land.
 That is how people came to the land.
 That is how the Jomani ancestor came.
 But they all came from Mande.
 500 Everyone came from Mande.
 No one will tell you that their root did not come from Mande.
 Therefore, that is what I know about that.
 That is what I know about that.
 That is the white man's homecoming gift.
Mammadi: Thank you.

[Zo Musa Kòma and the Kòma society]

Mammadi: That person, Kòma Musa... Tim: Zo Masa Kòma. Mammadi: Zo Musa
 Kòma. Tell us about Zo Musa Kòma in Misadu.
 505 Ansumana: Hun?
Mammadi: Zo Musa Kòma.
Ansumana: Zo Musa Kòma.
 I don't know.
 I don't know.
Tim: Kònsaba?
Ansumana: Hèn?
Tim: Kònsaba?
Ansumana: [no answer]...

* * *

[MANIYAKA JELILU]

Mammadi: Who are the *jèli* here in this country?
Ansumana: Hey, aye, there are many.
Mammadi: Can you explain something about that? [Who are] some of the people?
 595 Ansumana: Aye! I don't know those kind of people! (Everyone laughed)
Mammadi: Are there *jèli* in other clans? In this clan?
Ansumana: All clans...
 All clans have *jèli*.
 Do you understand?
 There is no particular [*jèli*] clan.
 600 All people have them with the exception of the white people.
 But all the black people have *jèli*.

504 'That is the white man's homecoming gift': Jabateh was saying that his interview was his way of welcoming me back to Douama-Sobala after a two year absence.

If you see the Jomani,
 The *jèli* of the Jomani,
 Are the *funè*.
 605 Do you understand?
 The *jèli* of the Jomani,
 Are the Dunò.
 The old men for the Jomani,
 Are the Dunò.
 610 If their birth could be explained,
 That would be it.
 The people,
 Who are the old people of the Jomani,
 Are the Dunò.
 615 Alright!
 All clans...
 All clans have *jèli*.
 There is no one group of people who are *jèli*.
Mammadi: Can you tell us about the *funè* business?
Ansumana: Ah, I don't know about that. (Everyone laughed)
 I don't know about the *funè* business.
Mammadi: Are all the *jèli* the same?
 620 Ansumana: *Jèli*?
Mammadi: Aan.
Ansumana: There are *jèli* in every clan.
Tim: How did people get to be *jèli*?
Mammadi: I already asked that one.
Someone in the audience: Say it.
Mammadi: How did people get to be *jèli*? How did the *jèli* business come about?
 The matter of *jèliya*, to say *jèli*? How did that come to people? How does a
 person become a *jèli*?
Ansumana: He did not understand and now he is asking again.
 I said all clans have *jèli*.
 It started for big reasons.
 625 He did not understand what I explained today.
 I talked a long time about our own.
 Like you now,
 If you tell your younger brother that you have become a man,
 And then you become a big man while you are sitting there,
 630 Then he will become the war king.
 Then you will have to praise your younger brother.
 That is how those things started.
 Haaaan!
 Like you are now.

613 'old people': *kèmòòba*.

635 When Soko praises you,
Then you will become a war chief and he will become a big man.
That is how that business started.
That is how *jèliya* started...

* * *

[ISLAM, KÒMA & NYANA]
[Islam and Kòma]

Mammadi: How did Islam (*Slamiya*) come here?

Ansumana: Islam (laughter, pause)...

Islam...

We have heard of Islam (*moiya*).

We were here,

655 In our land,
And we never had many Muslims.
About the coming of Islam.

Islam came down.

Islam came down.

660 It did not go up,
It came down.

We were here when it came.

They say that prayer came down from the desert.

Only a few people were here when it came.

665 Only a few people were praying.

We were told that only a few people were praying.

To say that everyone would be a Muslim,

That was good.

That is why many people joined.

670 For that matter you could only count a few Muslim towns here.

Our first Muslim town was Baladu.

Baladu.

The people of Baladu used to pray in this land too much.

Awa, they prayed more than the people in any other town.

675 All of the people here had *kòma*.

Awa, then Islam came.

We became Muslims because we were told.

They said, "If you join Islam you will be saved.

It would be good if you became a Muslim."

680 That is how Islam came.

But we heard that Islam came down from Makka,

Came down.

681 Makka: = Mecca.

That was how they came.

[Maniya Kòma and Loma *nyana*]

Mammadi: What was the *kòma* business like between the Maniya and Loma?
Who had *kòma*? How did they get it in their land?

Ansumana: Loma,
685 Maniya,
Awa, they had one *kòma*.
The Loma had their *kòma*,
And the Maniya had their own.
The one for the Loma was called *nyana*.
690 The one for the Manding was called *kòma*.
Awa, the Loma and Maniya,
Had the *kòma*,
But the Maniya did not have *nyana*.
The Maniya had *kòma*.
695 That was how it was.

Mammadi: What is *nyana*? What is *kòma*?

Ansumana: *Nyana*,
They are all the same *kòma*.
They are *masafin*.
They all kill humans.
Someone in the audience: They are *masafin*, but with different names?
700 Ansumana: Some are *nyana*, and some are *kòma*.

[ANCIENT MISADU: III]
[Fòningama - warrior and Muslim]

Mammadi: He wants to know what kind of job Fòningama did. What was his
work?

Ansumana: Fòningama's job was to fight.
He prayed,
But he also fought.
His ancestor fought a war.
705 That is what we heard, (pause)
That is what I know. (laughter)
Mammadi: How did he become powerful?
Ansumana: He became powerful by fighting.
He fought and became powerful.
He captured slaves.
710 He took slaves when he attacked people.
He sent them to the farm kitchens.

698 *masafin*: 'chief's thing.' *Masafin* sometimes means 'masked dancer.'

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HISTORY FROM THE MUSADU EPIC:
THE FORMATION OF MANDING POWER ON THE
SOUTHERN FRONTIER OF THE MALI EMPIRE

VOLUME V

By

Timothy William Geysbeek

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of History

2002

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.23

MAMMADI KONÈ

Place and date of interview: Douama-Sobala, Guinea, 12 July 1992

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek and Makula Mammadi Kromah

Context of interview: We arrived in Douama on Sunday noon, and had to leave the next morning by 5:00 a.m., so only had one day to conduct interviews. Mammadi Konè, who said he was fifty-seven years old, consented to let us interview him at dusk. This was near mealtime, so we ran into the problem that he was hungry and wanted to eat. We knew that we would not be able to interview him after he ate and prayed, so Mammadi Kromah pressed on. Mr. Konè provided hints about the basic struggle between men and women in the circumcision process, the origin of the Manden, and the early divisions of esoteric associations.

Transcribed by: Kèlèti Fofana (Monrovia, 1992)

Translated by: Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1992)

Checked by: Faliku Sanoe (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Boakai Yamah, Faliku Sanoe and Tim Geysbeek (Monrovia, 1993) -
tape/transcript, translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

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[Women separated from men in the Bambara *kènè* society]

Mammadi: He (Tim) is asking you where the Konè came from before they reached here. How did they come? They may have come from the north or somewhere else. Explain how they came to our land so he can know the history.

Konè: I am going to start from the beginning.

They told us in our presence,

That we came from Misadu.

Do you hear?

5 They were living in Misadu.

If you hear “Bamala *gafui*,”

That is where the children went who were circumcised.

Do you hear?

After the circumcision was done our ancestor said,

10 “Man and woman are circumcised in the same place.

That is not right.

We should fix our own place.”

Do you hear?

They fixed a place where the *suluku* dug a hole.

15 That was where the *suluku* dug a hole.

Do you hear?

The hole that the *suluku* can dig is where they did the circumcising.

Do you hear?

When they did that,

20 They said, “Haaan!”

One month.

After the second [month] they said, “Let us pass a law.

If we don’t pass a law,

6 *gafui*: This is a name for Loma, Kpelle and Gbandi or non-Manding ‘masked dancers.’ The speaker was saying that the *gafui* originated with the Bamana. The Gbandi in Liberia sing about the *bambara gafui* and consider them to be very powerful *nyana* (Boakai Yahah, personal communication).
(*kènè*): The word *kènè* has at least two meanings: ‘to circumcise,’ and the society where circumcision and initiation take place.

14 *suluku*: hyena.

- The women will own this place with us.”
 25 They passed that law.
 The Loma agreed.
 The Kpelle agreed.
 The Maniya agreed.
 The Kissi agreed.
 30 Eh, the Kulòngò agreed.
 Haven’t I said five?
 The different people came from that.
 In the division they said,
 “The Maniya should be in their own group.
 35 The Loma should be in their own group.
 The Fula should be in their own group.

[The Fula control the *nyana*]

- The Fula were the *nyana* owners.
 Do you hear me?
 The Fula people were involved in the *nyana* business.
 40 But when they stole too much - haaan!
 From our ancestor Fatalabama,
 He said that none of his descendants who came from *haijènè* - Makka,
 Would go anywhere else.
 That is what they used to do. [...]
 45 They [the Fulbe] used to clean their heads and rub salt on them. (speaker
 laughed)
 They would break through the fence at night,
 And guide them [the cows] past the fence.
 They [the Fulbe] would place their heads close to the cows,
 And then the cows would come out.
 50 They [the Fulbe] would go and do the same thing again.
 Do you hear?
 When that happened they [the Konè] said,

24 Without separating the men and women, the women would have the same control and rights as men, and the men would not be more dominant.

32 ‘people’: *si*.

36-58 There seems to have been a *nyana* law which stated that no one should accuse another person of stealing when they were being circumcised (in the *kènè*). The Fulbe apparently stole some cattle from the Konè during the *kènè* according to this story, and the Konè complained. The Fulbe left the area because the Konè broke the law.

37 See l. 86.

41 Fatalabama: This is a well-known story that the Manding, Fulbe and others tell about the late-nineteenth century French Governor General Louis Faidherbe (Robinson 1985:210-211; Brett-Smith 1996:10; see l. 297ff.).

42 Makka: = Mecca.

49 ‘and then the cows would come out’: The cows would lick the salt that was on the heads of the Fulbe. The cows would follow the Fulbe, licking their heads, as the Fulbe backed out past the fence.

- “Ah, we have been robbed!”
 The ancestor of the Fula said, “Woki!
 55 When we are in the *kènè* (being circumcised) no one should say,
 ‘I have lost something.’
 You can’t say, ‘My clothes are missing.’
 I can’t stay here.
 Let’s leave.”
- 60 They [the Fulbe?] left and went to Conakry.
 Their old man was there,
 And he had students.
 When God revealed his laws it was said,
 “Eh! If you people are neighbors,
 65 You must you must be governed by laws.”
 That was when the *moliya* came.
 After they became students the Fula carried the Qur’an.
 I don’t care what you think about the Fula, they are *mori*.
 If one does not become a *mori*,
- 70 His heart will not be cold.
 Any of them that you see...
 They are still involved in slavery today.
 The slavery is in secret.
 If you tell them [the Fula],
- 75 “You can’t say that because the white people will kill you,”
 They will just laugh and say,
 “We can say that because we are in our own land.
 Let us say it.” (speaker laughed)
 But if you see that the Loma, Maniya, Kissi, Kpelle, Kulòngò and Siwòlòn have
 cows,
- 80 If you see that we have cows,
 The Fula will be stealing them.
 Any time they took them [cows] out [of the fence],
 They [the cows] never returned [back into the fence].
 The *kènè* business was started after the division.
- 85 They said, “We must respect one another.”
 They built a *nyana* house and gave it into the hands of the Fula.
 They told them, “You have to remove your *nyana* law.”
 Everyone is better in his father’s group.

67 Qur’an: = *kafaa*. The Qur’an that is carefully handwritten on sheets of paper. Explanatory notes are often added, and different colors of ink are sometimes used (e.g., red for God’s words; black for Muhammad’s words).

70 ‘cold’: = *tèsuma*; means ‘happy’ or ‘satisfied.’ The Fula are *mori*, and are not content if they are not *mori*.

84 ‘*kènè* business’ (circumcision): not necessarily connected with the Poro or Sande. The Poro do not circumcise and initiate at the same time and place. Initiation involves body marking, not circumcision.

86 See line 37. ‘They’: The Maniyaka and Loma?

[The Loma to control the *nyana*]

- Now the Maniya and Loma said,
90 “Let the Loma be the head of the law.”
Do you hear?
When the Loma were made the head of the law [they said],
“If anyone breaks the law they [the Loma] can tell him [the law breaker]
anything but...
Or, if not that, they can kill them.”
95 Then they [the Manding] said, “Ki! let’s leave it with them.”
It will be the best if we leave it with them.
That is how the Loma came to be the leaders of the *nyana*.
Mammadi: Is that how the Loma got their name?
Konè: Aan.
Tònba.
100 They are the mother of the law.
[They said], “We have passed the law,
But let’s make one person be over the law. (speaker and others laughed)
They is why they are called the father of the law.
If that had not happened they would say,
105 “The Bamana *gafui* medicine in the Maniya land.
It is [for the] Loma.”
Bamana *gafui*.
When they left, they did something.
They did something.
110 They said, ‘Let it stay with the Loma.’”
Now they say, “Go away, Mande stranger.” (speaker laughs)
Do you hear that?
To say that the Mande are strangers? (speaker laughs)
Tim: I will hear it [the tape recorder] later.
115 Konè: We have become strangers.
We who owned it have been left in the back.
Let me stop there so that I can turn and hear it.

[MISADU DIVISION: I]

[The division of the people in Konokòlò]

- Mammadi: I will not turn it right now, so go on and say everything.
Konè: Awa, when that happened,
That was what they were doing.
They said, “Come, let’s make the division.
120 It will be the best thing when we make the division.

92-93 The Loma pronounced judgment on the lawbreaker.

99 Tònba: ‘mother (*ba*) [of the] law (*tòn*).’

111 ‘stranger’ (*bolokali*): Literally, ‘uninitiated member.’

- The division was done under the *kono* - *kòlò* tree.
 That is the *kono* seed that the *mori* cook and put in their ink pot.
 That is how we got the name Konokòlò.
 The division that was done in Misadu...
 125 That is how they got the name Konokòlò.
 Salangò came from it [the division].
 Kulòngò came from it.
 Awa, they divided the *jamana*.
 They traveled down to the ocean and also went up.
 130 Do you hear that?
 This was how the people settled.
 We are somebody now.
 As soon as you talk,
 They will say, “Haa, he is Kpelle.” (speaker laughed)
 135 As soon as you talk,
 They will say, “He is Bawolan.” (speaker laughed)
 As soon as you talk,
 They will say, “This is, aye - Jukulu.”
 We are divided according to the way that we talk,
 140 And the places where we have settled.
 Now we are in our own place.
 You will not speak what you do not hear.
 You will speak what you hear.
 It would not be good if that was not true.
 145 You must be in your area.
 I am just summarizing what I have in my mind this evening.
 I have not finished talking about everything.
 That is it.
 Let’s continue before it is time to eat food.
Mammadi: You can explain that and talk about something else because
 he (Tim) is going tomorrow.
 150 Konè: Eh, I will tell you to pay me or feed me.
 Can’t I go eat?
Mammadi: Would we just leave you like that? We’ll not leave you like this
 [without paying you] if you don’t hurry. He will not leave you like this if
 you say everything and when you are finished.
Konè: I should only talk a little?
Mammadi: No, he said you should explain everything.
Konè: Hoooh!

123 Konokòlò: = ‘under (*kòlò*) the Kono [tree].’ Konokòlò is the major region located southwest of Konya-Mani.

136 Bawolan: Or, Bawulèn.

138 Jukulu: Identity unknown to the editor.

[The Loma and *nyana*]

- When that happened, [the Loma said],
155 “If you completely refuse the *nyana* business,
We will refuse them.”
We did not refuse it for any other reason.
If the person whom you are walking with is stronger than you,
Then let it stay with him.
160 Isn’t the case over if you leave it with him?
However, it was not like that from the start.
The Bawulèn (Bawolan), Jukukulu, Loma have...
All of them have *doo-fa*.
The Kpelle also.
165 We who do not participate in that,
The Manding,
And, èh - the Kulòngò.
Those are two that I have not mentioned.
Awa, the Sangala people,
170 And the people of Koniya said,
Said that they were tired of it.
They said, “Kii, your law is stronger than us.
Let it stay with you [the Loma].”
All the leaf medicine...
175 All the leaf medicine remains in their land because those leaves are the
kind that kill human beings.
I am not talking about the bright Fula.
You can point to a person and kill that person right away with that medicine.
Do you hear?
Awa, that is why they keep it.
180 Do you hear?
When we recently left...

* * *

158 ‘If the person whom you are walking with is stronger than you’: The speaker here acknowledged that the Loma became ‘stronger than’ the Maniyaka. One possible explanation is that the Loma became more serious followers of *nyana* as the Maniyaka became more Islamicized.

169 Sangala: = Sankaran.

175 ‘leaf medicine’ (*fila basi*): = leaves that people use to make medicine.

176 ‘bright Fula’: *fulagbè*.

179 ‘That is why it remains with them’: Here the speaker was saying that the Maniyaka disassociated themselves from the *nyana* because the ‘leaf medicine’ business that the Loma used with *nyana* was so bad.

[ANCIENT MISADU: III]
[Fatalaba migrates from Makka and Mande to Misadu]

- Mammadi: Eh, the Konè ancestor who you talked about, which of them came and settled this way before they went to Misadu?
- Konè: They were in Mande.
- 280 Our ancestors were in Mande.
God did not,
Make Mande land,
With many people.
When the food was destroyed,
- 285 The first land that appeared was Mande.
If you think about what we are talking about,
If you go there,
They will tell you that there is no stranger there.
You will feed yourself from time that you get there up,
- 290 To the time that you leave.
They put money together,
And tell you that this is what it will cost to go to Makka.
After they left Mande,
They went to Misadu.
- 295 [They said], “Aye, let’s try and guard ourselves.
We should be circumcised.
Fatalaba who was leading the prayer was a white man.
He was not a black man.
Now, as it was said...
- 300 He said, “I will not pray behind a person who is not circumcised.
That was why he rose and went up.
He was the first person who brought a bicycle.
An old lady told him, “If you don’t leave...”
He traveled to where the sun sets.
- 305 He said, “We will not pray behind a person who is not circumcised.
He came from Makka.
That is where everyone goes to find a blessing,
Whether you are white,
Or black,
- 310 Or whatever other kind of person you are.
If you say that you want to go to heaven,
You have to go to Makka on Friday.
If you are not circumcised they will kill you on Friday.

285 ‘first’ (*premier*): French. This short episode might represent a segment of a Maniyaka version of the “Mande creation myth” (Dieterlen 1957). It may also say something about drought conditions that probably contributed to the downfall of Wagadu and the unstable period that preceded the establishment of the Mali empire (Conrad 1984:41).

297 See line note 42.

That will be one reason why a person will die.
 315 The white man took the Injil and added it to the Torah.
 The Injil that is made...
 That is a kind of writing.
 The white people added it [the Torah] to the Injil.
 They will...
 320 You can't harm someone and defeat him.
 Let the kind of work that you do be good.
 Let the mind that you be good.
 You can find that in the Qur'an or the Injil.
 This is what our father's took and carried.
Tim: Is he finished or not?

[The Kòno?]

Mammadi: The Kòno. The people that are called the Kòno. Do you know
 anything about the Kòno history?
 325 Konè: Haa! Eh-èh,
 I don't know about their history.
 They are human beings,
 And we are human beings,
 But everyone has their own route and the way that they grew up.
 330 I can't talk about the one that I don't know about.
 I will stop there.

[A woman warrior?]

Mammadi: Eh, do you know about any woman who ever became a warrior?
Konè: Hay!
 I never heard my father talk about that,
 To say that a woman ever became a war chief.
 335 I never heard my father say that.
 What I heard from my father's mouth,
 Was that all of the people who became warriors were men.
 They used to pay the youth and go attack.
 They captured people.
 340 They enslaved them and traded some of them for knives or food.
 But I never heard that a woman ever became a war chief.
 I have never heard that,
 Even today.
 345 I have not been told about that,
 And I have not heard that. [...]

[Fòningama and Base Kamara]

Mammadi: Do you know anything about Fòningama?

Konè: The man does not want me to go into my house (laughing).
 The talk about Fòningama,
 Is about our *jamana*.
 Do you hear?
 350 Fòningama.
 When the land was divided that was our land.
 Who owned the land?
 Fòningama.
 His grave is here.
 355 Fòningama's father was Base [Fase?] Kama.
 We are the descendants of Base Kama...

* * *

[The Jomani land owners]

Mammadi: Do you know anything about Fòningama who was in Misadu? Tell
 him what happened.
Tim: The Jomani in Misadu.
Mammadi: The Jomande.
Konè: They are the land owners (*duuti*) in Misadu.
 They own the whole *jamana*.
 400 In all of the black man's land they are there.
 They are the land owners.
 They were the first to go there.
 Like from where Makka is to go to the white man's land,
 And like the way we say "Pali."
 405 The same white people have Pali.
 The people of Fòningama are our people from Paris.
 Even if ten people move,
 You must stay under my shade.
 Talk about that.
 410 Let me stop here.
Mammadi: I want you to talk about the history of the Konè.
Konè: Do you understand?
 If you explain it like as if we were children...
 I don't know much about that.
Someone else: The Fòningama business. Do you know how the Fòningama
 business came about? The Jomani who were in Misadu: the way that they
 came and how they began. Do you know that history? Because, when you

354 If Konè was referring to the Macenta area where he was speaking, then he was more likely talking about Foningama's locally renown descendant Sewoni who allegedly migrated from Musadu to Douama-Sobala (Geysbeek 1995).

404 Pali: = Paris.

408 'under my shade': speaking of being under the shade or identity of Foningama?

are talking...

Konè: I said what I knew.

415 I have told him that I am not talking for free.
I told him that, right?

Mammadi: Han-han-han (laughing).

Someone else: That is real true.

Mammadi: Yes.

Konè: But he said I should explain something if I know about it,
Right,
Brother Mammadi?

420 I have told you what I know.
I have told you what I know.
That is the end.
I am done talking.
The Fòningama talk that I never heard from my ear...

425 Those are not the people of our day.
They are gone.
We were not born when they were involved in their activities every morning.
If he wants to know about that history,
You should go ask my father who knows about some of those things.

Mammadi: He said, if you want to know more about Foningama, you should go
talk to this man's pa, the old pa, Musa Kièlè.

Tim: We already talked to him. Can he say something about Fòningama?

Mammadi: Do you know something about Fòningama?

430 Konè: Ah!
Should I go back again!

Mammadi: You have not talked about that.

Konè: He does not know.

Someone else: Mammadi doesn't know.

[The Maniya and Loma take the *kènè* to the *suluku* hole]

Konè: Zo Masa Kòma.
Misa.

435 Misa, èh-èh-èh...
He was Loma, èh-èh-èh,
Misa was Maniya.
Zo Masa Kòma,
He was Loma.

440 Two of them were living in Misadu and they said, "Hun!
We have to teach one another.
How are we going to teach one another?
Let's go to the hole of the *suluku*.
That came about because of the *kènè* business.

445 I have already said that today.
They carried the *kènè* business to the *suluku* hole.

No woman could go there.

[The Maniya and Fula make the *soko* leaf medicine and entrust the law to the Loma]

[They said], "Let's find another medicine leaf to add to our *kòma*."

The Maniya said, "You Fula,

450 Do your best.

Let everyone make their own medicine."

When that happened they said, "Let's play the *soko*.

Let's put a kola nut on it so it can be the leaf medicine.

Do you hear?

455 Now the *soko* was the leaf medicine, "fuu-fuu-fuu."

They told the Loma, "Since you people did not look for the medicine,

Place it in front of the initiates who have been circumcised.

When that happens,

The rest of us will follow you so that nothing will happen to the children who
have just been circumcised.

460 As has been said,

Before anything happened to the children who were circumcised,

They said, "Let us make a law between ourselves,

And find someone who will control the law and deal with the violators.

The person who will brush the road...

465 The person who will brush the road to the hole of the *suluku*.
That was how the *suluku* business was.

[The division in Konokòlò]

Then they said, "There are more of us now.

Since God has made it possible for the flood waters to go down,

There are many of us.

470 Let's divide the land.

That was the division that was done under the Kolo tree.

When they made the division under the Kolo tree,

They forgot about...

They forgot,

452 *soko*: = a small drum with strings along the side that one puts under ones. Blacksmiths use *sokolu*.

455 'the *soko* was the medicine': The *soko* was the object of the sacrifice (*bolì*?). Kola nuts were placed there, and blood sacrificed from animals would drip on them (Faliku Sanoe, personal communication). (None of my assistants were familiar with the term *bolì*). After children are circumcised, they sit in a group on mats where they heal and are instructed. Medicine is placed in front of the group to protect them so that they will not die from sorcery.

456 'it': the *soko*. The Loma did not have leaf medicine according to the speaker, so they placed the *soko* in front of the newly circumcised children.

468-69 'flood': More people were born after the flood of Noah's time.

- 475 Eh, about the people of Konokòlò.
The people who were there,
Their old man's name was (pause)
Aan, I forgot.
They forgot about him.
- 480 When the division was over they said, "Let's go."
Then he woke up and said,
"You made the division.
You did not give anything to me,
Even though you made the division under my tree.
- 485 Then they told them that they could keep any areas that they could conquer in
war.
That is how they got the name Konokòlò.
Someone else: It goes from Zolawolò.
Konè: Yes.
Another person: All the way to Vasidu.
- 490 All of that is Konokòlò.
The person: Konokòlò stops in Vasidu, right?
Konè: Aan.
The person: Konokòlò stops in Vasidu.
Konè: That whole area is Konokòlò.
- 495 They forgot about their ancestor in the division.
They stayed there.
The others went down on their head.
I am done.

489 Vasidu: or, Vasseredou.

497 'went down on their head': They went wherever their heads led them.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.24

LAYI UMAR KOMARA

Place and date of interview: Lassaou, Guinea, 19 July 1992

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek and Makula Mammadi Kromah

Context of interview: This was my first visit to Lassaou since the same Makula Mammadi Kromah took Mark Wilson, my wife (Tami), my son (Jamie) and I there on December 31, 1984. A couple of the men who we wanted to visit were not in town, so Mammadi directed us to Layi Umar's house. I was interested in interviewing Umar because he was a Komara. The Komara or Komala are different from the Kromah (Koloma) and Kamara.

Umar's son Bangali helped us arrange the interview. We interviewed Layi Umar in his house. Even though Bangali explained what was involved in conducting the interview, Umar felt uncomfortable. Bangali and another one of his sons were present for the interview, and they encouraged him to talk.

We turned the tape off several times to explain questions to Layi Umar. Therefore, while some of the questions do not appear on the transcript, we have Layi Umar's complete testimony. The recorder was turned off and on at different points throughout the interview; this is specifically marked in this interview by three ellipses [...].

Transcribed by: Adama Talawole (Macenta, July 1992)

Translated by: Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Boakai Yamah and Tim Geysbeek (Monrovia, 1993) - transcript/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

Translation note: Layi Umar's voice was unusually strong and clear, and the recording

was good. This made it easier to translate the interview.

Summary of contents:

The Kamara leopard taboo: 107-110

The Komara dog taboo: 111-115

The Muslim dog taboo: 116

The Jomani elephant and leopard taboos: 117-133

[The Kamara leopard taboo]

Eh, the taboo business, èh - is not serious.

The taboo business is not serious any more.

They used to say that the Kamara could not eat leopard.

110 Ah, they could not eat leopard.

[The Komara dog taboo]

Ah, the Komara could not eat dog.

The Boloboloma [?] could not eat dog.

They could not eat dog, [they] could not eat dog.

The saw themselves as Muslims.

115 That is the way of Islam.

[The Muslim dog taboo]

Dog is taboo for all Muslims.

[The Jomani elephant and leopard taboos]

The Kamara can't eat leopard because they are the warrior *masa*.

Our relationship with them...

They were the chief fighters.

120 They were the fighters,

But their descendants are Muslim now.

The Muslim's taboo is now everyone's taboo.

The old taboos are now disregarded.

No one thinks about them anymore...

109 'leopard': *sòli*.

111 'dog': *wulini*.

- 125 The Jomani, the Kamara can't eat elephant.
The ones here can't eat leopard.
The ones that can't eat elephant are the descendants of Kòmba.
They live up.
They are Kamara.
- 130 They are not -
They are not -
They are not one...
They are the same clan...

121 Muslim: *moriya*.

125 'elephant': = *sama*.

126 'leopard': = *wala*. *Wala* and *sòli* mean 'leopard.'

127 Kòmba: probably Kònsaba, the person from Gbè, who is alleged in other interviews to have been Foniṅgama's older brother.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.25

FATA BAKARI KROMAH

Place and date of interview: Macenta, Guinea, 20 July 1992

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek and Boakai Yamah

Context of interview: Fata Bakari Kromah was my stranger father in Macenta who passed away in 1999. I first met him when Makula Mohammed Kromah took me to Macenta in August 1984. I returned that Christmas with my wife Tami, son Jamie and Mark Wilson, and saw him again in October 1992. He did not appear to hold anything back when I asked a question, except for a time when I asked about Fakoli. I interviewed Bakari on this occasion with Boakai Yamah on the veranda of his house in Macenta. Another older person was present for the interview. He did not contribute to the interview, seem to influence what Bakari said, or even listen the whole time. We interrupted the interview a couple of times to greet people, but those people passed on. This was the third time that I interviewed Bakari. The first time was in January 1985, and the second time was in October 1990 (Appendix 7.25).

Transcribed by: Adama Talawole (Macenta, July 1992)

Translated by: Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek & Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1993) - transcript/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

Translation note: The original tape was used in each stage of the translation process. The quality of the recording is good, and the speaker had a clear voice.

Summary of contents:

The Kromah dog taboo: 125-130

Foningama gets the leopard taboo from Fakoli: 131-162

Elephant (Konsaba) and leopard (Foningama) taboos: 163-178

The divisions in Mande and Misadu: 179-200

Foningama's *wulukèlèn* sacrifice: 201-306

[The Kromah dog taboo]

- Boakai: What is the taboo for the Kromah like you?
125 Bakari: (laughs) Our taboo,
Our taboo is -
Our taboo is dog.
Dog, dog.
We can't eat dog.
130 That is our taboo.

[Foningama gets the leopard taboo from Fakoli]

- Boakai: Who can't eat leopard-leopard or elephant?
Bakari: The Jomani.
Tim: Which one which?
Boakai: Which of the two?
Bakari: Both are the same.
They came towards Misadu.
Their taboo was the big animal.
135 Do you hear?
Since the division,
Ah, our ancestor Foningama,
The Jomani ancestor Foningama and our ancestor Fakoli,
Our grandchildren are the Jomani.
140 We, we ourselves listen.
We ourselves were the leopard.
It was our ancestor himself [who had the leopard taboo].
At some point,
The leopard would come and sit by him.
145 At some point,

125 'taboo': *tana*.

127 'dog': *wulini*.

134 'big animal' (*soba*): = 'big (*ba*) animal (*so*).'. Often a reference to an elephant.

139 'our grandchildren are the Jomani': Other informants also said that Foningama's mother was a Kromah (Ch. 7).

141 'leopard': *wala*, throughout the interview, except for *sòli* in line 171.

The leopard would come and sit by him.
 That was him himself.
 But, Foningama was his grandchild.
 The clay pot that our ancestor used to bathe in,
 150 That bathing thing...
 When he bathed in the pot,
 Everything was complete.
 When he bathed in the pot,
 Everything was complete.
 155 His grandson was Foningama.
 He [Foningama] went and bathed in his [Fakoli's] bathing place.
 He [Fakoli] became sad.
 He said, "It is never possible again."
 He took himself and said,
 160 "What Foningama has done cannot be erased."
 He gave the leopard to the Jomani.
 He [Fakoli] made that their taboo.

[Elephant (Konsaba) and leopard (Foningama) taboos]

Those [Jomani with the elephant taboo] are the descendants of Kònsaba.
 They are all Kamara.
 165 They have the same blood,
 But they are the descendants of Kònsaba.
 They are in the region going from the area north of Beyla to Konowari.
 Their taboo is the elephant.
 The others now,
 170 Who are descendants of Foningama,
 Have a leopard taboo.
 That is what we call *wala*.
 They say *sòli* from Kaa on down.
 The people who say *ngo* and *wala* in Maniyakā are those who live in the area
 from Gbin on down.
 175 But they both mean one thing.
Wala and *sòli* are the same things.
 Some of the Jomani have a *sòli* taboo,

148-62 Tènu Kamā Kamara gave a detailed description of this episode (App. 7.19). Tènu Kamā told how Fakoli got a powerful medicine pot from his daughters, and how that pot and its powers were transferred to Foningama when Foningama did something to defile the pot.

149 'clay pot': = *dala*. 'Everything was complete': This means that the power of the pot was complete.

161 'He gave the leopard to the Jomani': This means that he gave Foningama his taboo and all of his secrets (Boakai Yamah, personal communication).

166-167 The descendants of Konsaba live in the Mau-Touba-Barala regions of western Côte d'Ivoire or Konowari.

174 *ngo*: = 'I (n) say (go/ko).'

And some have a *wala* taboo.

[The divisions in Mande and Misadu]

Boakai: I want to ask you about the division that they always talk about. Can you explain the way that the division was done?

Bakari: The division of this land.

- 180 The region,
The division was done in Mande.
The first one was done there.
That is the one that we were told about.
Ah, after that the people...
- 185 People went, people went, people went.
That is what they call "division."
One clan would continue to go.
Some left.
Some left.
- 190 Some left.
Some left.
That is what they call "division,"
Some people left each other and went to settle in new places.
Some people went to another areas.
- 195 That is what we call "division."
Boakai: In the Foningama history...
Bakari: That happened in Misadu.
Misadu.
Now, the division,
That division happened in Misadu.
- 200 They said that the division happened in Misadu.

[Foningama's *wulukèlèn* sacrifice]

Misa - Misadu.

Eh, Foningama made the *wulukèlèn* sacrifice in Misadu.

They always talk about that in our presence.

Wulukèlèn (one thousand).

- 205 *Wulukèlèn* (one thousand) of everything.

Wakèlèn and *wulukèlèn* are the same.

He arranged it.

He made that sacrifice,

Including a human being.

- 210 He sacrificed all those things with a human being,

179 'division': *talili*.

186 'clan': *kabila*.

202 *wulukèlèn* (*wiki*) *salaka*: 'sacrifice (*salaka*) of one (*kèlèn*) thousand (*wulu/wa*).'

- [He sacrificed] anything that money could buy.
Tim: Did he describe it? Can he talk more?
Boakai: Is the *wulukèlèn* sacrifice still made today?
Bakari: Aye, no one has that kind of power now.
 Hay (claps hands twice), the only person who can say that he can make a
wulukèlèn is one who has taken a whole *jamana*.
- 215 Good, like the way Charles Taylor came to Liberia.
 If it was said that he should sacrifice one thousand persons,
 Couldn't he apprehend them and distribute them?
 He could even do more.
 It is only a powerful person who can sacrifice one thousand [items].
- 220 When you fight,
 You can enslave some people,
 You can kill some of them,
 You can leave some of them.
 Those were the kind of people that he sacrificed.
- 225 But a poor person cannot do that.
 A poor person cannot sacrifice so many people.
 We have never heard that since we became old.
 The only person who made that kind of *wulukèlèn* sacrifice was Foningama.
 Only him alone.
- 230 To say that you make a *wulukèlèn* sacrifice of everything,
 Not just human beings,
 But everything else as well.
 Everything that a human being could get was included.
 Some said that it was the full market ground.
- 235 They would say, "When the market is full, the market ground..."
 Let's say, "When the market is full."
 You know?
 Like when the herder has brought his cows,
 When the shepherd has brought his sheep,
- 240 When the goat owner has brought his goats.
 They brought rice.
 They brought oil.
 They brought things from the farm.
 They brought human beings.
- 245 Human beings were sold at that time.
 That was the purpose of the market ground.
 People bought human beings, cows, and horses.
 Other people wanted rice.

215 Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) had just taken all of Liberia and part of Monrovia from 24 December 1989 to August 1990. At the time of this interview, Prince Johnson's Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia and the multi-national West African force ECOMOG was pushing the NPFL out of Monrovia towards Kakata.

218 To distribute these captured persons to his clients, not to kill them.

Others wanted oil.
 250 Everyone went to buy.
 Good, then he [Foningama] went and stood up.
 He said, "They said that I should make a *wulukèlèn* sacrifice.
 Oh God, accept us.
 255 You are merciful.
 I am using this market ground and everything in it for the sacrifice."
 That was how the *wulukèlèn* sacrifice was made.
 He did not gather everything together at different times.
 He himself did not go and gather one thousand things:
 260 One thousand people,
 One thousand sheep,
 One thousand cows,
 One thousand goats,
 One thousand chickens,
 265 Or all the crops on the plantation,
 To get one thousand of everything.
 He never did that.
 It was a full market,
 Like the market was when he went there and stood up.
 270 He said, "I should make a *wulukèlèn* sacrifice.
 I am going to use everything in this market as a sacrifice."
 That was how the *wulukèlèn* sacrifice was made.
Boakai: Who did he give that sacrifice to?
Bakari: (Bakari laughed) I can't say the name of that *mori*'s clan.
 Was it the Kromah?
 275 Was it the Sefu?
 Was it the Dole?
 Kamara...
 He made it and gave it to the *molilu*.
 It was said, "The *molilu*."
 280 He gave it to the *molilu*, to the *molilu*.
 They did not capture and take any slave.
 They never took any slave away.
 They never took any cow away.
 They blessed him.
 285 Do you understand?
 When he put all the things together,
 He gave them to the *morilu*.
 The *morilu* accepted them.
 They blessed him,
 290 But he never captured anyone in the market and said,
 "You have to become a sacrifice.
 Come on, let's go."
 He did not take one horse and say,
 "They are being offered as a sacrifice."

295 Give my horses to me so I can take them.”
They never took a cow away.
They never took a sheep away.
They never took a goat away.
They never took anyone’s money away.
300 They never took food away from someone.
They blessed him.
They said, “The sacrifice that you made,
May God accept it and want it.
May God make you great.
305 May God give power to you. (pause)
Do you understand?

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.26

JEKE KAMARA

Place and date of interview: Daro, Guinea, 23 July 1992

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek, Adama Talawole, and Frank Vamunyè Jalla Kamara

Context of the interview: We found out during my interviews in Macenta in the summer of 1992 that the Maniyaka (like the Loma) remembered Fala Wubo and the Kònò wars. Adama Talawole, who was helping me translate, was familiar with some of the stories, and said that he knew of an old man named Jèkè Kamara in the town of Daro who could give us more information. It turned out that this was the same Daro that is linked in many oral traditions with the Kònò wars. In addition to talking about the Kònò wars (which is not included here), he provided some information about Foningama. Jèkè Kamara willing permitted us to interview him. We interviewed Jèkè veranda of his house. Frank Kamara was the only other person who was present. He was the principal of the Liberia refugee school in Daro at the time of the interview. During the interview, Jèkè said that he was sixty-two years old, and that he was an illiterate farmer who was once the chief of Daro.

Translated from Maniyakã into English by: Adama Talawole (Macenta, 1992)

Checked by: Adama Talawole and Tim Geysbeek (Macenta, 1992) - translation

Checked by: Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1992) - tape/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

Summary of contents:

Foningama and his descendants: 116-144

The Sèlefu ancestor helps Foningama defeat Zo Musa: 145-171

The coming of Islam: 172-180

The Kònò, Manya, and Loma: 181-188

The Kamara leopard taboo: 189-194

The Talawole (Sise) elephant taboo: 195-203

[Foningama and his descendants]

Adama: Grandfather, we want you to tell us everything that you know about your ancestor Foningama.

Jèkè: That Foningama,
I don't know much about him,
But I can tell you,
That he lived in Misadu, Koniya.

Adama: What kind of man was he? What kind of work did he do?

120 Jèkè: What kind of work did he do?
He was a *masa*.
But that sons who he sired,
All came on this side.
There was a division among themselves.

125 Some went to Gbai,
Some went to Kissi,
Some went to the Kpelle,
Some came here.
That happened in Misadu.

Adama: Where did Foningama came from before he went to Misadu?

130 Jèkè: Mande.
Adama: Do you know his mother's and father's name?
Jèkè: I don't know.

Adama: Do you know some of his children's names?

Jèkè: I know two names.

Adama: Name them for us.

Jèkè: Seebliama and Fanyala.

Adama: What did his children do?

Jèkè: All of them became *masa*.

Adama: From which ancestor did your Jomani ancestor come? Is your ancestor the son of Fanyala or Foningama? From which ancestor did he come?

135 Jèkè: We are the descendants of Fanyala,
We and our relatives.
They are our big old people,
The descendants of Seebliama.
We came after them.
From Baisiama to Konèsedu and Maanu,

133 Fanyala: = Fènjala.

140 They are the descendants of Seebiana.
From Kalawani and going down to Misadu,
To come to Kònòkòlò,
Are the descendants of Fanyala.
We are in the majority.

[The Sèlefù ancestor helps Foningama defeat Zo Musa]

Adama: What do you know about Zo Musa Kòma?
145 Jèkè: Zo Musa Kòma.
That happened in Misadu.
He and our ancestor lived there.
He and our ancestor were in Misadu,
Awa, until his children divided and left there.
150 I don't know much about that. [...]
Adama: Who founded Misadu?
Jèkè: Misa.
Misadu.
It is a town.
Do you hear that?
155 When our ancestor Mandi,
He went and settled there.
He was there,
And Zo Musa Kòma was there.
He [Zo Musa] bothered him.
160 So the Sèlefù ancestor came.
He [Foningama] told him [the Sèlefù ancestor] about him [Zo Musa],
And he told him that he would help him,
So his power would lessen.
He did some work.
165 The hat that he did his work with...
When he came out to sit,
The hawk came and grabbed it.
He placed it in the cotton tree and flew away.
But our ancestor met Zo Musa Kòma there.
170 He offered a wife to the Sèlefù man who was a *mori*.
He was an Arab.

[The coming of Islam]

Adama: We also want to know how Islam came to this country?

141 Kalawani: Kerouane.

165-168 This is a fragment of a longer episode that explains how the Sefu ancestor Talata made a hawk take Foningama's special hat off of his head; he then made the bird put the hat back on Foningama's head (see Mammadi Kènè 1992, App. 7.18).

Jèkè: This is how it came.
 Islam,
 Came from the savanna,
 175 From the *jamana* of the Arabs. [...]
Adama: Who brought Islam to this *jamana*.
Jèkè: This *jamana*.
 The Sèlefu, the Kanè, the Talawole,
 They were the clans who brought Islam to this country.
 All the people have joined now,
 180 But only a few people spread it.

[The Kònò, Manding, and Loma]

Adama: When your ancestor came here, before he settled, what people
 did he meet here?
Jèkè: That is what I said before.
 The Kònò were here.
Adama: Didn't your ancestor meet the Loma here?
Jèkè: No Loma were here.
 The Kònò were here.
 185 The Loma were nearby. (pause)
 The Koodu Loma came here a long time ago and have been here ever since.
 The Koodu Loma.
 They were here a long time ago.

[The Kamara leopard taboo]

Adama: What is the taboo of the Jomani?
Jèkè: The Kamara taboo?
 190 It is the leopard.
 We don't eat leopard.
Adama: Since leopard has become your taboo, do you know anyone else to has the
 leopard taboo?
Jèkè: Ah, I don't know.
 I only know about my own.
 We are the only ones in this land who have that taboo.

[The Talawole (Sise) elephant taboos]

Adama: Who had an elephant taboo - a long time ago or even now? Do you know
 anyone who has an elephant taboo?

176 Sèlefu [Sefu, Sirleaf] ancestor: Talata.
 178 Islam: *moiya*. Adama said *misimi* in his questions.
 190 'leopard': *sòli*.

- 195 Jèkè: The Talawole say, "*Sama so*."
They don't eat elephant meat.
The Talawole say, "*Sama so*,"
So they can't eat elephant.
Adama: What kind of people are the Talawole?
Jèkè: They are a clan but they are Sise.
- 200 They are called Sise.
Adama: Did the Kònò have any taboo that you know of when the Kònò were
here? Did your grandfathers say if they had a taboo?
Jèkè: You mean the taboo for my ancestors,
Or the taboo for the Kònò?
Adama: The taboo for the Kònò.
Jèkè: No.

195 *Sama so*: = 'elephant meat.'

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.27

FRANCIS V. JALA KAMARA

Place and date of interview: Daro, Guinea, 23 July 1992

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek and Adama Talawole

Context of interview: After we interviewed Jèkè Kamara, Frank Kamara said that his father could also contribute. Francis was happy to be interviewed. He would have talked longer except for the fact that the taxi was ready to leave when we were interviewing him. Daro is about a 30 minute drive from Macenta towards the Liberia border. Security was tight at the check-point just before we entered Daro because of the cross-border skirmishes in Liberia, and we didn't want to be stranded in Daro that night. The speaker was a Liberian refugee, probably in his fifties, who had crossed the border into Guinea two years earlier just ahead of the NPFL that was taking over Upper Lofa county. We conducted the interview in his one room house. Francis spoke all but the last part of the interview in English. Adama Talawole sat in on the interview, along with his brother Sidiki Talawole. Near the end of the interview, Mammadi Tawulèn (Cissé) came in the room and we asked him about his taboo.

English Transcribed by: Adama Talawole (Macenta, 1992)

Maniyakã transcribed by: Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1992)

Maniyakã translated by: Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1992)

Maniyakã translation checked by: Tim Geysbeek & Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/transcript/translation

Summary of contents:

Kamara migrations: 331-363

Zo Musa establishes the Poro society: 396-416

Zo Musa and Foningama separate after Foningama refuses to join the Poro: 417-430

Zo Musa travels to Zota: 431-439

Konsaba and Zo Musa: 440-442

The Manding and Loma migrate west: 443-449

How the Kamara got the Leopard taboo: 479-522

[Kamara migrations]

[Foningama and his sons Semanfila and Sisima]

... when I say Foningama and Wanglo,
Our great-grandfather bring all these Mandingo people here.
The warriors...

Our ancestors don't know nothing but they fighting war.

335 They bring all these people here,
Because...

Tim: Can you tell me something about this Foningama man?

Francis: Hiin!

Tim: Where he came from? Anything you can tell.

Francis: Foningama came from way in the desert.

He was fighting the same way.

340 He came and resided in this place here as I tell you, èh-èh -
Someone: Misadu.

Francis: Misadu.

There he stayed he got plenty children,

He begin to divide the children.

These people go so - fight war.

345 These people here go so -
That is how we managed to come down here.
He sent his son.

That is how we managed to come down.

Tim: Can you give me any names of his sons? How many sons he had?

Francis: Ha! No!

350 Eh-èh,
Our grandfather - this man, this man Fagba - Fagba...
Sisima.

Our grandpa is Sisima.

Or grandpa is Sisima.

Tim: From the same Foningama group?

355 Francis: Hiin! Um.
Sisima.

This one here now, Fagba - Fagba -

Semanfila, Semanfila - right.

Tim: Are you from Semanfila?

Francis: No! No! I am not from Semanfila.

360 Sisima.

Tim: You are from Sisima?

Francis: Sisima.

Tim: I see. The other man [Jèkè Kamara] is from Semanfila. Adama: What I want to know... The Mandingo came to settle in Lofa County, to settle there. They have any war with the Loma people?

Francis: No!...

* * *

[Zo Musa establishes the Poro society]

Tim: Do you know how Misadu came to be? How they made Misadu?

Francis: Misadu, Misadu.

I can't go far from Misadu.

Tim: That's alright.

Francis: Huum-ha! Misa...

But, èh - Musa[du] name derive from Zo Misa.

400 Zo Misa.

Zo.

When you hear "zo," it's a Kpelle language.

It derive from it.

Zo means...

405 The Kpelle people was there.

This Zo Misa now...

You are a white man and you want to carry me so far [into the topic]?

There [is] where they started the Polo palaver.

Tim: The Poro palaver?

Francis: Hèn! Polo.

Tim: The what?

410 Francis: The Polo?

Tim: The society? That was the man. He stay there?

Francis: Who?

Tim: Zo Musa.

Francis: Long time, long time, long time.

He started all those things with our grandfather.

You know to make the difference between the children there.

415 Do you here me now, alright?

Tim: I understand you clean.

Francis: ... to make the difference between the children?

407 'you want to carry me so far': He did not want to talk about the Poro society with Geysbeek in his presence.

[Zo Musa and Foningama separate after Foningama refuses to join the Poro]

Tim: Was Foningama also part of it, the Polo?

Francis: No! You don't hear me, I talk it low.

When I'm standing I talk loud.

But when I'm sitting I talk low.

420 That is how they made the difference between Foningama.

[Foningama] say, "I can't do it.

The man [Zo Misa] enter in this thing here.

He do it.

When he do it,

425 That cause the separation between us.

You got it?

You hear it?

Tim: To make the difference between the Loma and the Mandingo?

Francis: Hèn!

Except when we are forced to join it,

430 We don't do it.

[Zo Musa travels to Zota]

Tim: So Zo Musa stay in Misadu?

Francis: No! He died long...

Tim: No! No! I mean, did he stay there? Did he go somewhere else or did he stay there?

Francis: They all came down.

Tim: That's all I want to know.

Francis: Kooo. They all...

You see this...

435 Zota people here, Zota.

Tim: Right, right.

Francis: Don't you always hear Zota?

Tim: I can hear it. I can hear it.

Francis: Han! Han! That is the man.

Tim: That is the same man?

Francis: Uhun! Zota, Zo Misa.

Ohoo - Zo Misa.

[Konsaba and Zo Musa]

Tim: Have you ever heard the name Konsaba?

440 Francis: Hiin?

Tim: Konsaba? Konsaba? Adama: Kònsaba? Someone else: Kònsaba. Tim: Zo Musa had a last name?

Francis: Ha-hun (no). We usually hear Zo Musa.

Adama: Do you know where he came from? Zo Musa?

Francis: No!

[The Manding and Loma migrate west]

They came from up.
They came with war.
445 War - war brought them.
Exploring,
Looking for country.
That is how our people managed to come here.
They were looking for country to settle...

* * *

[How the Kamara got the leopard taboo]

Tim: Who can get the *tana* or taboo for the leopard? Adama: We are talking about
sòli (leopard)?
Francis: We.
Tim: The Kamara? Oooh.
480 Francis: Eh, That's we.
Question: Do you know how that one came? I mean, do you know the story
behind them?
Francis: Yea. Yea. (laughs) Maybe...
This leopard here,
We can't eat it.
Our old-old grand-people didn't ate it.
485 They get this history,
Long time.
They say one man was there.
The man, èh -
He born pekin somehow.
490 They say he born pekin.
This pekin here was so ugly,
They take it and go put it in the dump pile.
They say they put him in the dump pile.
So, the leopard came and took the child,
495 And carry it,
And put it down.
Then he begin to nurse the pekin.
He begin to nurse it - he begin to nurse it - he begin to nurse it,

482-524 The speaker transformed this story from an oral tradition into a folktale (see Ch. 7).

489 pekin: Foningama? Identified as Namulu(du) in line 517. Is Namulu a reference to Jomāgulu,
one of the Kamara ancestors?

494 'the leopard': Kromah?

Until the baby grow.
 500 When the baby now...
 They say the baby came in town.
 This baby came in town.
 When this baby came now,
 The people liked the baby.
 505 Alright.
 Going on, going on, going on, going on,
 Um, he became man.
 Going on, going on, going on,
 Until he now begin to fight in the town.
 510 Now, from fighting now,
 He begin to wait on the road to take people's things.
 According to uncle the man was too strong.
 You can't stand him.
 You can't stand him.
 515 So, that, that now...
 He coming to be chief.
 That is how Namuludu became chief.
 He conquered.
 The man was too strong, as they say,
 520 Too strong.
 So, anyhow, he conquered the area.
 He conquered the whole area and became the chief.
 That is how it happened.
Tim: What was the man's name?
Francis: Namuludu. Namuludu. Namuludu. Namuludu. Namuludu.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.28

ALHAJI FOMBA LANSE DONZO

Place and date of interview: Diakolidu, Guinea, 26 July 1992

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek, Majongbè Mammadi Chèjan Kromah and Mammadi

Oppong Sanoe

Interview Setting: Mammadi Oppong Sanoe suggested that Alhaji Fomba Lanse Donzo could give us some good information. Donzo had been one of Sanoe's teachers, and received us very graciously. We went to see him one day, and interviewed him the next morning. One other person was present for the interview. Fomba Donzo brought out a copy of the "Monographie of Beyla" part way through the interview and read some of it (Appendix 4.8). He also had some other sheets written in French. I took slides of those documents in 1992. When I visited Fomba in 1993, Mammadi and I took these sheets to N'Zerekore and photocopied them. The photographs turned out fine, but I did not know that until after I returned to Michigan in 1994.

Transcribed by: Ali Kromah (Monrovia, 1993)

Translated by: Ali Kromah (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Bangali Kamara (Monrovia, 1993) - tape/transcript/translation

Checked by: Ali Kromah, Bangali Kamara, and Tim Geysbeek (Monrovia, 1993) - transcript/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1996) - tape/translation

Translation note: Lines or parts of lines that Donzo narrated in French have been marked with an asterisk (*).

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[The 'five towns of Konya']

- Fomba: Koniya was a town at one time.
Everyone was in Misadu.
All the people were in Misadu.
There came a time,
5 When Nyèla left.
Nyèla went.
The Donzo went to Nyèla.
[They] went to Nyèla and settled.
[They] went there.
10 A division was made in Misadu.
The people separated.
Jakòdu was founded.
After Jakòdu was founded,
Beyla was founded.
15 Tabiala,
Came from Beyla.
Teachers and students lived in Tabiala.
Nyèla.
Dukulela was established.

15 Tabiala: = Tabilala.

16 'Teachers': *Kaamòò*. 'students': *kalandèn*.

- 20 Dukulela, Misadu, Dukulela [Nyèla], Jakòdu, and Beyla,
They belong to Koniya.
Yusumodu,
It is called Buse.
Yusumodu is in Buse.
25 It was founded in 1215.*
Jakòdu was established,
At the end of the second generation [when the Donzo came].
Everyone migrated with their own clan.

[The three strangers and three citizens of Misadu]

- Some came...
30 Foniṅ - Foniṅgama came to, èh-èh - Koniya.
There were six strong men.
Three strangers,
Three citizens.
Misadu,
35 Was the main town in Koniya.
Twelve clans were in Misadu.
That is where everyone divided...

* * *

[Foniṅgama drives the Kpelle and Loma from Koniya]

- Someone: You called Foniṅgama's name...
Fomba: I will surely talk about it.
Someone: Can you say something about Foniṅgama?
Fomba: I can do that.
140 This town...
The Kpelle and Loma were here,
In this *jamana*.
Foniṅgama was in Misadu.
When Foniṅgama came,
145 He fought.
He fought the Kpelle.

20 These are the *Konya so luulu* or the 'five towns of Konya.' Some speakers substitute Nyèla for Tabilala or Tulela. The five towns are Musadu and the nearby towns that people formed after they left Musadu. Here, Donzo states that Tabilala was established by people who immigrated from Beyla (l. 15-16). If other oral traditions support Donzo's claim, this probably explains why Nyèla rather than Tabilala is one of the 'five towns of Konya.' Nionsamoridu is in Buse, not Konya-Mani, so is not considered one of Konya's 'five towns.'

28 'clan': *kabila*.

33 'citizens': *duulèn*.

- He drove the Loma.
 The Loma were in Sumandu.
 150 The Kpelle were here.
 Yakòdu is a Kpelle name.
 Goniya is a Kpelle name.
 Jewu is a Kpelle name.
 Bèmbaya is a Kpelle name.
 155 The towns that we have...
 “Goniya” comes from the name *kawa* (rock) - *kawa lò* (In the rock).
 That is that.
 The Koniya say -
 The Kpelle say, “*Kawa lò*.”
Chèjan: Koniya.
 160 Fomba: Een.
Chèjan: Koniya.
Fomba: Goniya.
 Foningama,
 Medicine...
 They [the Kpelle] were not Muslim.
 165 They were all *kafri*.
 He had twelve children,
 But his eleventh child died in Misadu.
 All of those children’s names are here.
Chèjan: All of their names are here?
Fomba: All of their names are here.

[Jomani, Donzo, Kromah, and Kanè taboos]

- Someone: In this town, their taboo, the taboo of the people. Who has the leopard
 (*wala*) taboo?
 170 Fomba: The Kromah.
 Their taboo is lion (*jala*).
Chèjan: Lion?
Fomba: Yes, the Jomani have the leopard.
 Our - our taboo is the snake.
Chèjan: All snakes?
Fomba: All snakes.
 175 We can’t eat any kind of snake.
 Does he understand that?
Chèjan: Yes, he does. (*Chèjan* laughs). He understands. You said that the Donzo

168 ‘are here’: The “Monographie of Beyla” (App. 4.8), which he brought out before he began his interview.

171-172 ‘lion’ = *jala*. ‘leopard’ = *wala*. ‘snake’ = *sa*. One person said that the ‘leopard’ was the wife of the ‘lion.’

176 ‘he’: Geysbeek.

- taboo is snake.
Fomba: Yes, all snakes.
Someone: The taboo of the Kromah is -
Fomba: Lion.
The Jomanu is leopard.
Someone: The Kamara are the Jomani.
180 Fomba: Aye, the Kamara and Jomani.
Chèjan: Who has the elephant?
Fomba: The Konè.
Chèjan: The Konè has the elephant?
Fomba: Yes, the taboo of the Konè is the elephant.
Someone: Do you know why the Jomani have the lion taboo?
Fomba: No I don't,
Because,
185 Everyone has their own route.
If you go into that [other people's routes],
You will get lost.
That is because they are the ones who know their own taboo.
Chèjan: Okay, why do the Donzo have a snake taboo?
Fomba: They say that our ancestor and a snake went into a hole,
190 And the snake did not bite him.
He stayed there.
In the morning he saw the snake and said,
"Look, the snake and I slept here!
The snake is my taboo.
195 I shall not never kill another snake.
That has become my taboo."
Someone: Will anything happen if a Donzo person kills a snake?
Fomba: He/she will face some temptation these days,
Even if it does not last long.
If you don't know...
200 If you do know [that the snake is your taboo],
Then it [the punishment] will be harder.
Chèjan: Do the Sayon also have a snake taboo?
Fomba: All is the same.

[Zo, Kòma, and Misa: Zo founds Misadu]

- Someone: Zo Musa?
Fomba: Zo Misa Kòma.
Zo,
205 His son was Kòma,
And Kòma's son was Misa.

203 The Sayon (Sanoe) and Donzo are equivalent in this area.

- They were Kpelle.
 They were Kpelle.
 Zo was the one who established Misadu.
 210 This is not the original Misadu.
 This is the second town.
 Zo was the one who established Misadu.
 Misadu Zo's son was Kòma,
 And Kòma's son was Misa.
Chèjan: There were three people?
 215 Fomba: There were three people.
 There was a child, a father, a grandfather.
Chèjan: Zo [unintelligible]...
Fomba: Zo was the big man.
 He was the father.
 His son was Kòma.
Chèjan: Kòma.
 220 Fomba: Kò's son was Misa.
 He established Misadu,
 So the town was named after him.
 Misaso (Misa town).
 Misata (Misa town).
Someone: Zo Misa, what kind of work did he do?
 225 Fomba: He worked as a hunter and a fisherman.
 He killed animals and caught fish.
 That is why he moved to the mouth of the Dion river.
 Misadu was in the valley.
 When he went to the mouth of the Dion to catch fish,
 230 He said, "Let me go settle near the river to catch my fish."
 So he went and settled there.
Chèjan: The fish...
Fomba: To catch fish?
 He used to catch his fish.
 235 It was not a big town.
 He and his family and the few people who were with him...
Chèjan: He and which other people settled near there?
Fomba: Wait...
 He waited for a while.

[The three strangers and three hosts]

- There were six important men in Misadu:
 240 Three strangers,

213 Misadu Zo: The name of the town that a person comes from is sometimes added to ones name.

239-286 Donzo was reading from the "Monographie..." (App. 4.8) as he spoke Konyakä.

- Three hosts.
 The three hosts were Tumani Kromah, Zo Misa Konè - èh, Zo Musa Kòma...
 Jifa Kòne.
Chèjan: Jufa Kòne.
Fomba: Three men.
- 245 Three men founded the town.
 Three strangers joined them.
 Foningama,
 Kamara,
 Was a stranger.
- 250 Nyana Misa Kromah was a *jèli*,
 And a stranger.
 Fumo Dole,
 Was a *mori*.
 They were three.
- 255 Those were the six,
 Who established Misadu.
 Three strangers and three hosts.
Chèjan: Tumanij, his name - Tumanij...
Fomba: Tumanij Kromah.
Chèjan: Tumanij Kromah - o.
Fomba: Tumanij Kromah.
- 260 Eh-èh - Tumanij Kèmè.
 They were Kromah.
 His descendants live in Jakolodu.
 They [also] live in Kerouane.
 They came from Sigidi [Siguiri] *jamana*.
Chèjan: They and Musa and the others founded Misadu?
- 265 Fomba: That is right.
 But Misa was the one who became powerful.
Chèjan: The town was named after him.

[Ngana Musa Kromah: a *jèli*, the *nyana*, and the founding of Diakolidu]

Tim: It says griot here [Beyla Monographie] for Ngana Misa Kromah. Was he -
 whose griot was he? Who was he the griot for?

Chèjan: Was he the first *jèli*?

Fomba: He was the *jèli* for Tumani Kromah.

Chèjan: Jufa Koni, right?

Fomba: Jufa Koni, - èh-èh-èh-èh...

Tim: Ngana Misa Kromah. Whose griot was he?

Fomba: Nana Misa.

Chèjan: Nana Misa.

- 270 Fomba: Nyana Musa Kromah.
Chèjan: Was he a *jèli*?
Fomba: Even today,
 His children's descendants there -
Chèjan: In Misadu.
Fomba: They are in Misadu here.
Chèjan: They are here.
Fomba: They are here.
- 275 The *nyana*...
Chèjan: The *jèli*?
Fomba: They went into the forest (*tu*) when the *nyana* drove them away.
 They went into the forest.
 Boola, Jakolodu...
 Those of Jakolodu are there.
- 280 The ones from Misadu are there.
 There were three brothers from one mother,
 Who went to that town.
 The man went and lodged them.
 That is why they say *jèliya*.
Chèjan: Oh, the man who lodged them later came and praised them.
- 285 Fomba: Uum.
Chèjan: I see. This is good...

[The Fofana, Kanè, Kromah, and Kamara *jèlilu*]

- Someone: Which towns can become *jèli*?
Fomba: *Jèli* can come from any clan.
 The Fofana have them.
 There are Fofana *jèli*.
 There are Kanè *jèli*.
- 290 There are Kromah *jèli*.
 There are Kamara *jèli*.
 The *fine* people and the *jèli* are the same.
 They are found in every clan.
 There are *jèli* in each of the clans that we have mentioned.

[Rich and powerful women]

- Someone: Do you know of any woman who fought? A woman who led men?
- 295 Fomba: Who fought?
 Women become wealthy here,
 But they don't lead men.
 Mansan Fofana (?).

270-285 These lines are difficult to understand and interpret.
 292 *finà*: = *funé*.

Her husband,
 300 Ah, her father was a *masa*.
 But a woman has never taken a gun here,
 In this *jamana*.
 It has not happened in the last one thousand years.
 Misadu was established more than one hundred years ago.
 305 Misadu was established.
Someone: But what about wealthy women?
Fomba: There are many.
Someone: Who and who?
Fomba: San Gayawa.
 San Gayawa was Almami Samori's daughter.
 She was not a *masa*.
 She was a rich woman,
 310 But she never fought.
 They used to look for things and give them to her...

* * *

[The Kamara forbidden to sleep in Misadu]

Chèjan: What happened to the Kamara?
Fomba: The Kamara.
 The Kamara never used to sleep in Misadu at first. (someone laughed)
 They did not sleep there.
 330 That happens how,
 But they never used to do it.
 They used to pass through [the town] even if it was night.
 But that has been spoiled today.
Chèjan: Why did that happen?
Fomba: Because of the new *mori* business...

* * *

[The coming of Islam to Koniya]

But Islam in this place...
 365 It was the second generation and third generation [after the Donzo (?) arrived]
 before Islam came here.
 The Muslims were not many [at that time].
 Our own Muslims...

334 'new *mori* business:' = Wahabiyya are not enforcing the old laws. In this case, they are pressuring the people of Musadu to allow the Kamara to sleep in Musadu. This was not done in the past. The older Muslims in Musadu put their hands down when they prayed. The newer Wahabbi's cross their hands over their chest.

The Kanè, the Bèlète, the Cissé, the Fofana,
 They were the Muslims.
 370 After leaving Misadu,
 The only Muslim towns you could see was Sinko,
 Kalala,
 To go from Kalala to Wojènè, Samatila.
 There were no other Muslims [towns] anywhere else,
 375 From these towns to Liberia.
 The towns that are Muslim,
 Are not even one hundred years old.
Chèjan: Beyla here?
Fomba: Jakòdu here. Jakòdu.
 It is not even one hundred years old.
 380 Muslim people from here [Jakolodu] used to go and pray in Beyla.
 There was a mosque in Beyla.
 Many people were there.
 Everything was there.
 The people from Dukulela left a new town,
 385 And settled in Dukulela.
 A new town.
 The Dukule's new town.
Someone: They brought Islam.
Fomba: They brought Islam.
 Beyla-Farana,
 390 The Konè brought Islam,
 But they came and met the Bèlète who were already there.
 The Bèlète had already established that town.
 They came with Islam,
 And the Koesia people.
 395 They came with the Islamic religion.
 The Koesia came to Beyla more than one thousand and one hundred years ago.
 They went to Misadu and settled.
Someone: You said that the body of one of the twelve people who brought the
 religion is still here?
Fomba: His body is here, even today.
Someone: Do the towns people know the location of his grave?
Fomba: We are the only people who know where it is.
 400 Not everyone knows where it is. (laughter)
 If not, I would have shown it to you.
 Ask your things [freely].
 Arrange them.

[The *kafir* Kpelle: *nyana*, liquor and judgment]

Someone: The people came and met the Kpelle here. Can you tell us anything about them? What they were like when they were living here?

Fomba: Their way of living together did not continue.

405 They ended up fighting.

There were three clan towns.

When the Kpelle used to come,

The *nyana* used to follow them.

They were not descendants of Adam.

410 You can now see that they have suffered.

The Kpelle lived in the center of the town,

But they are now at the outskirts of town.

They have left us.

Our way of life and their way of life are not the same,

415 And we cannot agree on things.

They are Kpelle.

They like liquor and practice the *kafri* way of life,

And we don't like that.

Explain that to him.

420 So, when we come close to them, they fled.

Chèjan: Wasn't there any fighting?

Fomba: Fighting?

Sure.

There were some small conflicts.

Chèjan: But there was never a big conflict, to say a conflict...

* * *

[The Mènya become more powerful than the Loma]

Someone: What was it like when the Loma and Mènya were living here? Were they together? Was it good?

Fomba: The Loma and Mènya lived well together.

They have similar ways of thinking.

We could not cooperate with those who would not do one job.

445 The Mènya became more superior than them,

And they [the Loma] left.

They did not like each other,

And they fought them for goods,

Slaves and wealth.

Chèjan: To say...

450 Fomba: Who fought?

409 'they were not decedents of Adam at all': They were not Muslims.

What did Samori fight?
What did Gbangunò fight?
What did See Blama fight?
They went and troubled some people.

455 Chèjan: If you could fight them...
Fomba: If you could win,
You could take his wealth and make his people slaves.
That is how slavery developed.
Explain that to him.

[Zo Musa Kòma breaks Foningama's law and is driven away]

Chèjan: You said that Foningama made a law. What about Foningama's law in Misadu?

460 Fomba: The law that Foningama made...
He was able to make such a law because,
Eh-èh, So Misa Kòma's,
Medicine,
Could catch young babies.
It could also catch human beings and chickens.
465 His law forbid that,
And he did not like that.
There was trouble between them,
And Zo Misa Kòma left the area.
He did not just leave by himself.
Chèjan: They fought?
470 Fomba: They fought...

[The six men of Misadu]

[We were looking at the "Monographie de la Beyla..." for this last discussion]
They fought...

525 Chèjan: A-han. This man.
Fomba: This man.
Chèjan: Tumanin - Tumanin Kromah.
Fomba: Three citizens.
Chèjan: Three citizens, right?
Fomba: Three people.
Three citizens.
Chèjan: Zo Musa Kònè.
Fomba: Eèn. Zo - he founded the town, Zo Misa.
Chèjan: Eèn. Tim: He changed it. He said Kòma. Chèjan: Aha, Kòma, right?
Fomba: Zo Misa Kòma.
Chèjan: A-han, Zo Misa Kòma.
530 Fomba: Eh-hèn.
Chèjan: Tumanin Kromah. Zo Musa Kòma. Eh, Jufa Koni.

Fomba: Eh, Jifa - Jifa Kònè.
Chèjan: A-han. They were the three citizens.
Fomba: They founded the town.
Chèjan: They founded the town.
Fomba: The strangers, the three strangers.
 They came later.
Chèjan: Fòningama.
Fomba: Fòni - ...
Chèjan: They fought.
 535 Fomba: Uun.
Chèjan: Eh, what was his name?
Fomba: Fòningama.
 His *badèn* was,
 Eh-èh-èh - that Jomani who came from Konowari,
 That place.
Chèjan: That person, what was his name? Na Misa Kromah?
 540 Fomba: Hèn. Ngana Misa Kromah.
Chèjan: Ngana Misa Kromah.
Fomba: E-hèn, that was him.
Chèjan: He was a *jèli*?
Fomba: He was a *jèli*.
Chèjan: Fomo Dole.
Fomba: Fomo Dole.
Chèjan: He was a *mori*?
Fomba: Uhun.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.29

ALHAJI KABINE KROMAH

Place and date of interview: Diakolidu, Guinea, 27 July 1992

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek, Mammadi Oppong Sanoe and Muhammed Chèjan

Kromah

Context of interview: Mammadi Oppong Sanoe is the brother of Faliku Sanoe who was Martin Ford's assistant in Liberia in the mid-1980s. I first met Faliku and Oppong in 1990, and then met up with Oppong again in Diakolidu in 1992. Oppong introduced me to Layi Kabine and said that he was the oldest man in the Kromah family. A younger man named Ansumana Kromah, who attended the interview, was the chief of the Kromah in Diakolidu. Oppong's mother is a Kromah.

Oppong made prior arrangements for me to interview Layi Kabine. Layi Kabine said in this interview that he was born in 1898 (l. 2795), and he seemed to be every bit that old. He claimed that he was the oldest man in the region with the exception of one Seku Kanè (l. 2723). When Oppong, Chèjan and I entered the Kromah compound, we were directed to a large pavilion. Eventually, Layi Kabine, many of the leading men of the family, some women and several children joined us in the pavilion. A meeting was called to order, and I explained the purpose of my visit. When I said that I was conducting research as a student at Michigan State University and that I wanted to include Layi Kabine's testimony in a book, everyone was pleased. I asked Mr. Kromah some follow up questions when I went to Diakolidu one year later (Appendix 7.34).

Transcribed by: Ansumana Cissé (Monrovia, 1993)

Translated by: Boakai Yamah (pp.1-36) and Faliku Sayon (pp.37-253) (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek, with Boakai Yamah and Faliku Sayon (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995)

Translation note: Unlike all of the other interviews, I only checked this interview one time with my assistants. The translation for the shorter “Ancient Misadu” sections and some of the “Ancient Koniya” parts are good, but some of the “Samori” material (which is not included here) needs to be checked again. In addition, Layi Kabine spoke fast and some of his speech was not very clear. Problematic sections are bolded.

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[ANCIENT MISADU: I]

[The Kromah ancestor's four sons: Tumaningèmè, Famèvi, Sowana and Fatama]

Kabine: In the *jamana* of Sigi...

He [the Kromah ancestor] left the *jamana* of Sigi,

Because the people of Sigi drove him.

He went and settled in Tina.

5 After he settled in Tina,

He had four sons.

The first son was our ancestor.

His name was Tumaningèmè.

The son next to him,

10 His name was Famèvi [Fimevi].

He went to Gbana.

The one next to him was Sowana.

They live near Fuala over there.

They are called the people of Sowana.

15 The name of the other one,

His name was Fatama.

He stayed in Kèlèwani [Kerouane] *jamana*.

1 Sigi: = Siguiri.

2 'He': Fakoli?

12 Sowana: Or, Swana. The town name of Solona (Sinko) derives from Sowana.

[Tumaningèmè settles among the Kpelle in Koniya]

- Our ancestor Tumaningèmè came.
The Kpelle were living...
20 Eh, the Kpelle were at Koy -
They were in Koniya.
The Kpelle used to meet together at the place,
It was called Koniya.
It is called "Koniya" in the Kpelle language.
25 That is where they used to meet.
When our ancestor came now, èh, from Tina,
And he came to live with them there...
When he came to them they said,
"Oh, Kèmòò, have you come here?"
30 You will settle here and become prosperous.

[Misa founds Misadu]

- His slave...
His slave's name was Misa.
Ah-èh, our ancestor...
Tumaningèmè's slave's name was Misa.
35 He came and settled by the Kpelle.
He settled by the Kpelle.
He settled by the Kpelle.
He lived with the Kpelle for a long time.
They lived there for a long time.
40 His slave...
He took him and set him by the Dion river.
He farmed there.
He farmed there.
They [Tumaningèmè's friends] said, "Old man,
45 If you want to become prosperous in this land where you live,
You should go settle where your slave is staying."
He got up from that place and went and settled by his slave.
They all...
That happened...
50 They gave the name of the slave to the town.
His name was Misa.
There is no one else from Misadu beside the Kromah who will say,
When questioned,
"My ancestor founded Misadu."
55 There is no one else.

44 'They': Tumaningèmè, his wife and friends?

- Our ancestor's slave...
 He was the one who placed our ancestor's slave...
 He [Tumaningèmè] placed him [Misa] over there.
 His name was Misa.
 60 His [Misa's] ancestor was not one of them [Kromah].
 The name of his son was Kòma.
 Kòma,
 Kòma and Jufa Konè.
 Those people lived at the base of Koiyāba.
 65 He was...
 He had his okra farm there.
 That is where he was for a time.
 He [Misa] and our ancestor [Tumaningèmè]...
 He came and settled with his slave.
 70 Its name was Misadu.

[Kromah and Sayon *lasili*]

- When he [Tumaningèmè] arrived, the Sayon...
 Eh-éh, the Sise came and settled near them.
 The Sayon came and settled near them.
 God made it possible,
 75 So that he and the Sayon became friends.
 All of them now...
 Those two people say...
 They said that there was *lasili* between them,
 Because of the love that was established between them.
 80 That is why we have a have a *lasili* with the Sayon.
 They became our *lasili*.
 Their taboo is a snake.
 They said that we should reveal our taboo to each other.
 Our ancestor's taboo was the lion.
 85 The Sayon's taboo was the snake.

[Kòma's *saafèlè*]

While we...
 While we were there, Kòma...

64 Koiyāba: Koniya Mountain.
 80 The Kromah and Sanoe are joined by *sanangu* and *lasili* relationships (Faliku Sanoe, personal communication).
 82 'snake': = *sa*.
 84 'leopard': Kabine said *jala*, which is 'lion.' The Maniyaka sometimes interchange *wala* or *sòli* ('leopard') for *jala* ('lion'). All of the other sources say that the Kromah ancestor's (Fakoli's) taboo was 'leopard' (Ch. 7).

- Eh, Misa's son,
His name was Kòma.
90 Now, he and Jufa Konè lived there.
Both of them lived there.
Eh, Kòma had medicine.
He had *saafèlè*.
That *saafè* now,
95 Sometime when he brought it outside,
When they bathed a boy and lay him under the sun,
When they lay him under the sun,
When that happened,
Eh, the *saafèlè* would come and eat him.
100 When it went near a sheep,
It would eat it.
When it, èh, went near something...
When it went near a goat,
It would eat it.

[Three strangers prophesied to ruin Kòma's *saafèlè*]

- 105 He [Tumaningèmè] said, "Now, I am upset.
I came to live here,
And this medicine has become our enemy."
He [Tumaningèmè] said, "Ah-o!"
It was said, "Three strangers will come."
110 They would come from where the sun rises.
If they come here, they will ruin the *saafè* medicine."
He said, "That is okay."
God made it possible,
That Foningama, Fèmu Dole, Ka - Fèzuma,
115 Those three entered Misadu around *fitili*.

[Foningama leaves his brother Kònsaba in Gbè]

- Eh, Foningama,
His father's home - èh, was Gbè.
Eh, Foningama and his older brother,
Eh, they could not live together,
120 In Gbè - Gbèsoba.
Kònsaba.
That Kònsaba and Foningama could not live together.
He said, "Let's go."

107 'enemy': *ju*.

114 Fèzuma: = 'Ansumana man?'

115 The story picks up in line 395.

Eh, Wolodu...
125 "Eh, we are going to our uncle's place.
Let's go, èh, to our uncle's place.
If we go and come to an understanding...
When that happens we will live together."
They left Gbè.
130 They went and settled at Diemou,
Wolodu, Diemou.
When they went there...
Eh, Kònsaba went to his uncle.
Those uncles were the people of Wònò.
135 "You people of Wònò,
May God's will be your will."

[Kònsaba plots to kill Foningama]

[Kònsaba said,] "My younger brother has made me worry.
You must help me.
Let's punish him.
140 They went...
They went, èh...
They went and dug a hole under the cotton tree.
When they went and dug a deep hole under the cotton tree...
When they gathered together [Kònsaba said,]
145 "Let's bury Foningama after he sits on the mat,
And falls into the hole."
God made it possible,
That when they gathered together...
When the next day came,
150 They sent for Foningama.
They went and sat under the cotton tree.
Foningama remained at the back.

[An old woman warns Foningama about Kònsaba's plot]

When he was going [up front],
An old woman said,
155 "Come here you stupid man.
Come give me a small kola nut."
He took the one kola nut that he had and gave it to her.
He said, "I know that you can put snuff in your mouth.
I can also put snuff in my mouth."
160 He took some snuff and gave it to [her].
She said, "If you go,
Be careful and don't sit down.
The place where the mat is set..."

Don't sit down on the white mat.
165 Go."

[Foningama foils Kònsaba's plot]

Foningama went.
The whole crowd was sitting down.
All of them were sitting and waiting for Foningama.
[Kònsaba said,] "Foningama,
170 Take a seat on the white mat."
He said, "Ka, you are my big brother, Kònsaba.
Why should I sit on the white mat if you don't sit on it?
I will not do that."
He left and went somewhere else.
175 His uncle,
The people of Wònò...
The strangers were not aware of what was happening.
When they went,
They sat on the white mat and fell into the hole.
180 Foningama said, "Haa! This is what I was going to do today?
I will not settle here.
We have to go to a different place."

[Foningama travels to Misadu and meets Tumaningèchè]

So they came this way.
When they came this way...
185 They came.
They entered Misadu.
At that time our ancestor [Tumaningèchè] who was here said,
"Ha, the three strangers who have been talked about are here."
He asked, "Where did you come from?"
190 He said, "Uncle, we came from Gbè.
My big brother Kònsaba and I could not live in the same place,
So we went to Jèmu to talk.
We did not know that they had dug a hole under the cotton tree,
So they could kill me.
195 God did not allow me to fall into the hole.
I have come."
He [Tumaningèchè] said, "Which town does your mother come from?"
He [Foningama] said, "My mother comes from Swana."
They asked, "Are you the son of Swana's first daughter?"
200 He said, "Yes."

164 In the background, one can hear Oppong tell the children to move back.

[They said,] “You are the one?
 He said “Yes.”
 [They said,] “Your house is here.
 In fact, you are not going anywhere else.
 205 You will settle here.”

[Tumaningèmè transfers power to Foningama]

All the *lami* that I have,
 I give all of it to you.
 He [Tumaningèmè] said, “Ancestor,
 There is one thing that you can’t do.
 210 There is a law that you can’t break.
 You can’t break that law.
 I am the only one that can break that law.
 I pass everything in the land,
 And give the *masaya* to you.
 215 I give everything to you.
 I am happy.
 When judgments are to be handed down,
 You are the one who should pass the judgments.
 You are to do all of the talking.”
 220 He [Foningama] said, “I accept.”
 Then they sat down.

[Foningama’s sacrifices his nine children]

They took a woman and gave her to him.
 After they gave him a woman,
 She had nine children.
 225 He said, “Aye!”
 He said, “That is it.”
 He had nine sons,
 And offered them as a sacrifice for the land.
 The dug the earth,
 230 And buried them near the mosque of Misadu.
 If a Jomani goes...

206 *lami*: Occult made from medicine that supposedly provides protection against bullets (“gun-proof”). The Kromah symbolically transferred their power to the Kamara when they made this statement.

208-221 The speaker later said that the Kromah were the ones to make decisions about the serious cases, and that the Kamara would only deal with the less important cases (App. 7.34, l. 90).

228 ‘sacrificed’: = killed.

If a Jomani goes,
And sits on that rock,
They-they-they will die.
235 If you place your foot on it,
You will go crazy.
That is for the Jomani.
That is what God made.

[Foningama makes a division in Misadu between Fanyala and Fasu]

When that period ended he said,
240 “Ah! Let’s divide the town.”
They divided the town.
His son now...
The name of his first son was Fanyala.
He was the first son.
245 Fasu,
He was the second.
They divided the town.
Fasu went on one side,
[And] Fanya went on one [the other] side.
250 Ah, èh, Fa - Fanya went to Gbè.
The people who settled with Fanyala...
The people who settled with him are the...
The people who settled with him are the people of Jiila.
They are the people who settled with Fanya.
255 Ah, èh, the people who followed him,
Are the Jomanu from Maana.
They divided the town.
All those children were taken,
And given to Foningama.
260 “Take care of the land.
Take care of the land.”
While that was taking place he said, “Um!”
He said, “Ancestor...”

* * *

[Foningama’s *mori* destroys Kòma’s *saafèlè*]

395 Eh-èh, that person...
Eh, that man Kòma,

232-234 Yaya Dole told me not to step on the same rock in 1986 because of the *jina* that resided underneath (App. 7.8).

His medicine was killing things.
 Our ancestor [Tumaningèmè] said, “Han.
 Foningama, tell your *mori* man to write [a talisman] for you.
 400 When he writes,
 Maybe God will quickly ruin his medicine.
 He [Foningama] said, “Fèmò Dole,
 Write and give it to the *kaamòò*.
 He wrote it,
 405 And tied it around the waist of a frog.
 Ah, èh, they took it,
 And placed it on the road.
 They placed it on the side [of the road],
 Where [Kòma’s] medicine used to travel.
 410 It [Zo Misa’s medicine] swallowed the toad,
 And the medicine exploded.
 He [Kòma] said, “I can’t live here any more.
 I can’t stay here any more.
 The Maiyã are bad.
 415 The Maiyã are bad.”

[Kòma and Jufa Konè leave Misadu and separate in Kpoola]

Now, he,
 And Jufa Konè,
 They left.
 They went on the road to Kpòòla.
 420 After they went on the road to Kpòòla,
 They reached Manakuò.
 They passed Manakuò.
 The big river at Manakuò,
 Everyone calls Gbòò.
 425 Ahan, èh, Kòma’s...
 Kòma’s, èh, snuff can,
 It’s name in Kpelle is Gbòò.
 While they were sitting down and drinking [he said,]
 “Oh-oh!
 430 I forgot my snuff can at that big creek.”
 That is the place that they now call Gbòò.
 That is where that name of Gbòò came from.

399 Kromah-Dole oath made here. Later, Kabine Kromah said that he saved Mori Kuma Dole’s life because of this oath (l. 2415).

402 Fèmò Dole was Foningama’s *mori*.

415 Maiyã [Maniya] *juu*.

419 Kpòòla: = Boola.

421 Manakuò: = Manakòlò.

That is how that happened.
 After that happened, they went to Kpòòla hill.
 435 At that big hill,
 Both of them turned their backs and said,
 “*Jèlewie, Jèlewie*” (‘Good bye, good bye’).
 Ah, “*Mòòsi-o* (‘See you tomorrow’),
Mòòsi-o.”
 440 He said, “*Jèlewie*” in Kpelle.
 That is what he said.
 When they reached Kpòòla...
 After they reached Kpòòla,
 They went in different directions.
 445 They went to that place -
 They passed through Wenzu.
 They went different directions.

[Jufa Konè goes to Lola]

Eh-èh, Fòni - that one...
 Kòma went,
 450 He went to the right, on the Kpankpala road.
 Jufa Konè,
 He went on the Zèlèkole road.
 When he went...
 When he entered...
 455 When he went on the Zèlèkole road,
 He went to Lola.
 In Lola...
 A-ha, they did not go into the *doo*.

[Kòma establishes a *doo* with the Kpelle]

Now they went to -
 460 They went to Kpanpala.
 They passed Kpankala and went to Mabuana.
 They went and passed -
 They went and passed Koule.
 He went now and entered Mabuana.
 465 When they went to Mabuana,

436 Other traditions say that the name of that mountain, Yèlawula, originated at the time that Zo Musa passed Boola when he was going to Zota.

448 Fòni: Kromah started to say Foniṅgama.

452 Zèlèkole: = N’Zerekore.

458 ‘They did not go into the *doo*’ (*We tèè taa doo lò*): The people in this area did not join the *doo* or secret society (see l. 471-476,483).

They asked,
 "Why don't you settle with us?"
 He said, "No, I will not settle here."
 He said, "I will go and settle on the side of your town where the sun sets."
 470 Kòma then went and settled there.
 He called the Kpelle and the Loma.
 He said, "Come.
 Let's separate from the Mènya.
 The Mènya are bad.
 475 How can we separate from the Mènya?
 Let's go into the *doo*,
 And mark each other - and mark each other - and mark each other.
 They said, "Ha, that is good."
 All the Kpelle agreed.
 480 They all agreed.

[Jufa Konè protests against Kòma and moves to Gbiyaso]

Ah, Jufa Konè,
 His people said, "Ka, I who came with Kòma from Misadu,
 You have conspired to kill us.
 We will not go.
 485 We are not part of this."
 Jufa Konè,
 His descendants left Lola and settled at Gbiyaso.
 They don't go into the *doo*.
 God made it possible,
 490 So they could mark each other.
 That is how the *doo* business originated...

* * *

[TABOOS AND JIACA]
 [Jomani - elephant and leopard taboos]

Chèjan: What is our [Kromah] taboo?
 Kabine: Um?
 Chèjan: Kromah?
 2685 Kabine: Kromah.
 Chèjan: Kromah.
 Kabine: Our taboo is fish,
 And *jufa*,
 And dog. (everyone laughed)

2687 *jufa*: An animal whose throat has not been cut correctly, and where the proper salutation has not been made according to Muslim tradition.

- Chèjan: Who has the leopard taboo?
Kabine: Uum?
Chèjan: What people have the leopard taboo?
2690 Kabine: Who?
Chèjan: What kind of people have the leopard taboo?
Kabine: Jomani.
The people of Foningama.
They have the leopard taboo.
Chèjan: Who has the elephant taboo?
Kabine: What?
Chèjan: Elephant?
2695 Kabine: Elephant.
Chèjan: Elephant.
Kabine: Uum.
Chèjan: How did the Jomani get the leopard taboo?
Kabine: Ah, the Jomani are older than everyone else,
Like myself.
We are older.
2700 There is only one person who is older than me in this town.
Anyone who is older than everyone else,
Is called leopard.
We call that person “leopard.”
That is why they took that name.
2705 You people call it *wala*.
We call it *sule (soli)*.
Eh, take care of the Jomani because they are the leopard (*sule*).
They are the *sule*.
Do you hear that?
Chèjan: I hear that.
2710 Kabine: Eh, ha, that is it.
Chèjan: When that happened, the leopard became their taboo.
Kabine: That is their taboo.
All of the older Jomani are leopard.
The Jomani can’t eat that.

[Jiaka: the Sabole who fled to Lola]

- Question: Who are the *jiaka* here? *Jiaka*?
Kabine: The *jiaka*?
Question: Who are the *jiaka* here?
2715 Kabine: Eh, Va Bolo Wulèni who lives down there,
Is a *jiaka*.
The *jiaka*...
There are many *jiaka* here.
Ah, when the white people freed them from slavery,
2720 All of the *jiaka* ran away to Lola.

Chèjan: Went to Lola?

Kabine: Um, the yard of those who stayed is there.

We call them the Sabole people.

Chèjan: Sabole people...

[Jiaka: Seku Kènè]

Kabine: Un, èh, today, the only person who is older than me is Seku - Seku Kènè.

Ah, he lives behind the mosque there.

2725 He can't even come out of the house now.

Eh, he is one of the *jiaka*.

Chèjan: He is a *jiaka*?

Kabine: Um.

Chèjan: Seku Kanè. Okay.

Kabine: Yes, Seku Kènè, behind the mosque over there.

[Jiaka: The *fin*a Kamara]

Some of them are near the road over there.

They are the *fin*a people.

2730 They are here.

They were our father's messenger.

Chèjan: They used to be messengers?

Kabine: Yes, the *fin*a and the *jiaka* are the *masa*'s messengers.

Go and tell someone,

"Take this message to this *masa* and that *masa*."

2735 That is what they did.

[The means of becoming a *jiaka*]

Chèjan: How did someone become a *jiaka*?

Kabine: Someone became a *jiaka* when they sent you to be a messenger.

When they send you as a messenger,

When you are a *masa* and your brother is next to you,

And when you are talking,

2740 Then he will answer him the way you are answering me.

That is how the *jiaka* business came.

Chèjan: That means that I am your *jiaka*?

Kabine: Yes, that is how it started.

[ANCIENT MISADU: II]
[Kromah: farming immigrants]

Chèjan: He asked what the Kromah were doing when they came on this side? What were the Kromah doing when they came here?

Kabine: Our coming here?

Chèjan: Yes. What kind of job were they doing?

Kabine: Farming.

2745 From that time up to now,
Farming is the only thing that we have done.

[Foningama the war chief]

Chèjan: What kind of job did Foningama do?

Kabine: Foningama?

Chèjan: Uum.

Kabine: War *masa*.

Otherwise, we were not war *masa*.

My ancestor left everything and gave them to Foningama.

2750 [He said,] “You be the war *masa*.”

That is how it was.

Chèjan: You said that today?

Kabine: Yes.

[The coming of Islam]

Chèjan: How did Islam (*Islamia*) come?

Kabine: Um.

Chèjan: How did Islam come?

Kabine: How did Islam come?

2755 Those people came here from Futa.

2755 The Jabi-Gassame Jakhanke from the Futa Jalon played an important part in spreading Islam into Konya-Mani in the nineteenth century. The Jabi or Gassama became the “organized clerical elite” of the Jakhanke, and eventually “took over the intellectual and spiritual leadership of the extensive Jakhanke diaspora” (Sanneh 1989:41). According to most accounts, Ture Fode Jabi founded Dougousin-Komé and Safalou in Tanda in the eighteenth century (Sanneh 1989:41-44). Ture Fode developed a large school of more than 600 students who came from the entire region, including Baté and Konya-Mani (Suret-Canale 1970:56). Ture Fode sired Muhammad Fatuma, who moved north to Didécoto near the Senegal river to establish his own Jakhanke community (Sanneh 1989:45,258). One of Muhammad Fatuma’s sons was Salim Gassama, named after the Jakhanke founder Al-Hajj Salim Sware. Salim Gassama or Karamo Ba was born in Didecoto in about 1730. After his father died, Karamo Ba is said to have spent the next forty years traveling from location to location, being taught and teaching others. At one point during his journeys, Karamo Ba went to Kankan for three years and taught many students (Suret-Canale 1970:57; Sanneh 1989:98-100). He next journeyed to Konya-Mani and then went down to the town of Faye or Mfai in modern-day Sierra Leone near the coast. Ba did not want to make the two hundred plus mile walk to Faye, but he did so because a diviner told him that he would ‘marry a princess’ there ‘who would bear him his spiritual heir and successor.’ When the teacher reached Faye, he met “King Ishaq Kamara.”

Chèjan: Futa, right?

Kabine: Yes, because, èh,

No road led from here to Makka.

God gave everything to the Prophet's disposal,

In Makka.

2760 The people of Makka who fled and crossed the river came this way.

Ha, now those...

When their fathers crossed the river,

They lived near the Futa people.

When that happened,

2765 They taught the Futa people how to pray.

That is what they were doing.

When we became friendly with them,

They taught us how to pray. [...]

[Femo Dole succeeded Foningama as chief of Musadu]

Chèjan: When Foningama left from there, who became Misadu's leader?

Kabine: When Foningama left Misadu, the Dole people...

2770 I didn't tell you.

Foningama, Femo Dole, Fènzima...

Fènzuma was a *jiaka*.

Femo Dole stayed there.

Now, when Foningama left there...

[Foningama's descendants in Simandu and Koningò]

2775 When Foningama left Misadu,

He went to Simandu.

The child who he sired there are,

Eh, are the people of Damaro.

He left there and settled in Kèlèwani.

2780 The child who he sired in Kèlèwani,

His name was, èh, See Bliama.

One oral tradition claimed that Ishaq Kamara came from "Musadu" (Hunter 1977:253, fn. 2). (This Kamara at least came from Konya-Mani; if the Kamara were ban from residing in Musadu at this time as many oral traditions indicate, then he did not come from the town of Musadu itself). Karamo Ba the Kamara chief if he could marry his daughter Aisatou. Ishāq initially refused because Aisatou was so much younger than Karamo Ba, but consented if Karamo Ba could remove a boulder in the river that obstructed shipping. After Karamo Ba performed a special prayer and moved the rock, Karamo Ba married Ishaq Kamara's daughter and then returned to Kankan by way of Konya-Mani. His students from Konya-Mani were Kaba, Kendo, Sware, Konte, Sise, Darama and Sanqaranko (Sanneh 1989:98-99). Many years later, in about 1804, Karamo Ba founded Touba. The town comprised 400 compounds and was divided into four main quarters. Students from Baté, Konya-Mani, and many other regions went to Touba to receive instruction. Karamo Ba died in about 1824, but his children and students continued his legacy (Sanneh 1989: ch. 5; see Suret-Canale 1970; Quimby 1975; Hunter 1976).

- See Bliama.
 His name was Bliama.
 Now when he went...
 2785 He went to Koningò.
 The child he sired in Koningò **went to Macenta,**
Went to Mandu,
Went to Koligblama.
 His **children who are head warriors** are those **slave descendants there.**
Chèjan: They are Jomani?
 2790 Kabine: Yes.

[Foningama's *jiaka* and *mori*]

Chèjan: Did a *jiaka* follow Foningama?
Kabine: Um?
Chèjan: A *jiaka* for Foningama?
Kabine: Didn't I tell you?
 The name of the *jiaka* who followed him was Fènzuma?
Chèjan: Fènzuma.
Kabine: Han, the *jiaka* who used to be with him was called Fènzuma.
 The *mori* was Femu Dole.

[The speaker's age]

- Chèjan: How old are you?
 2795 Kabine: I was born in 1898.

[Misadu, Liberia, and Bakedu]

- Chèjan: Do you know about someone who came from Monrovia a long time ago who went to Misadu?
Kabine: Who went from Monrovia to Misadu?
Chèjan: From Liberia to Misadu?
Kabine: Those Misadu people ran away to Liberia.
Chèjan: Am, someone who left from there and came here?
Kabine: Oh, no one came from there.
 The people of Misadu ran away and went to Liberia.
 2800 The person who came from there was...
 I told you..
 That person was Va Famo, Fa Famo Kènè [Kènda?].
 He left Liberia and went to Misadu.
 Eh, **Muan Sitèn** and **Muan Makon** [Mèkò?] were given to him.

2795 In the next interview on 7 December 1993, Layi Kabine said that he was 103 years old (App. 7.34).

2801 Kènda: Kènda cloth is made in Musadu.

2805 **They came from Liberia and went to Misadu.**

Chèjan: To come here?

Kabine: **They came from Liberia.**

They came from Liberia.

Eh, Bakèdu.

That is what I said.

2810 They gave Father Famo the woman in Misadu.

[Manding-Kpelle relations]

Chèjan: How did the Maniya and Kpelle live together?

Kabine: They used to intermarry.

Oppong: The Mènya and Kpelle?

Kabine: Live together.

Ha, something.

When we settle together now we disown their children.

2815 **Then we broke the marriage.**

All *kafris* are the same. (laughter)

All *kafris* are the same.

Something, something...

Eh, those Muslims left Futa and came to our side.

2820 When we say Jakodu,

When the Jakodu name reached.

Weren't they [the Manding] and the Kpelle people living here?

The Kpelle lived as far as Waninò, Misadu - behind Misadu.

Chèjan: That was their boundary?

Kabine: That was their boundary.

[The Loma from Simandu]

2825 Aha, the Loma,

They lived as far as Beyla-Farana.

All of the people of Simandu, are,

In the Loma area.

They were Loma.

Aha, because, èh, Damaro...

2830 All of the big old men there spoke and understand Loma.

All of them could speak Loma.

All of them...

[Gbana, *nyana*, and the Sayon]

Ah, èh, Gbana, Gbana.

When they say the Sayon people, Gbana...

- 2835 **The Sanyo people of Gbana are all Kpelle.**
 They are from the same mother.
 When they stay at **Gbandala**,
 They named Gbana after Gbandala.
They say Gbanda, your gbanda was Gbana.
- 2840 Prayer became widespread.
 Our prayer came from Algeria.
 You yourself know Algeria.
 Our pray left Algeria and came here.
Question: Gbanda was a bush area or what?
- 2845 Kabine: The forest people,
 Their-their *nyana*...
 [The place] where they had their activities was called Gbanda.
Question: Gbana.
Kabine: Yes, yes. Most of the people in Gbana are Sayon.
 Most of them are Kpelle.
- 2850 Most of the Sayon in Gbana are Kpelle.
They changed when they started to pray.
All of the Gbana-Sayon would be Kpelle if it was not for that.

[Kòma and Jufa Konè leave Misadu]

- Question: What kind of man was Zo Misa?
Kabine: I said, Zo Misa.
 His son was called Kòma.
Question: What kind of person was he?
- 2855 Kabine: Wasn't he Kpelle?
 I didn't tell you.
 That Zo Misa Kòma,
 Jufa Konè...
 Didn't I say that today, teacher?
- 2860 All of them were Kpelle,
 Both of them.
 When they left...
 Now, when they left,
 They went into the forest.
- 2865 They passes something, Gbenikiala.

[Kòma establishes his own town behind Mabuani]

Now, when they reached Gbenikiala,
 Jufa Konè went on the Zèlèkole road.
 The other man went on the Kpankpala road.

2837 Gbandala: Some say that this is the *zo* bush from where the *kòma* come out.
 2844 Perhaps speaking of the Turé who he later said came from Algeria (App. 7.34).

Now, when he went on the Kpankpala road,
 2870 He went behind Kpankpala.
 He is still there.
 He also went to Mabuani.
 Now, when he reached Mabuani,
 They said to him, "Come settle with us."
 2875 He said, "No, I am going to establish my own town.
 He established a town behind Mabuani.
 Ha, that is Kòma's town.

[Jufa Konè settles in Gbaiso]

Now, Jufa Konè's people left Zèlèkole and went on the Lola road.
 He went and settled in Gbaiso.
 2880 That is where his people live.
 That is how it is.

[Foningama's laws]

Chèjan: Did Foningama pass any laws? Did Foningama pass any laws?
Kabine: Yes, he used to pass laws.
Chèjan: What were those laws?
Kabine: He used to pass laws.
 When you looked at a person's wife,
 2885 They would give you fifty lashes.
 It used to be that you would go and ask them for a woman,
 And give them seven cows.

[Foningama's *wulukèlèn* sacrifice]

Chèjan: Foningama... Foningama was the one who gave the *wulukèlèn* sacrifice in
 Misadu. Foningama was the one who gave the *wulukèlèn* sacrifice in Misadu.
Kabine: The old people used to say *wulukèlèn*.
 We say *wakèlèn* (one thousand).
 2890 He had that *wakèlèn* sacrifice,
 And killed nine of his children and buried them in the ground.
 Nine children.
Chèjan: Why were they killed?
Kabine: For *masaya* business, so that his clan could rule over us.
 Ha, they were killed because of the *wulukèlèn* sacrifice.
 2895 The children he sired were Fanyala and Fasu...

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.30

BABA DOLE

Place and date of interview: Musadu, Guinea, 27 July 1992

Context of interview: When Majongè Mammadi Chèjan Kromah and his father Mustafa took me to Musadu in 1986, Yaya Dole hosted us (App. 7.8). I told him that I wanted to return, and did so for a few hours - six years later in 1992. On this trip, I just wanted to reestablish contact with the Dole family and the people of Musadu, but could not stay longer because I had malaria. Though Yaya died in 1991, his family fully accepted me when I returned in 1992. Yaya's son Baba was in Liberia when I went to Musadu in 1986, so this was the first time that I had met him. Baba and I quickly formed a good relationship, which continued the following December when I returned. I sadly learned that Baba was killed in an accident in Guinea in February 2002.

After I arrived in Musadu, we first went to the place where the French laid two cement blocks just outside of Musadu along the road that leads to Sinko. We then walked back into town and conducted the second part of the interview at Kabakòni. We concluded the last part of the interview in one of the Dole houses in Musadu.

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5. Zo Musa's sheep horn
6. The Kanè destroy Zo Musa's sheep horn
7. Jòn River and Zo Musa's wife

MISCELLANEOUS

8. Water, Jina and Pump
9. Kabatinikòni
10. Misadu's Jina
11. Execution grounds
12. Kabatinikòni
13. Zo Musa's curse: No Kamara in Musadu
14. No Goats in Musadu

[FRENCH PRESENCE]

[1. The French, the White Man, and Musadu]

Tim: What is this things? You can just talk in the mike and tell me what is this?¹

Baba: You know, the time before Guinea got independent, when the white people were here. The French people were ruling this country at that time, but one American man came. He want to enter Musadu. He ask the French people in Jakodu. He say, "I want to see Musadu. From here to Musadu is far?" "Right away the French man asked the white man, he say, "Yes." He say, "Where you from?" He say, "I am from Liberia, Dukò." That time they used to called Monrovia - Dukò. He say, "I from Dukò." He say, "From Dukò to here, and from here to Musadu, from here to Musadu, is far more than from here to Dukò." "Where from, what about from Jakoudou to Musadu here?" He said. "Thank you." Which suppose to be about five [kilo]meters. Now they sent the sent the man back. After the man went back, he went and come back again, sent another man to come Musadu, to come and do this work. When the American man came and do the work in this place here, at that time, our father then were never born yet.

[2. Cement]

Tim: This one here... [the visible cement block]

Baba: This thing here,

Tim: What exactly?

Baba: Something what here, the man who put it here, he is the man that know about it. The man who put it inside, the man who put the thing here.

Tim: The white man?

Baba: The white man, what under it he know. Because the time he do this thing, even the people came from in town and meet him. They asked him. He was doing the work, He didn't answer anybody, according to my father. He told me. He say that his grandfather told him that. (Uum) Yes. He said that white man who did this work here, who came to do this work here. You see this small little thing here [the top of the cement block], what under it nobody knows. Only the man who put it here and Allah, that the only people who know. (Uum). Yes. That what my father told me. He say his father told him that. (Uum)

¹This part of the interview was conducted where the French laid the cement bricks.

Yes. Who is supposed to be Mori Kumala Dole. Mori Kumala Dole and his own son mane Yaya Dole. Yaya Dole's son name Baba Dole, that the Baba Dole talking now. (Uum) Yes.

Tim: Okay. Okay. That is very good.

[ANCIENT MISADU]

[3. The Founding of Musadu: Zo Musa and the Donzo rock]

Tim: (continued): The rock in Musa's yard. (Yes) You can explain that?²

Baba: Yes. Musa [Zo Musa Kòma], when the man came in town here first, he used to go fishing for somebody. At that time he was slave. He was working under somebody. He was staying with some body. He used to go for fishing and come give it to the man.

Tim: Who was he staying under?

Baba: He used to be with See Blama.

Tim: See Blama Kènè?

Baba: Yes, See Blama. That the man he used to stay with. Right away the man say, "Where I can go and do the work, it far from here. Please let me go and be near the place. I build a small little place there. So, when I get fish, I can dry it and and bring it in town so people can buy it, so we can able to feed ourselves. Right away the man accept. They came to this place here. The rock what in the town now, that is the place the man used to sit down on it. Another rock, that three rocks in that place. Another one there he used to stand on it to look around. When he see any tree shaking with animal - when animal in the tree, when animal in the bush, to stand under the grass... When he see the grass shaking, right away he used to shoot with some kind of country spear. Okay, that is what he used to chunk it. Yes. (The Musa man) When he chunk it and go hit the animal, right away he kill it and dry it on top of the rock, and the sun can dry it. At that time, there was no salt business. They used to fix some kind of African salt. The salt we can eat now, was not at that time. There was no salt at that time. Musadu first building, that's the place they build where I show you the place.

[4. The Founding of Musadu: Zo Musa, Fakoli, Famou Dole]

The first first house they built, they built it in that place. But when the Musa was in the town now, right away people used to come to him now to come in and buy the thing, buy the thing. Some of them used to traveling from here to Dukò [Monrovia]. At that time, there were no town, from Jasodu [Jakodu] all the way to Dukò. Only one town, they used to called it Musadu . People used to come and sleep with him. Right away, some of them used to stay there now and built their own house. But when the man been in the town, the man who came to him, next to him now, the called the man, èh-èh - Fakoli Kromah.

Tim: Maybe we can walk back, so the rain... Chèjan: Me, I want to see the forest [Doofatini]. Tim: Not this time, it is too far. Chèjan: No. Tim: Yes.

Baba: The Fakoli man now, he was the first, the second man now, to come to the man.

²Speaking about a boulder in the Donzo quarter behind the Dole yard where Baba lived. Mammadi Oppong Sanoe took a picture of Baba Dole and I standing of this rock (Fig. 33).

After that, Famou Dole came. That the Dole own or grandfather, Famuo Dole. Famuo Dole came, to come and build the town. But the time they used to fight the war, they came to destroy the town. They burn the place. Everybody find his was somewhere else. Right away, that Famuo Dole came again and start to build the town.

Tim: Famuo Dole?

Baba: Yes, that is how Musadu is.

Tim: So Famuo Dole built the town?

Baba: Yes.

Tim: Zo Musa did not build the town?

Baba: Yes, no, Musa was there at that time. When the fire came, when they fight the war, they kill people...

Tim: Who was fighting?

Baba: By that time, you know, the war leaders, they were fighting war. At that time, my father's father was not living at that time.

Tim: But Musa was fighting?

Baba: No, no Musa was not fighting.

[5. Zo Musa's sheep horn]

Baba (continued): When Musa was in the town, Musa used to have one sheep. During the first people time, when they bath the baby, they were not having mattress you know or blanket to put the baby on. They used to fixed country something, they put oil on the baby, put it under the sun, because there was no cloth business. But this sheep used to come and take the baby and swallowed it.

[6. The Kanè destroy Zo Musa's sheep horn]

Baba (continued): That is the time that they fixed, they sent somebody to go to Jasodu area there, to go and bring the Kanè people, the people who they can call the Kande.

Tim: Kande?

Baba: Kande. That is the time, the people entered the town. They sent for them to come and do the work, to find way now, because this sheep was giving them hard time. When it find the children, it can swallow it, it find anything on the ground, it can swallowed it. So, it is giving us hard time. Find way now, so we can get the chance to more this sheep on top of us. That is the time now they fixed some kind of medicine from Qur'an book.

Tim: How they call that?

Baba: *Lisumu. Lisimu.* They fixed that one now. When they fixed the *lisimu*, they put it on the frog. Well, now, it was walking on the ground now. When it jump so you go put it on the ground... When you jump so it go put it somewhere else. Right away the sheep saw it and took it and swallowed it, and the sheep died. When the sheep died, right away the man get vex and say that he not going want to stay in this town now. Because the sheep what you depending on, they finish kill the sheep, so he can't remain in this town. He will find his way somewhere else.

[7. The Jòn River and Zo Musa's wife]

Baba (continued): When the man was going, you know the river what you crossed before coming, they called that place Jòò. That the man woman, who used to go and wash cloths there, and also the man used to go fishing there with the fish hook. He used to go fishing there.

Tim: What is the name mean?

Baba: The river?

Tim: Yes, what is the name mean?

Baba: Jòn, but first time there was no name on it.

Tim: Does it have any meaning?

Baba: The Jòò name, that the man - that Kpelle woman. His name Jòò. That the man, that the woman used to go and go wash cloths and draw water there. They called that place now Jòò. That why they name the place to the woman. Otherwise, there was no name for it at that time on that river. There was no different name on it, for them to change it with second name. No. There was no name on it according to my father...

[MISCELLANEOUS]

[8. Water, Jina and Pump]

Tim: Let's walk because of the rain. {Begin walking back to Musadu} You was talking about *jina* people. You can explain that? Chèjan: They say that when you chuck rock, that was...

Baba: Ahan. Alright. Where we got the pump now... The German people built some kind of pump, here to draw water inside. Even the time they built that, my father didn't support. My father said "No, we got this water here from our grand-grand fathers time up to now. I don't care how you draw this water, it can't be dry. So, the best thing, let have this water instead of taking - fixing another pump in this country - in the town, because it will not end good. But the people said that my father must agree, so that the can fix that pump. You know, it will help us in this town. My father said, "Okay." Where they built that pump now first-first time, the people what used to lived there, there was a big river. But you go there, you go there, as human being, you can't see the water. But when you chunk the rock, you will just hear the rock sound in the water - gbutu. When you go, you walk inside, you can't see no water. That's the place I saw you over there.

[9. Kabatinikòni]

Another place here also, you go there you can go and see the water, how it coming from under the hill coming down. There where we can go and get water to drink. Even the time when the French were here, during the time, the colonial time. One man, they used to called the man Commander Rizze. He came here one time. They gave him the water to *drink*. He looked at water and said, "What!!! Where this water is coming from?" They say, "What happen?" He say, "I want to see where the water is coming from, because this water is too clean. How you get this water from? You go to show me the place. They carry the man and go see.

[10. Musadu's *Jina*]

Tim: But you said that there was *jina* there.

Baba: Yes.

Tim: Explain that one.

Baba: *Jina* there....you know the *jina* what here around Musadu , even the way we are standing now, all around here, they get - they get - that *jina* area, but they don't embarrassed anybody. Musadu *jina*, they are very easy. They are good. They don't embarrassed anybody, in this town. But the *jina* what here, the place what I am talking about now, the *jina* plenty there, but can't do bad to anybody. You can go there now and you walk there now, they don't embarrass anybody. Because the small-small boys them didn't know any thing. But first time, when the older people do some of those thing there, it can feel bad. But the small-small children, when they do it, they can't even look at them. They leave them. They [the *jina*] even used to caught them [boys] and circumcised them, leave them, in that place. When you see them, there was no cloths business, cloth business were not plenty. You used to born the child, some time four years - five years, you don't wear no clothes. You don't wear trousers, nothing. They used to caught than and circumcised them, boy child them. They used to catch them and circumcise them, and free them. No embarrassment, even still now, right now it can still happening. Some of the children you can see it. When they borned than after forty days you can see than circumcise. You don't know how they got it. That one can still happening.

[11. Execution Grounds]

Tim: And you are also saying that when they used to get slave, they will keep the women and children, but they would... on the older people, and they will kill the warriors.

Baba: Yes, you know that time, like the way now, the two countries. God forbid, when two countries fight, the other soldier and the next soldiers, like the way American used to fight war, when they go and fight war, when they catch the others people own soldier, they will bring it, and the other civilian, they can bring them and keep the civilian. But those who were fighting war with them, their own fight, their own enemies, they can bring them and come and kill them. Where they used to kill them, they stay.. We can even go there and see the place. So, so dead bodies, the place is just higher like this, but it is not to say that it was a hill before, but the dead bodies, they go, they take dirt and cover it. That why the place became ground just like this. But it was not like that first. That is what got the place higher like this. It was a flat area, according to my father now. He said the blood used to waste all around like a water running at that time. Sometime they used to killed more than two hundred, three hundred people. They bring them, kill them. They sent another man so, another man will be over there, like from here to where those boy are standing, people stand all the way over there. One man, they cutting people head. One man so, on this side cutting people head. They cutting until they go to make one person now. That person, they use to take their knife and clean it with the person. That it like this, but they don't kill you. But the people not used to be to themself. When you do that one now, you can't be to yourself. Sometime you will just be like some be some kind of way.

Tim: Like make you crazy man.

Baba: Okay.

[12. Kabatinikòni]

{By now we had walked past through town and gone to Kabatini kòni (rock hill creek). Water comes out from a spring along the side of Kabatini (rock hill), and the flow of the water can be heard in the background as we conduct this part of the interview.}

Baba (continued): The whole town people used to come, according to my father, to come draw water here, and go drink it. And the water can't get dry, and this water is too clean and too sweet. Even the time when the white were ruling this country, one man was here, they called him Commander Rese, he was in Jakodu at that time. The man came. The first thing they gave it to him, that this water they gave him to drink. The man asked, "What kind of water is this? This water too clean. Where you got this water from? Is this pump water or what?" They said, "No, we got this water from somewhere here." He said "Okay, let me go, let me see this place." They take the white man all the way here to come and see this place. That time, it happen about 1942 or 43. I think at that time, when the white people were ruling this country. That is the water we got it here now. Those who are blind, those women that can't hear - born again, this other one here, that is the one they used to come and take it and go drink it. But it was - this place was closed. So-so rocks. You see this rocks them. The people met it like this here. This place was closed. But during this our time now the people don't respect the old-old things. That is why they moved those things there. And right now, when we got the pump here now, nobody get the time for this place. Otherwise, all this place was clear. This never used to reach all the way here. From here over there. But the way that water is looking now, you can't drink it. You can't take it. It just sitting, started wasting by itself going. That is how this place has become like this, because we got pump water now.

Tim: Yes.

Baba: We can't drink this one now again.

[13. Zo Musa's curse: No Kamara in Musadu]

Baba (continued): The man, that they called Musa. When the Musa was leaving from this town. You know, the old people used to respect their word. When they say this, it used to be the final. Nobody should pass behind it. They said, no Kamara man should live in the Musadu town. They should live across the water. The water around Musadu. They should live outside across the water. The shouldn't live in Musadu town itself.

Tim: But Foningama was chief.

Baba: Yes.

Tim: But how did he manage to be chief if he was not suppose to live here?

Baba: Yes, because he was the man first to come. Now but, the man [Zo Musa] was having sheep that used to swallowed the people children. This why they find means for the man to move. Now, when he go now, when they do something to him that was not good, right away he leave and go to different place. Now, he say, "No Kamara should be here again." The way the people treated him like this, no Kamara should live here. If you live here, you will find out, you will see, what will happen yo you. That is how they can

be outside the town.

Tim: But not in the town?

Baba: Yes, but inside the town. They can't build house, they can come and still here ten years, five years, thirty years, but you can't build your own house to live in the town.

[14. No goats in Musadu]

Also, the reason - the reason why we can't keep goat in the town, but at this time, they can keep goat. You know, the first time, the old people sit down to discuss something, to pass the law, they used to get the liquor at that to drink it, the palm wine. They used get it at that time to drink it. Now, the time - the time they used meet to talk something now, they were having the palm wine in the pot. The goat came and hit that pot and waste the palm wine. Right away they said nobody should keep the goat here again. What they used to talk - what they suppose to talk that day, they don't talk it. The appointment was dissolved. So, for that reason, they said nobody should keep goat here. But at this time now the people can keep the goat in the town.

Tim: Goat?

Baba: Yes, goat. But father even not like the idea. My father say nobody should keep the goat. Some people came. They say, "Oh, those things, they are old-old things. Let's forget about those things." But first time they not used to do it. That is why they can't find goat at that time in Musadu, just for that reason.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.31

ALAFAN KONÈ

Place and date of interview: Beyla, Guinea, 28 July 1992

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek, Mohammed Chèjan Kromah, and Mohammed Oppong Sanoe

Context of interview: When we went to Beyla, a Konè friend from Monrovia directed us to a Bèrètè who was laying in a hammock, but he was too sick to grant us an interview. Bèrètè sent us to another member of his family, who in turn led us to the Bèrètè imam of Beyla. The imam also declined because he was going to a meeting, but sent us to Alifã Konè.

We met in the front room of Alifã Konè's house. In the background there were at least two dozen bound books written in Arabic. Present were Chèjan, Mohammed Sanoe, my Konè friend from Monrovia and a number of children. Two or three men joined us at the end of the interview. Alifã was probably near seventy years old and allegedly died later that year.

Translated by: Faliku Sanoe

Checked by: Faliku Sanoe and Tim Geysbeek (Monrovia, 1993) - tape/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

Translation note: I typed the first translation based on the original-handwritten transcript and translation. Months later, however, I decided to check the first translation against the tape with Faliku Sanoe because the original transcript and translation were poor. This was a very time-consuming process, but was necessary to get a good working document.

Three minutes and forty-four seconds of the original tape (after line 1488) were accidentally erased when the initial transcript/translation was being made. My failure to make a copy of the tape after the interview was an act of extreme carelessness.

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[INTRODUCTION]

[God's blessing on the people of Beyla and the narrative]

Question: How was Beyla founded? How was Beyla founded? What about the difference clans that came, the Béété and Konè people (Konakawu)? How did those differences emerge? How did the Béété and Konè come? That is

5

10

15

820

825

830

8

8

8

what we are anxious to hear, for you to explain to us.

Alifā: Children, move.

I want to talk to these people.

Praise be to the Almighty God,

The Lord of the World.

5 Oh!, may the Lord have mercy on Mohammed and his people.

Peace be upon Mohammed.

May the blessing of peace be upon Mohammed.

May God prosper the activities of the town that we are in.

May God give all blessings to us.

10 [May God] even give blessings to the people who came who want to know how
the earth was formed.

We are talking about how the world was formed.

May it [the talk] be rightly directed and guided by God.

The blessing of the great Messenger and the blessing of his blessing...

Peace be upon Mohammed.

15 Peace and grace be upon Mohammed...

* * *

[EARLY ISLAM: I, KONÈ MIGRATIONS TO GBÈ AND KONIYA]

[Alafā Konè the Muslim travels from Morocco to Mauritania]

Our ancestor who came here...

Our ancestor came from here,

Came from Sangalan.

He came from Sangalan.

820 He came from the *jamana*,

Of the white people.

He came here, èh - Sangalan.

When he took control of the *jamana*,

He said he was coming to fight,

825 To make the country submit.

That was our ancestor.

His son...

His son, his name was Masa Brahima.

My ancestor's name was Alafā Musaba.

830 He said that he was coming,

1 'Children': Speaking to the children who were in the room.

3-9 Translated from Arabic by Boakai Yamah.

10 'the people': those of us who went for the interview.

821 'white people': Morocco? Arabs? Drawing a close link with Islam.

825 'submit': *tube*.

828 Masa: = 'chief.' He became the *masa* and led the fighters (l. 1575).

829 Musaba: = 'big (*ba*) Musa.' See line 1181.

- To fight to make the *jamana* submit.
 At the time that happened in Morocco...
 They were in Morocco.
 They were in Morocco.
 835 Morocco was under their control.
 When that happened,
 They said that he left Morocco,
 And went to Mauritania.
 Sayedu was the one.
 840 He found out,
 That the man was a Muslim,
 When he went there.
 He said, "Muslims can't fight Muslims."
 He left,
 845 And went to the land of the Malaka,
 And also found that they were *molilu*.
 He also said that *molilu* should not fight *molilu*.
 He passed them.

[Alafan Konè founds Alfaliya near Sangalan]

- He left,
 850 And entered Sangalan.
 When he entered Sangalan,
 He said that he reached home.
 That was in the area of Beledu.
 When he reached Sangalan,
 855 He said that he reached home.
 They told him to settle in town.
 He said, "No, I can't settle there."
 He said that he would build his own town,
 Behind the river.
 860 He went and built his own town called Ailfaliya.
 The town that my ancestor built was called Alifaliya.
 He built Alifaliya,
 And settled there.
 He said, "This is my area."
 865 He stayed there,
 Until his father died.
 Then he took his warriors,
 And came to this *jamana*.
 My ancestor Foumuo brought his warriors.
 870 The man who was the *masa* - Alafan,

850 Sangalan: = Sankaran.

853 Beledu: = Beledugu, in today's Mali northwest of Kangaba (Kaaba).

His name was Masa Blamia.
 Masa Blaima,
 He was his first born.
 He led his warriors,
 875 And he became the *masa*.
 Masa Blaima took his warriors,
 And said that they were coming,
 To this *jamana*.

[Kònsaba Kamara coerces Masa Blaima to settle in Gbè]

When he came to this *jamana*,
 880 From Sangalan...
 When he came to this region from Sangalan they asked him,
 “Where are you going?”
 He said, “I am going to fight Kònsaba,
 To make Kònsaba submit.
 885 That is in the *jamana* of Tube, in Gbè *jamana*.
 He said, “I am going to make those *kafri* submit.”
 When my ancestor reached Gbèsoba he said,
 “I am going to make these *kafri* submit.”
 He entered Gbèsoba and went to Kònsaba.
 890 When he [Kònsaba] saw him he said, “Thanks be to God.
 Thanks be to God.
 Thanks be to God.
 God has given me a neighbor.
 God has given me a *mori*.”
 895 He took one bag of rice and gave it to him as a gift,
 And he added one cow.
 After they killed the cow,
 And after he had eaten that one,
 They gave him another cow.
 900 After he ate that one,
 They gave him another one.
 He gave him two more bags of rice,
 After his bag finished.
 My ancestor said [to himself], “Aye!
 905 This man is a *kafri*.
 If I say that this man is *kafri* and I fight him,
 I will not defeat him,
 Because,

884 Other traditions indicate that Kònsaba, Fèngama’s supposed older brother, was not a Muslim (Ch. 3). This statement supports those claims, and says that Masa Blaima essentially was going to fight Kònsaba in jihad.

887 Gbèsoba: ‘big (*ba*) town (*so*) of Gbè.’ Tape One, Side B.

- He has given me too much respect.
 910 He has done his part.”
 For that reason he said, “Kònsaba.
 Kònsaba,
 I came to see you,
 And I am leaving.”
 915 He [Kònsaba] said, “Should you leave,
 And I remain here alone?
 God has given me a neighbor.
 Do you think that I will let you go?
 I don’t agree **because I don’t want to stay here alone.**
 920 You and I will stay here.
 In fact, you shall be my *mori*.
 This *jamana* is now for you and me.
 I do not have a *mori* here, and you are my *mori*.”
 He went with the intention to fight.
 925 He replied, “I understand.
 You have spoken the truth.”
 He stayed two more days.
 He went and brought extra rice and a cow.
 [Kònsaba said,] “*Mori*, let me know when the food finishes.
 930 I will give some more to you.
 You are not going.”
 My ancestor said, “Kònsaba, since you have talked,
 I put my ten hands under it.
 I want to go and come back.
 935 I want to go and get my mother’s children that I left behind.
 I want to go and get the others.
 Then we will come and settle.
 We will settle together when I bring the others.
 That is what I would like to do.”
 940 His host agreed.

[Masa Blaima Konè leaves Kònsaba and returns to Samana]

- He passed through Singò when he returned.
 Singò [Sinko] was a small town on the side of the road at that time.
 They used to call Singò...
 This Singò - Solona.
 945 Do you hear?
 Have you ever heard of Singò?
 Solona.
 The Konè are not the ones who own Singò.

933 ‘my ten hands’: one finger = one hand. He fully accepted Kònsaba’s proposal.

- The people who own Singò,
 950 Are the Kromah.
 It is near the mountain.
 The Kromah live near the big mountain,
 That is over Singò.
 When that happened,
 955 The pumpkin area that is behind Singò...
 That is Singò.
 When they left that place,
 Near the mountain...
 To go near the mountain...
 960 **They called the Bolanjaydu when they went on top of the mountain.**
All the people who live [in the area] from Bolajaydu mountain to Fuala,
They are all Kromah.
 He said, he said...
 They are called the Solona Kromah.
 965 They called Singò, Solona.
 My ancestor said, "I have brought the name of your town.
 The people of Singò are the ones.
 "I have come back" (*Mè sekòngò*).
 That is how Singò got the name Singò.
 970 My ancestor was the one who named it.
 He left after that happened.
 He went to his own town,
 And never returned [to Kònsaba].
 He didn't return.
 975 He said, "Well, if I return and upset that *kafri*,
 He will defeat me.
 I am not going back."
 He never returned.
 He went and settled in the town that he built in the region of Samana.

[Masa Blaima travels to Beyla-Farana and settles in Beyla]

- 980 He left from there.
 His father's children who are in Beyla-Farana...
 Beyla-Farana stretches all the way to Singò.
 He went to Beyla.
 He went to them in Beyla-Farana.
 985 He was Chèjan Gone's grandfather.

960 Bolanjaydu: Also sounds like Bòlòjèdutini. This portion of the tape is difficult to understand.

969 Singò: 'to come back.' The actual pronunciation is *siyeikò* ('back'). He left and came back.
 That is why the name of the town was changed from Solona to Singò.

985 Chèjan: 'tall (*jan*) man (*chè/kè*). 'grandfather' (*mèmè*): could also be translated 'ancestor.'
 Gone: this is probably a form of Konè.

- We are their father's children.
 But they came.
 Their ancestor [Béété] came before our ancestor.
 He went and settled there.
- 990 That is the history about us: the Konè and the Béété.
 That is what I just explained.
 You may ask me if you have a different question to ask.
 That is how Beeta town was founded,
 And that is how the region was settled.

[ANCIENT KONIYA]

[The expansion of Koniya: Misadu, Dukulela, Nyèla, and Beyla]

- 995 Koynya was settled at that time.
 At the time that Koniya was settled,
 That Misadu...
 All of Koniya came from Misadu.
 All of Koniya,
- 1000 Came from Misadu.
 All of Koniya came from Misadu.
 [The people of] Beyla left to travel all around the world.
 The people of Misadu,
 They said that they were going to travel around the world to spread the religion.
- 1005 It took eighty years,
 Before Dukulela and Nyèla were founded.
 Eighty years,
 Separated them.
Question: Misadu and ...
Alifā: No, no.
- 1010 Beyla.
 The founding of Beyla from the founding of Dukulela and Nyèla.
 But the number of years between Beyla and Misadu,
 I don't know.
 Beyla.
- 1015 The Beyla people...
 The Béété left,
 The base of the red mountain,
 And met Misadu here.

995 Koynya: = Konya.

997 'All of Koniya came from Misadu': literally, *Koniya bè tèè Misadu le*, or, 'All of Koniya was Misadu.' The idea is that all of the people in Konya-Mani originally came from Musadu. The 'five towns of Koniya' (Misadu, Beyla, Jiakodu, Nyèla and Dukulela) technically only fit into this category (see L. Donzo 1992, App. 7.28).

[The oldest towns: Kalala, Jèmu, and Misadu]

- Before Misadu was built in this region,
1020 The only other town that was here,
Was Kalala.
Kalala.
The second,
Was Jèmu.
They were in this *jamana*.
1025 Jèmu and Kalala,
They were in this *jamana*.
Those two towns were in this region.

[ANCIENT MISADU]
[Zo Musa founds Misadu]

- But Misadu...
When Misadu was founded,
1030 They wrapped a white piece of cloth,
Around a stick,
And set it [the stick] on fire in Kalala.
They passed Chèwa.
Then they went to Misadu where they burned the area,
1035 And built the town.
Misadu is not located at the site where the first town was established.
It was at the fishing area near the Dion River.
It was near a river.
It was a fisherman's area.
1040 They caught fish there.
The person in Misadu...
The person who the town was named after,
Was Musa.
He was a slave.
1045 He was a slave.
The person who...
The person who owned the town,
Was Zo Musa.
Zo Musa.
1050 The town was owned by a *zo*.
That person lived in - lived in,

1035 The context does not indicate if this was just a simple reference to the burning of brush and trees that people did before they built and farmed, or if it has more to do with the ritual burning of the land that the Manding do to placate the spirits so they can use the land (Arntson 1994:5).

1037 'It': the original town of Musadu.

Damuda.
 Damuda is right behind Misadu,
 And it is a good area.
 1055 Only its ruins are there now.
 Zo Musa lived there.
 They said, "The area that Musa lives is in a good place.
 "Let's go near him because plenty of fish are there."
 They went and built Misadu...

* * *

[Zo Musa Kòma's *saafèlè*]

Question: Did the man in Koyaya named Foningama involved in any of the activities that took place in Beyla?

Alifā: Fèngama.
 When they say "Fèngama..."
 1405 He was in Misadu.
 Fèngama was in Misadu.
 Fèngama,
 His little brother was called Kònsaba.
 He was in Gbèsoba.
 1410 Fè - Fèngama [Zo Musa],
 He was a zo,
 Kpelle.
 He was a zo,
 1415 And he had strong medicine.
 He had all kinds of bad medicine.
 When he was ready - ready,
 To use the medicine,
 That he had,
 1420 He would put it outside,
 And it would go all around the town.
 It would swallow any young baby when it saw it drying in the sun.

[Fèngama asks a Kanè *kaamòò* to destroy Zo Musa's medicine]

The Kana people who were here,
 They came when that happened.
 1425 They came with him.
 They were right here in Beyla.

1052 Damudu: is located on the Dukulela road.
 1404 Fèngama: The speaker also said Fèningama.
 1423 Kana: = Kanè. 'here': = Beyla.

They call them followers of Fiala.
 They are the followers of the *moi*.
 When that happened,
 1430 They came.
 The followers of the *mori* were here,
 But Fiala was not here.
 Fèngama said,
 To one of the followers of the *mori* who was here,
 1435 “Zo Musa Kòma is causing problems for us.
 Zo Musa Kòma is causing problems for us.
 What are we going to do about that, *kaamòò*?”
 The *kaamòò* said, “Well, the workers...
 One of my little brothers who I left behind can do the work,
 1440 But I am not able.
 He is with my mother.
 You have to call him to come.

[The *Kaamòò* summons his younger brother from Nyamina]

They wrote and letter.
 They put *dippa* inside a piece of cloth,
 1445 And let it dry in the sun.
 It became very hard after they did that.
 They made it, “gbala-ba!”
 They put the letter in it after that.
 Then he took the prayer beads,
 1450 And began to ask God if his little brother could come.
 He started to call his brother in God’s name.
 He called his brother in God’s name to come.
 After he did that,
 A crocodile came from the Dion,
 1455 And laid down on the riverbank.
 That is the Dion that is in Misadu.
 He called the crocodile after the crocodile went there,
 And rested.
 He called the crocodile.
 1460 He tied the *lisimu* on the crocodile’s neck and said,
 “Take it to my mother’s son in Nyamina.
 Take it.”
 After that happened,
 He prayed to God.
 1465 His brother who was in Nyamina,

1427 Fiala: Fila Layi Kanè.

1444 *dippa*: dried cassava that has been beaten to a dust form and then boiled in hot water. It gets thick when stirred, and turns from white to brown.

- Also dreamed,
 And learned that he should go.
 He went and said to his mother,
 "I also dreamed that my brother wants me to go."
 1470 His mother said, "Well, don't refuse him when he calls.
 You should go."
 His mother had many cows at the time.
 His mother was old.
 She said, "Shouldn't you go if your brother called you?"
 1475 That is your brother."
 The crocodile was going to their home in Nyamina when that was happening.
 The crocodile went to the river bank,
 When it reached.
 The women used to go there and wash their dishes and clothes.
 1480 The crocodile lay there and did not move.
 They went and told the *kaamòò*.
 He said, "Yes, that is the message that my brother sent to me."
 He took the knife and cut the rope on the neck.
 He took the *lisimu* and the letter,
 1485 And went to town.
 He read the letter and delivered the message to the people of the town.
 [He said,] "This is the letter that my brother sent to me."

[3:44 MINUTES OF THE ORIGINAL TAPE ACCIDENTALLY ERASED]

[Zo Musa leaves Misadu and goes to Zota]

- He [Zo Musa] went back,
 And saw him.
 1490 He passed.
 He left the place.
 He passed Boola.
 He passed Winzu.
 He went to Kpologbiyani,
 1495 And slept.
 Now he slept at Kpologbiyani which is in Kpelle country.
 Then he went and settled in the region of Zota.

[TABOOS]

[Konè taboos: dog, *jufa*, elephant]

Question: What can't the Konè eat?

Alifā: The Konè taboo is dog and *jufa*.

- 1500 *Jufa* is the animal that has not been slaughtered before it is eaten.
 After that happened...
 My ancestor took his warriors and went to the eighth creek,

- And the water was flooded when he reached.
 The water flowed everywhere,
 1505 And there was no road to cross over the water.
 That is where they sat.
 They were surprised.
 He said, "Why can't the water go down?"
 He said, "I will loose this war if I am pushed behind this place.
 1510 That means that I will have lost the war."
 After that happened,
 He saw a monkey crossing from one side of the river to another in the trees,
 And he said, "Let's look at these monkeys that are passing.
 You go there."
 1515 When they reached the place they said,
 "Father,
 A big tree over there has fallen over the water.
 A big tree has fallen over the water.
 After that happened they crossed the river.
 1520 After he and all of his fighters crossed the river,
 He told his people, "None of my descendants should ever eat monkeys with white
 backs."
 The monkey, the monkey...
 That is why we can't eat monkeys with white backs.
Question: Who has the lion, leopard and elephant taboo here in Koniya?
Alifā: Elephant is the taboo of the Konè in Gbè.
 1525 Elephant is the taboo of the Konè in Gbè.

[The Jomanu leopard taboo]

Those with the leopard taboo,
 Are the Jomanu.
 The Jomani can't eat leopard.
 None of the Jomani can eat leopard.

[EARLY ISLAM: II, KONSABA, DUKULE, JAFUNU]
 [Va Lasana Konè and the coming of Islam]

Question: We want to know how Islam came to this country, and the time that it
 came? What religion was here before that time? What were the people
 like?

- 1530 Alifā: There was a time when Islam was not here,
 But I do not know much about the time,
 When Islam was not here.

1521 'monkey' (*kogbè*): This particular monkey has a white (*gbè*) back (*ko*).

1529 Beginning of Tape Two.

- I do know something about how Islam came.
 It came when people fought in the war.
- 1535 People brought Islam to our country after the people overthrew,
 Eh, prophet Ali.
 They said that his son, Va Lasana,
 Would never become *masa*.
 That was how Islam came.
- 1540 It came after that.
 Va Lasana,
 He never became *masa*.
 When Ma-Wiyate decided to fight him,
 Va Lasana stayed in the jihad.
- 1545 Va Lasana said that he was not going to fight in any more *jali* after that.
 He and his fighters left.
 He and the fighters went to Morocco.
 Our ancestor came with those fighters,
 And went to Morocco.
- 1550 That is what they told us.
 They reached Morocco.
 When they reached Morocco,
 They settled there.
 The Sefu...
- 1555 Va Lasana, his son who came...
 Va Lasana...
 Va Lasana...
 Va Lasana's wife was pregnant at the time that Va Lasana's father died.
 Va Lasana's son said,
- 1560 "The Moroccans will make his son *masa*."
 The Islamic religion...
 When that happened,
 All of his people agreed that he should become *masa*.

[Musa Blaima leads the Konè to Morocco, Mauritania, and Malaka]

- Our ancestor brought *jali* on this side.
- 1565 That happened at that time.
 They came.
 They got up and said that they were coming to take this *jamana*.
 That is what I said earlier today.

1536 'Prophet': *Seidna*. Ali was Muhammed's cousin and son-in-law. He became the caliph of Islam in 656 A.D. (Denny 1985:132; see Ch. 3).

1541 Lasana: Lasana/Lassana/ Lansine/Lasine is the twin name of Lusini.

1543 Ma-Wiyate is a reference to Mu'āwiya. Mu'āwiya was the governor of Syria who defeated Ali in 657 (Denny 1985:133-135).

1544 'jihad': *jali*.

- Now when they came,
 1570 Eh, our ancestor Alafan Musaba,
 Took his warriors,
 And stopped in the savanna.
 He reached the savanna with his warriors.
 1575 His son who was leading his fighters at that time,
 He was Musa Blaima.
 His son, Musa Blaima,
 He was leading the fighters.
 Musa Blaima led the fighters,
 1580 When they went to,
 Morocco.
 They passed Morocco they went to the *jamana* of Mauritania.
 When they entered Mauritania,
 The Mauritanian people said,
 1585 “Muslims should not fight Muslims.”
 They did not fight them.
 They left and went to the Malaka area,
 At night.
 The Malaka who they met there were *moi*.
 1590 They said, “We are Muslims.
 Muslims can’t fight Muslims.”
 He left.
 That is the time when the *mori* business started to come.

[The Konè convert the *kafri* peacefully]

- He came out,
 1595 And entered the savanna.
 No Muslims were there.
 All of them were *kafri*.
 He said, “I have come.
 I have reached the place where I want to settle.
 1600 But he never shot a gun.
 He said good things to them.
 He convinced them to submit,
 And they submitted.
 They used to come and give him money and food.
 1605 He used to pray for them and say, “*Ishialaho, Ishialaho*.
 That saying became part of their religion.
 They called him Alifalila.

1572 ‘savannah’: = Beledugu (see l. 1595).

1595 ‘the savannah’: Gbèlèdu?

1605 *ishialaho*: Ar., ‘by the help of God.’

That was Alifalila.

[The Konè go the Kònsaba Kamara in Gbè]

Alifalila's son rose and said that he was going to fight Fèngama in Gbè.

1610 He said that he was going to fight Kònsaba in Gbè.

He went to fight Kònsaba in Gbè.

When he went to fight Kònsaba in Gbè,

We were already Muslims at that time.

There were no Muslims in Gbè,

1615 And there were not Muslims in Singò...

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.32

MOLIKÉ SIDIBÉ

Place and date of interview: Kankan, Guinea, 1 December 1993

English translation published in: Sidibé (1997:80-91). Parts of the interview that were not published in the book appear below.

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek, with Toligbè Braima Kamara

Context: Just before we interviewed Fata Jiba Kamara and Molikè Sidibé on 1 December 1992, we met in Lai Makula Mammadi Kamara's yard and had a picture taken of the Kamara at 5:30 p.m. Mark Wilson was present when the picture was taken, and was very helpful in getting me in contact with Molikè Sidibé and others in Kankan.

Fata Jiba Kamara (68 years old) spoke first but did not stay long for the interview. The interview was conducted outside as the sun set. Molikè Sidibé was a thirty-three year old history professor at the University of Kankan at the time. He knew about the time that I visited Damaro in 1986 with Muhammed Chèjan Kromah. Sidibé completed his thesis on the history of Damaro in 1989. Braima Toligbè Kamara worked in Monrovia as a mechanic from 1965-1991, and used his English to help me communicate with others during the interview. Another person who was present was Joel Maxim, a colleague of Sidibé's in the History Department at the same university. I had met Maxim in 1990; he was the person who introduced me to Sidibé. Others who were present for the interview were Matènè Mammadi Kamara, another English speaker, Mawa Musa Kamara and Mori Musa Kamara.

Transcribed by: Ansu Cissé (Monrovia, 1994)

Translated by: Faliku Sanoe, with Tim Geysbeek (Monrovia, 1994)

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

Translation note: One or more persons acted like a *namu*-sayer. When some *jèli* perform, someone will say *namu* or 'yes' in agreement and encouragement almost after phrase or sentence. This practice seems to be more common in the north than in the forest or fringe-forest areas like Macenta or Beyla.

[Power struggle and Fajala's exodus from Misadu]

Tim: Why did Fajala leave Misadu and go to Simandu? Why?

Sidibé: The reason...

Toligbè: Can you explain why they went to Damana?

Sidibé: I can explain that.

It is not a secret.

(Um)

How they came from there is not a secret.

850 You know,

That I told you today,

(Uhun)

That they are many,

That there are many Kamara,

(Uhun)

In Misadu.

855 When the Kamara became many,

There were twelve regions,

And they asked them to rule over them.

They gave them the leadership positions.

They said that they should rule the *jamana*.

860 However, after a certain period of time passed,

Many problems developed.

Foningama's children had become successful in the area by that time,

But the *jamana* was starting to become destroyed.

When the population starts to grow in one area,

865 Many towns can be established.

That is how towns are founded...

[From Misadu to Damaro: Islam and sorcery]

Now, those who left - who left Misadu,

(Uhun)

849 'secret' (*secrete*): French.

857 'They': the Kromah.

- 895 And came to the Damaro area, (Uhun)
 They left Misadu because it was not good. (Uhun)
 That is one reason.
 The second,
 Is because they wanted to bring Islam.
 900 Islam was not very strong when Damaro was established.
 Isn't that right? (Braima?: Uhun)
 They can say many things about that.
 Now, when the religion came and organized the people,
 The people came together.
 905 Otherwise, they came and met the Kòne.
 The Kòne had many sacrifice pots.
 Even our own Kamara had sacrifice pots. (Uun)
 Eh, they used to make sacrifices to the rock in the water, "wolowolo."
 There were many places,
 910 Where they went to make offerings. (Un)
 But they stopped doing those things, (Uum)
 When Islam came.

[From Misadu to Damaro: rich farmland]

- The people left Misadu and went to that side, (Uhun)
 Because Simandu has good ground.
 915 It is a good place. (Um)
 Plenty of food can grow there.
 It has a good atmosphere.
 People can stand on their feet there,
 And people can sit down there in one place.
 920 People say that,
 I should go where life will be easy on me.
 Let me go and settle there. (Koso - Kosobè)
 When people were traveling,
 They say that the *jamana* of Simandu was good,
 925 That it was a fine *jamana* with good soil.
 It was a very sweet *jamana*.
 The ground is good there.
 Aren't people still there today? (Uhun)
 Food grows well there. (Uhun)
 930 The world is becoming a difficult place to live in,

903 'organize' (from *organiser*): French.

906 'sacrifice pot' (*sòli da*): 'offering/giving/sacrifice (*sò*) [action] (*li*) pot (*da*).'⁹ This could more literally be translated 'offering pot,' but the full importance of the function of the pot is realized with the word 'sacrifice.' People would make an offering or sacrifice that would be put in the pot. The pot is used in a negative sense in this context, but can also have a positive connotation. A tea kettle, for instance, that is used for ablutions, can be called a *sòlida*.

And you can get plenty of food if you make a small farm there, (Uhun)
 Isn't that right? (Ahan)
 So, people went to Simandu, (Um)
 Because of the good farmland. (Uhun)
 935 Confusion will never end, right? (Uhun)
 Ahan, let us go and pray, (Uhun)
 Since we have talked about so many things. (Uhun)
 Tell him that we should go and pray. (Uhun)
 If he has any more questions after that, (Um)
 940 Maybe grandfather will be back by that time, (Um)
 But I don't think that he will be able to add anything
 to what I have said. (Ahan)
 That is what I have to say. (Uhun)

[Foningama's children]

Tim: How many children did Foningama have?
Sidibé: Foningama?
Tim: Foningama.
Sidibé: Foningama had many children,
 945 But I can't remember how many. (Uhun)
Toligbè: What is the name of the person who lives in Zèlèkole? What is your
 friend's name? Tim: Chèjan. Mammadi [Kromah]. Chèjan. Toligbè: You
 can ask him to show you (Tim: Uhun) Maningbè Abdullahi Kamara.
 (Uhun) Abdullah Kamara can name all of the names. (Uhun) He will
 explain those things in Zèlèkole. Tim: Okay...

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SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.33

MOLIKÉ SIDIBÉ, ALHAJI MAKULA MAMMADI KAMARA AND BRAIMA TOLIGBE KAMARA

Place and date of interview: Kankan, Guinea, 1 December 1993

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek and Braima Toligbè Kamara

Context of interview: This interview was given right after the last one with Molikè Sidibé and others (Appendix 7.32). This took place in a room in Makula Mammadi Kamara's compound where we conducted the first interview. About five men were present for this interview. Alhaji Makula Mammadi, the man who I wanted to interview, left shortly after the interview began to pray and eat. He then returned at the end and talked a little. He moved from Damaro to Kankan in 1935 and he said that he did not know much about the history of Damaro. He worked as a driver in his earlier years. Makula Mammadi said that he was 76 years old (line 94) at the time of the interview; he died in about 1995. Molikè Sidibé did most of the talking, and Joel Maxim spoke a little as well. Braima Toligbè Kamara, the mechanic who had lived in Liberia, assisted me in this interview and also provided some information.

Transcribed by: Ansu Cissé (Monrovia, 1993)

Translated by: Faliku Sanoe (Monrovia, 1994)

Checked by: Faliku Sanoe and Tim Geysbeek (Monrovia, 1994) - transcript/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

Translation note: Some of the interview deals with greetings and discussions about different people. This has been summarized in the text.

Summary of contents:

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[KAMARA MIGRATIONS]
[Kamara migrations from Sibi]

Braima Toligbè Kamara: Give your name, your clan, and where you come from.

Tell what you know about Damaro, Musadu and Boola.

Alhaji Makula Mammadi Kamara: Good.

That is what he likes because he is looking for knowledge.

What was explained to us is not our words.

What we were told is that our ancestor came from Sibi.

Braima: Sibi.

5 Alhaji: Sibi.

Braima: Sibi is in which *jamana*?

Alhaji: In Mali.

Braima: Mali. Sibi.

Alhaji: Uhummm.

He came and entered this town.

Braima: Which town?

Alhaji: Kankan.

Braima: He entered Kankan.

10 Alhaji: The oldest one settled here in Kankan.

That is the quarter that they call Kamarala.

The other group went to,

They went to Kasiadu,

Kasiadusobala...

* * *

[RELIGION]
[Origin of *nyana*]

Tim: You know, sometime they talk about the society, the *nyana*, the *kòma*. I don't know if you know anything about that.

Braima: A-han!

The *kòma* and *nyana*.

That is what the *kafri* dealt with.

215 The African never had anything,

So they just sat down and said,

"We have to do something to frighten our friends -

To frighten our friends.

That is why we organized something so we could hide from others."

220 That made them stupid.

That is how the *nyana* came about.

There was also the matter of medicine that was made to kill people.

Now people in Africa became the owners of this big medicine.

They came to own big medicine.

225 If you did not know about medicine owners,

You would not be able to lift up your ears?

That is how *nyana* was created.

Nyana only deals with medicine owners.

If you don't go into their *dòò*...

230 Alhaji: They will overcome you so that you will not be able to go tomorrow.

Sidibé: If you weren't going,

I would take him to Kaba tomorrow.

If it was not for tomorrow,

My father, Kaba, has explained everything.

235 Braima: That is the story about the *nyana*.

It belonged to the sphere of the medicine owners.

Neither I nor any or us own medicine.

We can't talk too much about medicine.

However, *nyana* had to do with medicine business.

240 There is no other explanation.

Mr. Bakari, that is what I am able to tell you.

We will answer any other question that you have to ask if we are able.

[Origin and function of *kòma*]

Tim: The *kòma*, from where did it come? Braima: Uum, *kòma*. Tim: Yes. Do you know *kòma*? Braima: I know *kòma*. Tim: Where did it come from?

215 'African' (*falafin*): 'black (*fin*) skin (*fala*).'

220 'stupid' (*kòmò*): Also *naloma*.

226 'not to be able to lift up your ears': or, you would not be able to understand the *nyana*.

241 Mr. Bakari: = Tim Geysbeek.

- (laughter)
- Braima?: *Kòma* came from the Kurongò people.
 There are some people in Guinea,
 245 Who are called the Kurongò.
 They are from the areas of Kissidougou and Farana.
 The Kurongò are the ones,
 Who brought the *kòma*.
 It was not a bad thing.
- 250 It was just brought by young boys who had hard heads.
 They just did it to organize something and say,
 “You! That is the *kòma* that is talking!
 That is the *kòma*!
 You better move from there before it catches you and circumcises you,
 255 Before it circumcises you!”
 When the *kòma* came,
 They would catch those who had not been circumcised.
 That is what they did until the *kòma* originated.
 That is how the *kòma* came.
- Tim: What was the name of Zo Musa *Kòma*’s medicine?
 260 Braima: He said, ‘What is the name of Zo Musa’s *kòma*?
Sidibé: *Kòma*. Hii!
 It was a *kòma* in the forest (*tu*).
 It was a *kòma* in the forest.
 We don’t know its name.
- 265 We don’t know its name.
 But they used to have a *dòò*.
 They did what the French people call *tatouage* (tattoo).
 You know those Loma people.
 Zo Masa *Kòma* started it there in the forest,
 270 Near the Gbè mountain.
 Do you know *tòtoise*?
Somebody: He [Tim] doesn’t know it [the meaning of the French word, *tatouage*].
Sidibé: They lay people down and cut their backs.
Tim: Aan, they mark them.
Braima and Sidibé: Ahan.
Sidibé: Good.
- 275 That *kòma* is there,
 And the youth,
 Have *kòma* there.
 Woman have *kòma* there.
 Men have *kòma* there.
- 280 Do you understand?
-

There are some *kòma*,
 That only drive maggots (*tumu*) away from the farm.
 The women have a *kòma*.
 When maggots go to the rice and grass,
 285 They bring the *kòma* out to kill them.
 There are *kòma* like that.
 They are not bad *kòma*.
 There are also *kòma* that make children afraid.
 They say, "The *kòma* will catch you if you do this."
 290 There are *kòma* like that.
 There are men *kòma* and women *kòma* who used to make people afraid.
 They are used to govern people:
 So that they won't leave the group,
 And to protect the people.
 295 They also have *kòma* like that.
 There is also *suba*.
Suba is used to protect people,
 And some are used to eat people.
 There are two kinds of *suba*.
 300 They are used for different things,
 But we are not able to explain them.
 That is because we don't control them,
 And we don't have any information about them.
 That is what we are able to tell you.

[The 'forest people' retreat from Foningama and Islam]

Braima: He wants to know why the Kono people went to Lola.
 305 Sidibé: Lola.
 Do you know what happened?
 The Kònò,
 The Kpelle,
 The Mano,
 310 And all of the forest people,
 Were involved in medicine business.
 When Foningama's people came...
 Didn't I tell you that they were Muslims?
 Didn't I tell you that Mori Biyèn,
 315 Made medicine,
 To ruin their *dòò*.
 After their *dòò* was destroyed,
 They could not live there any longer,
 Because two religions can't live in the same area.
 320 The new religion became more powerful than the first religion.
 The religious people who were with the forest people said,
 "Their religion will become powerful where they are living,

So we should leave.
 They have become more powerful.
 325 Let's take our religion and practice our religion,
 So that nobody will be able to hinder us."
 That is why the Kònò,
 The Kpelle,
 The Loma,
 330 And all of the others,
 Went down.
 They all went into the forest region,
 And developed their religion.
 They left Musadu and Koniya where the savanna,
 335 And the *molilu* were established.
 Haven't you heard that?

[Muslim education in Nyèla and Kankan]

The people of Damaro used to send people to the *molilu*.
 Hii, wasn't it to Nyèla?
 They used to send people from here to teach them.
 340 But this is what they used to do.
 They would take those beautiful women from Simandu,
 And give them,
 To the *kalamòòlu*.
 However, the *kalamòòlu* never used to teach the people very well.
 345 Those who really learned were the ones,
 Who were sent to Kankan.
 That is because [the people of] Damaro and [the people of] Kamarala,
 Are members of the same family.
 My grandfather has already explained that.
 350 So, all of those who were taught in Kamarala,
 Received a good education.
 The people of Koniya just used to give them half of the teaching.
 It was not good.
 Do you understand?
 355 That is what I am able to explain.

[Islam and traditional Manding religion]

Braima: Where was Foningama? Where was Foningama?
Sidibé: Foningama.
 Foningama came from some people.

334 'grassland' (*gbèka*): Also 'open field' or 'savanna.'

346 Kamarala: The main Kamara quarter in Kankan.

Now, he was a Muslim.
 He and the Muslims were together,
 360 And they strengthened the religion.
 When the religion of Islam was strengthened,
 Those who were not Muslims left them.
 If you and another person are members of the same religion,
 Then you will understand each other.
 365 The first religion delved in medicine business.
 But they do not have power any longer.
 The two religions that we have today,
 Are Christianity and Islam.
 Do you understand?
 370 They are powerful today, right?
 The first religion made offerings to idols.
 There were many idols.
 They made offerings to rocks,
 Made offerings to streams,
 375 Made offerings to trees,
 Made offerings to animals,
 And to snakes in the forest.
 That was not a good religion.
 They made offerings to idols.
 380 Do you understand?
 Now, the Muslim religion...
 Now the Biliti,
 The Fofana and the Turé,
 Were in, èh-èh - Koniya.
 385 And they were the ones who introduced Islam.
 They joined the Jomani,
 And strengthened Islam.
 That is how Islam became established.
 Do you understand?

[TABOOS AND ORIGINS]
 [The Kamara leopard taboo]

390 Tim: Who are the *tana* for anybody? For the Sidibé, the Kamara.
Braima: How did the clan business come?
Tim: Ahan.
 The Fula.
Sidibé: He is talking about taboos.
Braima: Our clan,
 Our taboo is the leopard.

371 'idols': *jolu*.

395 That is what he is talking about.
Sidibé: The taboo is leopard.
Tim: Why?
Braima: That happened...
The leopard,
Is something that can catch things.
400 They can catch animals by force,
And eat them.
We are powerful people,
And we can capture people.
Do you understand?
405 Our taboo is the leopard.
That is what we like.

[Kamara origins]

Sidibé: Let me say something about that.
The Kamala,
In this part of Africa,
410 History explains that they were the first clan,
Whether you are talking about the Kamara or the Kromah or the Jabatè or the
Sidibé.
The Kamara were the very first clan.
They were the first clan.
Why?
415 There were three reasons.
They were honorable people.
They were honorable and powerful.
They could rule a group,
Guard a group,
420 And show the right path to a group.
They were good at that.
When they talked about war,
They were also good at that.
During Sunjata's war,
425 The Kamara were Sunjata's warriors.
Do you understand?
Sunjata defeated Sumaworo,
Because he was supported by the Kamara.
They were powerful,
430 And able to control groups.
They were able to show the right path to the group.

405 'leopard': *wala*.

434 Sidibé and others said that the Kamara were warriors and conquerors. Here, he stated that the Kromah, Dumbuya, Jabateh, Sidibé, Keita and other clans were offspring of the Kamara because the

They controlled.
 Some of them were circumcised.
 They said, “Kamala, Kamala - *Ka a mala* (to control him),
 435 Those who control.
 That is what the Kamara were called.
 The Kamara,
 The Keita came from [them].

[Kromah origins]

And the Dumbaya came from them.
 440 The Kromah are from them.
 All of the clans,
 Came from them.
 So the Kamara are the original clan of Mandin.
 Do you understand?
 445 There is a meaning for all of them.
 We live in a maggot place.
 That is where the Dumbaya name came from.
 The Kromah said, “Let’s shoot him.”
 They did everything to kill him,
 450 But that failed.
 Kodima.
 Kodima became Kromah.
 Do you understand?
 That is an example.
 455 That is how most of the names are.
 That is how they came...

Kamara were honorable, powerful, wise and good rulers. Sidibé and Wata Mammadi Kamara maintained that Sunjata only defeated Sumaworo because his warriors were Kamara (App. 7.37). Seku Salifu claimed that Foningama came from Kirina and that he was a hunter. He was his mother’s only son, and his father was a war chief. A prophecy was made that Foningama would someday ‘shake the world’ (App. 5.1). According to Soumaoro Kaba, the Kamara ‘were the first conquerors of the earth’ (1971). A Vai tradition noted that the Kamara used their skills as archers, hunters and warriors to conquer their neighbors (Fahnbulleh 1969).

- 432 *mala*: means ‘control.’
 435 *malalikèla*: ‘those (*lu*) [who] make (*kè*) the (*la*) control (*mala*).’
 446 ‘maggot’ (*tumuya*): Literally, ‘maggot (*tumu*) place (*ya*).’
 447 Dumbuya: The /t/ has been corrupted to /d./ so *tumuya* has become Dumbuya.
 450 ‘that failed’ (*wo wè kè kolima le*): literally, ‘that (*wo*) had (*wè kè*) failed (*kolima*).’
 451 ‘Kodima became Kromah’ (*Kolima wo ka kè Kromah le*): literally, ‘Kolima, that (*wo*) became (*ka kè*) Kromah.’

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.34

ALHAJI KABINE KROMAH

Place and date of interview: Diakolidu, Guinea, 7 December 1993

Interviewed by: Tim Geysbeek and Mammadi Oppong Sanoe

Context of interview: We first interviewed Alhaji Kabine Kromah on July 7, 1992

(Appendix 7.29). My 1992 interview was preceded by a meeting with other leading men of the family. This meeting was much less formal. I interviewed the alhaji in a small enclosed porch attached to one of the houses in the compound. The only people who attended were several children and some adults who paused for a few moments and then proceeded on. We started the interview at 8:37 a.m. and finished in less than half an hour. Alhaji Kabine's voice was raspy, making it difficult to hear what he said in some places.

Transcribed by: by: Ansu Cissé (Monrovia, 1994)

Translated by: Faliku Sanoe (Monrovia, 1994)

Checked by: Faliku Sanoe and Tim Geysbeek (Monrovia, 1995) - transcript/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

Summary of contents:

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[ANCIENT MISADU] [Zo Misa Kòma and the Kpelle in Konya]

- Mammadi: Grandfather, we want you to tell us about Zo Misa, about Zo Musa.
Alhaji: Zo Misa Kòma.
Mammadi: Yes, Zo Misa Kòma. Please talk about him.
Alhaji: When our ancestor came,
He was living at...
Zo Misa was living at Konyyaba,
5 At the base of the big hill.
Konyyaba.
When he was living there...
When he was there...
Ah, the Kpelle, the Kpelle...
10 When they say Konya,
The area that they call Konya...
They named the Konya area after one of the mountains.
That is the whole Konya.
Their town...
15 That is where they were.
Our ancestor met them there.
Our ancestor's slave came.
Hii, his slave, he...

4 Konyyaba: 'big' (*ba*) 'rock' (*konya*): This is the mountain range located along the eastern side of Misadu. 'at the base of': literally, 'under' (see l. 25).

10 Konya: = 'rock (*kòni*) hill (*ya/ye*)' in Kpelle.

He built a house in Misadu.
20 His name was Misa.
The house...
Misa Kòma,
Eh - Jafua Konè,
Both lived there.
25 Both lived at the base of the hill.

[Three strangers and three citizens]

Their ancestors came from Tina and met them there.
They say that there were six men of Konya.
Three strangers and three citizens.
Those three citizens are our ancestors:
30 Kòma, Jafua Konè, and our ancestor.
Those three were the citizens.
Foningama - Foningama,
Fuomuo Dole,
Ah - Fènzuma,
35 They were the three strangers.

[Zo Misa the farmer]

Our ancestor, Koniyan...
He pulled the stump out of Misadu.
His slave was living there.
He used to farm.
40 He used to farm near the Jon.
Hii, this road that leads to Kankan was not there [at that time].

[Recent kola route]

They used to travel along this road that goes to Wolodu.
After they transported the kola to Siana,
They used to put it in a bamboo basket and take it to Kankan.
45 The other road...
The other road that the white man made...

26 'Their ancestors': the strangers. 'them': the citizens.
28 'citizens': *duulèn*.
36 'Our ancestor': Fomba Kromah? (see line 210).
37 'He pulled the stump out of Misadu': He founded Musadu. The land has to be
brushed and the stumps of the trees uprooted before a town can be built.
43 'kola': *wolo*.
44 'bamboo basket': *salan*. This is a basket made out of bamboo that is similar to the more
commonly-known "kinja" (*gbaa*).

That road was once a path that went to Wolodu.
Now, when we reached Wolodu,
We would put all of the kola in bamboo baskets and send it to Kankan,
50 And go to Bamako.

[Zo Misa's *saafê*]

Eh, now Kòma, èh - Kòma...
He had a *saafêlè* which was medicine.
He had a *saafêlè* which was medicine.
When those women bathed their babies and placed them under the sun it would
eat them.
55 It would eat the sheep that it saw.
It would eat the goats that it saw.
It ate those things.
Their town was located where the two big hills rise over Dagbana.
They called it Talala.
60 Now, our ancestor's slave came to Misadu.
Now, when he went to the town there...
Now, when he went...
Now, when the three strangers came...
When they bathed their babies,
65 They would place them under the sun and it would eat them.
When they bathed their babies,
The *saafêlè* would eat them.

[Kromah ancestor transfers chieftaincy of Misadu to Foningama]

Now, they said...
Eh, Foningama, hii...
70 Eh, Fuomuo Dole,
Molikumba Dole and his people are Fuomuo Dole's descendants in Misadu.
Fènzuma,
Fènzuma was a *jiaka* [jèli].
They called Foningama.
75 Our ancestor said, "If you want to make sure that this country remains prosperous,
Then you should allow the three strangers that are coming,
To settle here."
Those three strangers were Foningama, Fuomuo Dole, and Fènzuma.
They were the three strangers.
80 When they asked the three strangers to settle,
He said, "You, Foningama, are my grandson.

52 'medicine' (*basi*): Here and elsewhere in the interview.

70 Molikumba Dole: Son of Vafin Dole and Yaya Dole's father. Samori installed him as the chief of Musadu in the mid-1880s (Person 1868b).

- I am turning everything that we have over to you.”
 Then he made Foningama the *masa*.
 Eh, now, Foningama...
- 85 Our ancestor was responsible for everything that Foningama did.
 [Our ancestor said], “The only thing you can’t do is...
 When anybody creates a serious problem,
 When anybody creates a serious problem,
 You can’t settle it.
- 90 I am the only one who can settle it.
 You are responsible to settle the small cases.
 You are responsible for the matters that concern the *masa*.

[A *mori* destroy’s Zo Misa’s *saafê*]

- When that happened, Foningama...
 Eh, now Kòma...
- 95 Foningama, now, when he came,
 Our ancestor said to him,
 “Foningama, in the name of God,
 Tell your *mori* to write [a talisman] for us.
 This Kòma,
- 100 We are tired of him.”
 He wrote the *sèbèli* and tied it - tied it on a frog,
 And put it on the frog.
 Now, Kòma and his *saafèlè* came.
 It used to walk in the town on Tuesday.
- 105 When it came out on Tuesday,
 It would walk around the town.
 When it took the frog and swallowed it,
 The *saafèlè* exploded.
 After the *saafèlè* exploded,
- 110 He said that he would not remain there because the Mènya were bad.
 “I will not settle here.

[Zo Misa leaves his snuff can at Gbuwo]

He and Jufua Konè left and went on the road that leads to Boola.
 When they went on the Boola road,

87-92 The Kromah ancestor restricted Foningama’s judicial powers to settling minor cases.
 101 *sèbèli*: ‘talisman.’

103 *saafèlè*, ‘sheep (*saa*) horn (*fèlè*)’ or ritual object. Zo Musa worshiped it and asked it to do things for him. The *saafè* represented a spirit, the power of the *saafèlè*.

108 ‘exploded’ (*jila*): Assistants said that this is the same action that a hand grenade makes.

112 Jufa Konè: A Kònò (l. 141-150). Slaves took the name of their slave owners. *jufa* = ‘to kill (*fa*) enemy/bad (*ju*)’.

- When they reached Maana,
 115 When they reached [to the place] under Maana...
 They reached Maana in front of the creek.
 They called the creek Gbuwo [Gbo].
 The Kpelle call 'snuff can' *gbuwo*.
 They forgot their medicine, èh - snuff can there.
 120 They forgot their snuff can when they stopped there at the water.
 After that happened and they left,
 He said that he forgot his snuff can.
 Everybody called that place Gbuwo.
 Do you hear?
 125 If it had not been for what happened there,
 That would not be its name.
 A, hii, Kòma's medicine...
 The snuff bottle was called *gbuwo*.
 He said that he forgot it.
 130 They named the creek Gbuwo.

[Zo Misa travels to Jèwu]

- After that happened,
 They left that place and went to...
 When they reached Boola hill they turned to the north and said "*Jèlewulu*,
jèlewulu.
 Hii, he said, 'Goodbye, goodbye' in Kpelle.
 135 *Jèlewulu* means 'goodbye.'
 Everybody called the hill Jèwu.

[Zo Misa (Kpelle) and Jufa Konè (Kònò) separate at Boola]

- Ha, they reached Boola.
 When they reached Boola,
 He,
 140 And Jufa Konè...
 Jufa Konè.
 Eh, they are called Kpelle.
 They are called Kpelle.
 They are Kònò.
 145 The Kpelle from Lola to Gbeso are called Kònò.
 They are Kònò.
 Those people don't have *doo*.
 Hii, when they reached Boola,
 They continued along towards Zèlèkole and went behind Winzu.

114 Maana: = Mahana. There is also a tree called the *maana*.

149 Zèlèkole: = N'Zerekore.

150 Jufa Konè went on the Zèlèkole road.

[Zo Misa separates from the Maniyaka and goes to Maboina]

He went on the Kpankpala road.
When they reached Kpankpala,
They continued on and went to Kelema.
He passed and went to Kule.
155 He passed and went to Weyafintu.
He passed and went to Maboina.
The people of Maboina said, "Sleep here."
He said, "No."
He went south of Maboina,
160 And settled.
Now, he established his town when he went there.
Now, he established his town.
Everything that is...
He called all of the forest people for a meeting,
165 And said,
"Let's separate ourselves from the Mènya.
Let's separate."
They asked, "How are we going to separate?"
He said, "We should lower our chest and lower our back."
170 Let's separate."
Now, that is what happened.
They went and met him in Maboina.
The Loma agreed.
All of the forest people agreed.

[Jufa Konè separates from Zo Misa and settles in Lola]

175 However, Jufa Konè's people did not agree.
They went and settled in Lola.
They live in Lola.
They are the Lola-Kpelle.
And went as far as Gbeyaso.
180 It goes all the way up to Fombadu.
They never agreed to separate themselves from the Mènya.
All of the rest of the people agreed to separate themselves from the Mènya,

151 'He': Zo Misa.

169 'We should lower our chest and lower our back': The Kpelle realized that they were weaker than the Maniyaka, so they decided to separate quietly from them. The Maniyaka would retaliate if they protested.

172 'They went and met him in Maboina': They met him in his own town, in the region of Maboina.

Even the Kissi.
That was because of...
185 That was because of the same Kòma [man],
Because of Zo Misa Kòma.

[Seku Turé's government fails to take medicine from Kòma's town]

Kòma established his own town [Zota],
A time came when Seku Turé said that all of the medicine should be exposed.
When they went to Kòma's town,
190 Two very big snakes,
We call them *Tuzu* [*Tufin*]...
Two very big snakes,
Eh, chased the people away.
Ha, they were not able to take their medicine.
195 Everybody failed to do that.
Ha, that is the story about Kòma.
Zo Misa Kòma got his name because his father was a *zo*.
He used medicine more successfully than his father.
Ahan, that is the story about Kòma...

* * *

[Misadu expands under the Jomani]

Mammadi: Is it true that the Kamara don't build in Misadu?
360 Alhaji: That is not true.
Do you hear?
They said that...
Our ancestor said that they gave the *masaya* to them.
The Kamara brushed the area,
365 And made Misadu a big town after that happened.
Mammadi: The Kamala brushed Misadu?
Alhaji: They brushed the town of Misadu and made it big.
Eh, their ancestor [Foningama] sired two sons: Fanyala, Fasu.
He sired two sons.
Now the town was divided into two parts.
370 Fanyala brushed one side,
Fasu brushed the other side.
They divided the town.
Fanyala brushed one side,
Fasu brushed the other side.
375 They stayed there because our ancestor left everything with them.
Do you hear?

363 'to them': Foningama and the Kamara.

[Kamara sons sacrificed for Misadu]

- When they said that he should give his nine sons,
Fanyala took his nine sons,
And sacrificed them.
380 He sacrificed them for Misadu.
They dug a hole in front of the mosque.
That is the hole that is near the mosque in Misadu.
Any Jomanu who sits on it will be killed.
Mammadi: What clan are the Jomani?
Alhaji: They are Kamara.
385 All of Foningama's descendants are called Jomanu.
That is why we call them Jomanu.
We call them Kamara.
After that happened,
After the seven sons were sacrificed for the town,
390 They dug a hole.
They put all of them in the hole,
And placed the rock over it.
Any Jomani who steps on that rock will not live the rest of that day to tell the
story.
They will die if they step on it.
395 Now, when Foningama became powerful,
He took two...
Do you hear?
When he took two...

[Fanyala and Fasu Kamara's descendants]

- The Dunzu came,
400 And settled here,
In the forest.
They remained in the forest,
Until Fanyala went to Simandu.
They said, "Fanyala and his descendants..."
405 When they were dividing the town of Misadu,
The said, "Fanyala and his descendants..."
Fanyala's descendants are called the Jila Jomani.
Fasu's descendants are called Kosedu-Kosedu-Kosedu.
Kosadu is mixed up.
410 The Jomani are mixed up.

378 Fanyala: The speaker said Foningama in his first interview (App. 7.29).

386 Jomanu: This is the plural of Jomani.

389 'seven sons': Nine sons in line 323.

404 'descendants' (*agbèlè*): Literally, 'branch.'

The others are Fanyala's descendants.

That is where both of them are located.

Mammadi: Did Zo Misa Kòma's *saafèlè* used to have a different name?

Alhaji: Hou-hou, it was only named after the *saafèlè*.

[ANCIENT KONYA]
[The Sefu and Talawole]

Mammadi: Do you know anything about the Sefu? How did the Sefu come here?

Alhaji: Sefu.

The Talawole were the Sefu at the beginning.

415 We know about the Talawole,

Because they used to be the ones who called for prayer.

Eh, the Sefu were the important people during the time of the Prophet.

That was during the first time.

Who are those people who sell medicine?

Mammadi: Medicine sellers? In what language?

420 Alhaji: Those who come from near Mecca.

Mammadi: The Mauritanian people?

Alhaji: Ho-ho.

[The Sayon and Kpelle in Gbana]

Mammadi: Do you know anything about the Sayon people? ...From where did the Sayon come?

Alhaji: The Sayon and the Kpelle,

They are the same. (light laughter)

425 Don't you hear the people say Gbana.

They say Gbana.

Their *gbanda* was there.

[The Kromah and Dunzu marry the Sayon in Jalagbelela]

Mammadi: What do you know about the Sayon people? What do you know about them?

Alhaji: Their ancestor Buba lived near us.

He was here in Jalagbeledu.

They and our grandfather settled together.

430 Our ancestor Vèma,

Settled with him.

413 Sefu: Sherif, Sirleaf.

419 'those people who sell medicine': The two "Hausa" men, Sefu Talata and Tiyyale [Kanè] (l. 378-384).

426 *gbanda*: The place where the Sanoe farmed and kept their children who were circumcised during the day. They would return home at night.

They intermarried.
 Eh, God allowed them to settle there when that happened.
 They settled in Jalagbeledu.
 435 They and the people of Jalagbeledu settled,
 Because of them.
 They were Kpelle.
 They stayed together until they intermarried with the Dunzu.
 All of them became neighbors, until, hii-hii...

[Buba Sanyo's son Nakuma in Dukulela]

440 Now, Buba Sayon's son's name was,
 His son's name was Nakuma.
 They lived in the old village where the ruins of Dukulela are located.

[Sefu Talata and Tiyyale Kanè]

Do you know about the Hausa people who sell medicine?
 Those Hausa...
 445 Two Hausa men came here.
 Two Hausa...
 One said that his name was Sefu Talata.
 Eh, his name was Sefu Talata.
 The other one said that his name was Tiyyale.
 450 That is where the Kanaka [Kanè] and Sefu [Sherif] separated.
 He said that they were descendants of Sefu.
 The Talawole Sefu said, "Let's leave now."
 Those people,
 Who were selling medicine,
 455 Were the ones who said that they were Sefu.
 Even the people in Mecca don't agree with that.

[The Sayon and Kpelle separate when Islam becomes strong]

Mammadi: Concerning the Sayon. How did our ancestor get to Gbana? Have you
 ever heard something about that?

Alhaji: From here up to...

From here up to..

All of the Sayon,

From Gbana,

438 'until they intermarried with the Dunzu': The Dunzu and Sanoe are *lasili*. The Kpelle had to leave after the Dunzu arrived because the Dunzu were strong Muslims (l. 469). Thus, the Kromah, Sanoe and many other Maniyaka who lived in Jalagbeledu prior to the immigration of the Dunzu do not generally seem to have been Muslims.

441 Nakamu: = *kalamoo* ('teacher').

- To go to Boola,
 To go to Winzu,
 To go to Miniya hill,
 Are all Kpelle.
- 465 I said that they are all Kpelle,
 And that they intermarried.
 Our ancestor and all of the people in this area used to intermarry.
Mori business [Islam] was not strong at that time.
 They separated after the *mori* business became strong.
- 470 Do you know the meaning of *gbèsè*?
 Our ancestor, the people of Gbèka...
 The Gbèka...
 The Gbèsè came from Gbèi.

[The *kafri* and Muslims]

- Mammadi: What did they believe about *kòma* during the time of Koniyaaba?
 The *kòma* and *nyana* business. What did the people do at that time? Was
 the religion here at that time?
- Alhaji: The religion had not come at that time.
- 475 Everyone was *kafri*.
 Nobody used to pray.
 I left from here.
 The Turé came from Morocco.
 They came from Morocco and Algeria.
- 480 Our Turé left Algeria and came here.

478-480 This statement about the Turé migrations from Morocco and Algeria merits further research.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.35

ALHAJI BINTU IBRAHIM BÉÉTÉ

Place and date of interview: Musadu, Guinea, 9 December 1993

Interviewed by: Baba Dole and Tim Geysbeek

Context of interview: In March of 1986, Yaya Dole said that Alhaji Béété was one of his friends (Appendix 7.8, l. 244). When I went to Musadu for a brief visit in August 1992, I met four or five elders sitting under the veranda of a house near the main road that goes through Musadu. I told them that I wanted to return the following year to ask them about Musadu's history. When I returned to Musadu the next December, Baba Dole arranged for me to interview Alhaji Béété because he said that Béété was well informed about Musadu's past. Many of the elders of Musadu came to greet me after the early morning prayer on December 9, and Alhaji Béété was the imam who blessed me. It was only after I interviewed Alhaji Béété that I learned that he and Yaya Dole had been good friends, and that he was one of the persons I had spoken to the previous year. Alhaji Béété, in fact, attributed much of his knowledge about history to Yaya Dole (l. 80,110,115). Béété said that he was about eighty years old, and that he was a retired farmer. He also stated that he joined the French army in 1940 (l. 691-724). Alhaji Béété was the third imam of Musadu: Alhaji Musa Sherif and Alhaji Usman Kènè were the first and second imams respectively at that time (l. 277-84).

We went to Alhaji Béété's yard to interview him, and conducted the interview in his round one room house. Baba Dole, Alhaji Béété and I were the only persons who were present for the interview. Alhaji Béété was very friendly, and he seemed to answer most

of the questions that we asked in an easy and free manner. The interview lasted thirty-nine minutes. We took a picture of Alhaji Béété and some of his family members after the interview. They stood beside a well in front of his house that was funded by the Islamic Heritage Society of Kuwait.

The quality of the recording was very poor in some places, but the recording is intelligible enough even in the worse places so that a good translation could be made.

Transcribed and translated by: Faliku Sanoe. This translation needs to be checked.

Translation checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

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[ZO MISA KÒMA IN MISADU]

[The three citizens of Misadu]

Baba: He is asking you how Misadu was founded.

Alhaji: They told us everything that we know about the Misadu business.

Three people were here when it started.

Those three people were here.

They lived in Baayòla.

5 It's name was Baayòla.

That is where they lived.

It's name was Baayòla.

The first person's name was, èh - Zo Misa Kòma.

The second one's name was Jufa Kòni.

10 The other one's name was Ngana Misa.

Those were the three people.

Those were the three citizens of Misadu.

[Three strangers migrate to Dolèla]

Three other persons came later.

Those three persons joined them when they came.

15 How did they come and how did they join them?

The first one was Foningama.

The other ones were Timaningèmè and Fuomuo Dole.

8-12 Béété said that Zo Musa, Jufa Kòni and Ngana Musa were Kpelle and the 'citizens' or 'sons' of Musadu (l. 75; Ch. 4).

9 Jufa: The speaker also said Yufa.

12 'citizens' (*duu dèn*): Lit., 'land (*duu*) children (*dèn*).'

15-16 Foningama, Timaningèmè and Fuomuo Dole were the 'strangers.' Foningama: Béété also said Fòningama.

- Those three persons came here on the same day.
 They came here and met the three other persons.
 20 Nèlèkòlò Creek.
 They called the place Dolèla.
 Those three persons came here on the same day.
 They came and met the other three persons here.
 When they arrived they said, “All of us came here on the same day.”
 25 Timaningèmè, Fuomuo Dole, and Foningama.
 Those three persons came on the same day.
 [They said], “All of us came here on the same day.”

[Timaningèmè Kromah becomes the *masa* of Dolèla]

- Who will be the leader?
 Who will be the leader?
 30 Foningama said to Fuomuo Dole, “Timaningèmè is my uncle.
 Let’s let him be the leader.
 Let’s give the leadership to him.”
 That is why Timaningèmè became the leader of this town.
 It was not Fuomou Dole,
 35 And it was not Foningama.
 Even though Foningama was a *masa* because he was a Diomanu,
 The others agreed to give the *masaya* to Timaningèmè.
 Fuomou Dole was not chosen because of Foningama.
 He said, “Timaningèmè is my uncle.
 40 Let’s let him lead us.”
 My ancestor said that they named the town after him because of this.
 They settled at a place called Nèlèkòlò Creek.
 They came from a place called Baayòla.
 They settled here at Nèlèkòlò Creek.

18 ‘here’: Dolèla (l. 21).

21 Dolèla: is on the other side of Nèlèkòlò creek.

28-40 This story supports many statements which claim that the Kromah were the political leaders of Musadu before Foningama arrived (Ch. 7).

30 Timaningèmè: A Kromah in all oral traditions. See lines 504-516.

31 ‘leader’: *nyèmòòya* = ‘person (*mòò*) [at the] front (*nyè*) [of the] place (*ya*).’

37 *masaya*: = ‘chieftaincy.’

41 ‘My ancestor said that they named the town after him because of this’: They seem to have named the town of Dolèla after Fuomuo Dole because he did not become chief (l. 21,27-44). Or, perhaps the Dole were the first chiefs who lost their position to the Kromah.

43 Yaya Dole said that the three citizens moved from Baayòla to Musadu (App. 7.4e, l. 234-243; App. 7.8, l. 16-28).

[Zo Misa founds Misadu]

- 45 A person named Misa used to come and catch fish in the river when they were there.
He used to put a bamboo trap in the water to catch fish.
He then built a dryer and dried them.
People used to come and buy them from him.
Traders used to come and buy them from him when they passed by.
- 50 The town was over there behind Nèlèkòlò Creek.
That is where the town was located.
More people came here [to Misadu] to buy fish from Misa until the place became a market.
Everybody used to buy fish here from Misa.
Everybody then decided to join Misa.
- 55 They left and came here to Misa.
Somebody...
He was a Kpelle man who caught fish.
Now, they established a town here.
That is how the town was established.

[Confrontation in Misadu between Islam and *kòma*]

- 60 The other three persons were not Muslims when the town was established.
They had *kòma* and owned *kòma*.
Those three strangers came and met them.
They said, "We don't like this *kòma* business."
Now, they were our uncles but they did not agree.
- 65 The other three persons took their things and left after that happened.
They took their things and left.
Those three persons went and left.

[The strangers control Misadu after the citizens leave]

The three strangers stayed here.

45 'bamboo trap' (*kia/kala*): A bamboo-wedge cylinder trap that can measure one foot or longer. Fish can swim into this trap but cannot go back out. An alternative Konyakā word for this trap is *sanzan*.
50 'the town': Dolèla.
52 'market' (*duu-da*): Literally means 'mouth (*da*) land (*duu*),' or 'mouth to the land.' A *duu-da* is a trading center where goods are bought and sold.
60-62 The speaker associates this *kòma* with Zo Musa's *saafèlè* or *jo* (see l. 91, 134-158, 261-69).
61 'the other persons': the citizens, Zo Musa, Jufa Kòni and Ngana Musa (l. 8-10).
62 'three strangers': Foningama, Timaningèmè and Fuomuo Dole (l. 16-17).
64 'They': the strangers. 'our': the citizens. The speaker seemed to be saying that the Kromah were 'our uncles' (the uncles of the Kamara or Foningama), but that they could not 'agree' or get along with each other.

Who were those three strangers?
 70 Fuomuo Dole, Foningama, and Timaningèmè.
 The town was left in their care.
 The town was left in their hands.
 The three strangers left,
 And the three citizens stayed.

[The citizens move to Zota]

75 Those three citizens were Kpelle.
 Those Kpelle who established this town went over there to Zota.
 [It was] called Zota.
 They went and established a town there.
 That is why they left and let the strangers keep this place.
 80 Everything that I know about this story is what your father told me.
 That is it.
 That is how Misadu was established.
 That is how it was established.

[Misa founds Misadu]

The main town was not here.
 85 It was behind the river,
 But they left [Dolèla] and came here [to Misadu].
 The fisherman used to set traps and catch fish.
 Everybody used to come to this land and buy from him.
 It was located on a road that traders used,
 90 And it later became a town.

[The citizens and strangers of Misadu]

The three citizens left because they participated in *kòma* business.
 They left and the three strangers took over the place.
 That is what I know about it.
 This is how it has been with us since that time.
 95 This talk should explain why some people say that some of Misadu's citizens are

73 'strangers': The speaker made a mistake and should have said 'citizens' (see l. 74, 79, 91-95).

74 'citizens': The speaker made a mistake and should have said 'strangers.'

76 Zotia: Zota is another common pronunciation.

80 'your father': Baba's father, Yaya Dole, the speaker in (App. 7.4e, l. 229-67 and App. 7.8).

84 'The main town': Dolèla (l. 18-21).

87 'The fisherman': Zo Musa.

91 '*kòma* business': See lines 60-66. The speaker equated Zo Musa's *saafèlè* to *jo* (l. 148-54), and said that the three strangers called the *molilu* to drive their *kòma* away and destroy their medicine (l. 261-69).

strangers.
 My talk makes everything clear.
 That is what I know about it.
 That is the way that it went.
 Even what they are doing now...

[Misadu: the central town in Konye]

- 100 Most of the *lasili* and most of the clans that are represented here today originated from here.
 That is because this is where most of the division took place.
 The Foningama they talk about whose name is known all over this region settled here in this town.
 Anybody - most of the *lasili* came from here.
 Dukuwiela, Nyèla, Beyla, and Yakodu came from here.
- 105 All of the *lasili* in the country came from here.
 Some later went and established their own towns.
 Our town is the oldest of all the towns.
 Misadu is the oldest town here except for Samatila.
 Samatila was founded before Misadu.
- 110 That is what old man N'Vafin told us.
 That is the story.
 That is what we know.
 Samatila is older than this place,
 But this place is older than all of the others.

[Written and oral tradition]

- 115 The old man used to talk to us and we used to take what he said very seriously.
 Now the good results have come.
 If our story was written like what Va Djiba did for the people in Simandu.
 They collected information and had somebody write everything down.
 When that happens,
- 120 When an educated person comes,

100 'originated from here': Musadu.

103 'Yakodu: or Diakolidu, usually translated 'Yakuo's land (*du*).' One assistant suggested that Yakodu means 'land (*du*) [of the] *jia* seed (*kuo*).' A *jia* is a type of tree.

108 Samatila: Samatila (Samatigila) is located in northwest Côte d'Ivoire.

110 N'Vafin [Dole]: The speaker probably meant Vafin's grandson Yaya whom we interviewed.

113 See Kromah 1985, App. 7.4c, l. 93-94.

115-123 Ibrahim Béété was lamenting the fact that the history of Musadu had not been written, unlike what Dyigiba Kamara did for Damara (n.d.).

116 'Now the good results have come': We did not pay too much attention to history, but we are benefitting from the good work of those who passed before us.

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This will change and you will then be able to take it.
 That is not yet happened in our case.
 That is why ours is spoiled.
 When there is something that you do not know,
 125 And when you say that it is not good,
 That is history.
 When you talk about something that is good,
 And when it is narrated anywhere else,
 The person who spoke will gain prestige.
 130 A road will be given to that person.
 That is the situation.
 In the name of God,
 That is what he asked about,
 And this is what I know.

[Zo Misa's *saafèlè*]

Baba: There is another one. What about the *saafèlè* that they talk about? What
 kind of thing was it?
 135 Alhaji: It was medicine-medicine-medicine that they fixed.
 They sewed a sheep horn.
 Don't you see that the Bambara do that?
 Yes, they used to sew the *saafèlè* and use it as their medicine.
 It could talk.
 140 It could say this,
 And it could say that.
 That was the medicine that they made.
Baba: Is that the thing that used to swallow human beings?
Alhaji: That is what they say.
 That is what they say.
 145 They say that it was because of Satan.
Baba: Oh.
Alhaji: It was because of Satan.
 Isn't that the cause when you see medicine catch somebody?
 They told us that his *saafèlè* swallowed human beings.
 It belonged to the first people who lived here.
 150 That is how it has been explained,
 Whether it was true or false.

121 'you': Tim Geysbeek.

122 'ours': our history.

135-158 For more about the *saafèlè* and *jo (ju)*, see ln. 91.

136 'sheep horn' (*saa kili*): Medicine is put in the hollowed-out section, and a cloth is sewn over the opening of the horn.

145 Satan: The speaker said "Suitan."

149 'It belonged to the first people who lived here': See Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8, l. 72-74.

- You have to stop here.
 It was medicine.
 They left because of *jo*.
 155 The others who came and met them were Muslims.
 They were not Muslims.
 They used to do strange things with the *jo* every day.
 That is why they left this place.

[Dole origins]

- Baba: Our ancestor who came here was Fuomuo Dole. Fuomuo Dole. Who were
 Fuomuo Dole's children up to the time of our father?
Alhaji: Aye God - that covers a long period of time!
 160 Fuomuo Dole came from the region of the people of Mani.
 That happened a long time ago.
 Uncle came from the region of the people of Mani.
 That is all that I know about that.
 That was a long time before you.
 165 Can't you think about how long ago Misadu was built?

[Zota Misa and Zo Misa Kòma]

- Baba: What does Zo Misa Kòma's name mean?
Alhaji: That was his name.
 He was Kpelle.
Baba: What was his clan?
Alhaji: Zo Misa Kòma was Kpelle.
Baba: Was he a slave before Misadu was founded? Who was the person who
 brought him here?
Alhaji: Zota Misa was the *zo* who owned Misa.
 170 All of them were Kpelle,
 But a *zo* owned Misa.

[FONIN̩GAMA IN MISADU]
 [Laws established in Misadu]

Baba: Do you know about the kola sacrifice?

154 *jo*: In this case, a ritual object or the *saafèlè* that was revered (see l. 148,157).
 155 'The others': the strangers.
 156 'They': the citizens.
 160 Maninga: or Maninka, 'Mani people.' The speaker softened the /k/ to /g/. The Dole came from the Manden (see App. 7.8, l. 21).
 172 I asked about *wulukèlèn salaka*, but Baba misunderstood and said *wolo salaka* ('kola sacrifice'). Alhaji Béété understood what I was asking when Baba said something about the children who were killed. Béété then talked about the *wulukèlèn salaka* without mentioning its name.

Alhaji: I don't know about that.

Did they produce the kola?

Baba: He said that there were some children... Some children died here when a sacrifice was made. Do you recall anything about them? Can you remember anything?

Alhaji: Some children died?

Baba: They died because they spoiled a law.

175 Alhaji: Those were Fanda Mammadi and the others.
They were Foningama's children.

Baba: He said they were Foningama's children.

Tim: Let him explain.

Alhaji: They were Foningama's children.
He had fifteen with him.

Fifteen children.

180 He said that they should not break the law.

They should not steal.

They should not take another person's wife.

People used to sell fellow human beings for money,

But they should not do that.

185 They should not kill a person when they are in a troublesome or foolish mood.

They should not steal.

You know the Diomanu.

They try every possible way to steal.

After everybody settled,

190 The *masa* passed the law saying that anybody who violated a law that was passed
would be executed.

They would be killed.

[Four of Foningama's sons executed for breaking a law]

Four persons went and stole.

We heard that it was a cow.

They stole a cow.

195 They wrapped something around it and put it around the cow's feet.

They then took it to another place and used it.

The say that the practice of putting something around the feet of cows started
at that time.

They stole a cow.

They found out what happened,

200 And all four of them were judged guilty.

180 'law': See Vase Kamala, App. 7.6, ln. 1567; Ch. 7-8.

183 'People used to sell fellow human beings for money': slavery.

195 'They wrapped something around it and put it around the cow's feet': The Fulbe are sometimes said to tie a cloth or leaf around the feet of cows to hide the path they take. The speaker is saying that the Kamara started this practice at that time.

Those four persons...
 Those four persons were arrested.
 They cut their heads off and dug one hole.
 They buried their four heads in one hole behind Fa Misa's house.
 205 After that...
 The rock that they talk about...
 After they dug the hole and buried their heads there,
 They filled the hole with dirt and placed a rock over it.
 That is the reason why they placed the rock there.
 210 Nothing else is there.
 They violated the law.
 Those persons who violated the law were killed.
 Their heads were buried there.
 He only had eleven children who remained.
 215 Foningama's eleven children - eleven children were the ones who remained on
 the earth.
 But those four...
 He killed those four [children].
Baba: Do you remember the name of some of Foningama's children?
Alhaji: No.

[Timaningèmè succeeds Foningama as the *masa* of Misadu]

Baba: Did Foningama die here or go somewhere else?
Alhaji: He went somewhere else.
Baba: Who came after him?
 220 Alhaji: Ah! Here?
Baba: Who followed him after he left?
Alhaji: Timaningèmè was in control after he left.
 All of the people used to go.

[The Muslim Béété migrate from Jaa to Misadu]

Baba: How did your [Béété] ancestor come to Misadu? Where did your ancestor
 come from before they came to Misadu?
Alhaji: Jaa is the name of the place from where our ancestor came.
 Do you hear?
 225 There is a big Malaka town there called Abdullahi.
 My ancestor came from behind Jaa.
 Not Masiné Jaa or Bamako Jaa.
 I am not talking about Bamako Jaa.
 Our ancestor came from there.
 230 That is the place from where our ancestor came.

202-208 For Yaya Dole's version of the rock story, see App. 7.8, l. 38-57.

They came with papers.
He came to this country with the religion.

[Foningama instructs the Kamara to protect Misadu]

Baba: Foningama was here and he was a Kamara. But no Kamara live here in town. They say that many clans live here, but not the Kamara. What is the reason for that?

Alhaji: Foningama told the Kamara that this was his ancestor's town, And that they should not build a house in the town here.

235 Whenever they want to build,
They should build behind the river.
They should build behind the river to guard the town.
This town should not be destroyed in front of his children.
That was the reason.

240 The Diomanu do not have a house here.
We can marry their women,
But they don't have houses here.
When they come...

Even when they come here now,
245 They settle behind Gbèkè,
But they said that they should not build any houses in town.
That was not because they are *kafri*,
To say that they will do something to them if they build here.
It is not the reason.

250 They should guard the town.
They grew up here.
They were born here.
They should not be present if the town is destroyed.

[CULTURE AND RELIGION IN KONYE]
[*Doofa* and scarification]

Baba: What is this *doofa* business?

Alhaji: That was the place where the owners of the *kòma* worked.

255 It [Dofatini] is behind the river on the road that leads into the valley.
It is behind the river.
They used to do all of their things there.
They used to scarify people in the *doo*.

232 'the religion': Islam.

237 Kamara: In the question that preceded this response, Baba said "Kamaya" for "Kamara."

240 The Diomanu do not have a house here': See Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8, ln. 322.

258 'They used to scarify people in the *doo*': Literally., 'They used *doo* to scarify the people.' The literal translation makes it look as if the *doo* is an instrument that people used to scarify others.

- All of that used to happen.
260 Didn't I tell you that they came from the wilderness?

[Muslims overcome the *kòma* medicine]

- Baba: How did Islam come here?
Alhaji: The religion of Islam?
Baba: The person who brought Islam. Since they were Kpelle, who came and stopped them from doing that?
Alhaji: Ka!
Foningama, Fuomuo Dole and Timaningèmè were here.
They called the *mori* to confront them.
265 They called the *mori* to come and drive the *kòma* away from this place.
Those *mori* worked and ruined all of the medicine.
They destroyed all of the medicine that they used to have.
It got ruined.
The medicine failed.

[Kaamòò Afamasaba Kènè: the first imam of Misadu]

- Baba: Who was the first imam who came to Misadu?
270 Alhaji: Misadu's first imam? (pause)
Um, the name of the one I know is Kaamòò Afamisaba.
Now, the last one...
Islam was not so popular during the first time that people used to pray.
Kaamòò Afamisaba was a Kènè.
275 He was the one who came and built the mosque and operated it.
He was a Kènè.

[The Sherif, Kènè, and Béété imams of Misadu]

- Baba: Who is the present imam of Misadu?
Alhaji: Misa Sherif.
Baba: The one after Béété - Sherif, is Ansumana Kènè. Then he, Abraham Béété, comes after him. What is the reason why they are the imams? Is it because they are educated?
Alhaji: One has to have good fortune to become an imam.
It is good fortune.

261-69 See line note 91.

266 'ruined' (*tinyè*): Can also be translated 'broken,' 'destroyed' or 'spoiled.'

271 Afamisaba: = 'big (*ba*) father (*fa*) Misa (Musa/Moses).'

276 Sherif: Later, the speaker said Sefu (l. 470). According to Yaya Dole, the third imam of Musadu was Layi Blaima (App. 7.8, l. 248). Layi Blaima and Abraham Béété are variant names of this interviewee, Ibrahim Béété.

279 'good fortune': *haliyè*.

- 280 If you and somebody else are equal,
God can give him the position and leave you out.
He is the owner of the town.
Even though you can be more educated than him,
They can give him the position and exclude you.

[CHIEFS OF MISADU]

- Baba: Who was the first *masa* of Misadu?
285 Alhaji: Ah!
Baba: During our ancestor's time.
Alhaji: The first *masa* during our ancestor's time was Timaningèmè.
The one who I saw after that was N'Va Kunimuo.
He was the person we saw who was the *masa*.
N'Va Lasana came after N'Va Kunimuo.
290 Lai Yamah Mori came after N'Va Kunimuo.
N'Va Kalifa came after Lai Yamah Mori.
N'Guamuo came after N'Va Kalifa.
Kalifa Kromah came after N'Guamuo.
Kalifa Sayon came after Kalifa Kromah.
295 Your father came after Kalifa Sayon.
That is what I know about this.
Baba: How many people are they?
Alhaji: That was just a few.
Baba: There were about eight?
Alhaji: Maybe.
Baba: You never said my father's name. You said everyone else's names. That is
what I am talking about.
Alhaji: Layi Yaya [Dole] came after Kalifa Sayon.
Baba: He is our father.

[THE DOLE OF MISADU]
[Warriors and chiefs]

- 300 Alhaji: After that, our town's *masa*...
Layi Yaya was the leading warrior in their town to shoot a gun.
They own the town because they can handle these guns.
They are Timani's descendants.

285-99 I unfortunately did not insist that the speaker say the chief's last names.

286 'during our ancestor's time': referring to the Béété ancestor (see l. 331 ff).

287 N'Va Kunimuo: This may be Kuni Mammadi (Blama Fofana n.d., App. 9.2, l. 120).

290 Lai Yamah Mori: This is Nya Mori (Blama Fofana n.d., App. 9.2, l. 122).

302-304 The Dole could be defined as the 'owners' in the restricted sense that they were the chiefs, but the real owners of Musadu seem to have been the Kromah.

[Vafin Dole's descendants]

- N'Vafin Dole's son's name was Mori Kumba.
305 Mori Kumba's son's name was Layi Yaya.
Look at Yaya's son...

* * *

[THE SEFU AND CISSE]
[Sefu Talata travels to Misadu]

- Baba: How did the Sefu come on this side?
Alhaji: What?
Baba: What do you know about that?
470 Alhaji: Sefu - ah!
That is an important story.
We know that the name of the first Sefu who came was Sefu Talata.
His grave is in a town behind Sinko,
His grave is in Biasana.
475 His name was Sefu Talata.
He was a light-skinned man whose name was Sefu Talata.
That is what they told us.
He came here from the white man's country.
His descendants live here.
480 He married a black woman here,
And all of his children were black.
That is what they said.
Sefu Talata came from up.
This is what we have heard.
485 That is what Misa and the others told us about their coming.
That is what their father also said.
All of them can count and trace their ancestry back to Sefu Talata.
All of the Sefu family descended from a man whose grave is in Biasana under the
baobab tree.

306 'Yaya's son': = Baba Dole, the person who was helping me interview the speaker.

485 Misa: Alhaji Misa Sherif, the first imam of Musadu (l. 277).

488 Cotton and baobab trees were also used as grave sites, especially for bards. Bards bodies evidently become too contaminated because they used so much sorcery, so they were buried in baobab trees. People feared that they would infect the land or water if their bodies were buried under the ground or thrown in the water (Conrad/Frank 1995:4-7). Fofin Sumawolo stated that there was a great cotton tree in Boola where all of the *zos* were interned. Jialò, the supposed founder of Boola, was buried under the same tree after he was sacrificed to appease the land spirits so his people could settle there (App. 7.7b, l. 452-457). Moliké Sidibé recorded an oral tradition which claimed that Fakassia Kamara, one of the descendants of Foningama and the alleged founder of Damaro, was buried at the foot of the great baobab tree of Kassiadou. There is an opening in Fakassia's tree which allegedly contains an endless supply of water that can cure all sicknesses. At the beginning of each planting season, people go to the baobab and pray so that

The grave is there.
 490 They came here.
 That is what I know about how they came here.
 That is how it was.
 Something may have happened after that,
 But that is all that I know.
 495 The only person they can trace back to is Sefu Talata.
 I don't know how Sefu Talata is connected to all of them.
Baba: Who lodged him when he came here?
Alhaji: Sefu Talata?
 Hii, he never settled here.
 Didn't I tell you that? Biasana.
 500 I will stop there for now...

* * *

[Alhaji Vamba Cissé goes to Mecca]

Baba: Why did the *kaamòò* who went to Mecca, Kaamòò Layi, go and sit there?
Alhaji: He went where the mango tree is planted.
 That is where he went and rested.
 675 He went and rested there when he left the town.
 That is why they went and planted the mango tree there.
 They said, "This is the place for Kaamòò Layi to rest."
 He was the first person from here who went to Mecca.
 He was the first person from this town who went on the pilgrimage to Mecca.
 680 He was very respected by our important people.
Baba: What was his clan?
Alhaji: Cissé. Cissé.
 Alhaji Vamba Cissé.

[THE KPELLE AND KONYE MOUNTAIN]

Baba: He wants to know how matters related to Konyeba came about. Konyeba mountain.
Alhaji: That is a Kpelle name.
 Listen, the Kpelle who established this town called it Kabatini, or Gòniya.
 685 Their name for 'rock' is *kòni*.
 That is what the Kpelle named it.
 The Kpelle were the ones who established the town here.
 They called it Konye, 'rock mountain...'

the baobab's spirit will ensure a good harvest (1989:28).

684 *Kabatini*: means 'rock (*kaba*) hill (*tini*)' in Konyakā.

685 *kòniya*: means 'rock (*kòni*) hill (*ya/ye*)' in Kpelle.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.36

BINTU MAMADI DONZO, WITH MAMI MORIFIN DOLE

Place and date of interview: Musadu, Guinea, 9 December 1993

Context of interview: Baba Dole and I spoke with Bintu Mammadi Donzo shortly after we interviewed Alhaji Ibrahim Béété. Although Baba said that Mr. Donzo knew a significant amount about Musadu's history, it turned out that he was most comfortable talking about Samori Turé. Baba's father's brother, Morifin Dole was with Mr. Donzo when we went to Mr. Donzo's house, so the four of us sat down for the interview. The interview lasted about thirty-one minutes. We were only interrupted at the end when a women came into the room and greeted us. Both men indicated that they are in their late seventies (ll. 568-71). Molifin Dole spoke at the end of the interview.

Translation note: Bangali Kamara transcribed and translated most of this interview.

Bangali Kamara speaks the Koadu-Boninḡã dialect of Mainyakã, which is a little different from Konyakã, so Faliku Sano and Amara Dole helped retranslate some of the difficult portions of the tape.

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¹See Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8, ll. 1118.

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[ZO MISA KÒMA AND FONIN̄GAMA KAMARA: I] [Zo Misa builds a shelter in Misadu]

Baba: How was Misadu founded?

Donzo: It began at the lower side of the river.

They used to tell Zo Misa Kòma to use a hook,

Go catch some fish in the river,

And bring the fish to them.

- 5 That is what he did until he came here to this river [the Dion].
He went to his father where the ruins are now located and said,
"Father, I saw an area where we should go and build a village."
That was in our yard.
It was the first yard.
- 10 That happened a long time ago,
And that was the first yard.
They went and saw Kabakòni.
When he saw it he said, "Father, this is a new creek.
It is not like the big river [the Dion].
- 15 If we go and found the town there,
How will we draw water from it?
There are small rocks in that river."
Then he left and built a shelter in our yard.
He came and started a yard here.

7 'our yard': The Donzo yard (see S. Kromah 1985, App. 7.4, ll. 199-200). Baba Dole took me to Donzola quarter where Zo Musa reportedly settled when he founded Musadu (Fig. 31). Baba said Zo Musa stood on the big boulder in the yard and shot animals when they came to the edge of town (Fig. 33).

12 Kabakòni: See ln. 167.

13 'he': Misa. 'this': Kabakòni.

14 'big river': The Dion.

[Three citizens and three strangers found Misadu]

- 20 That happened before they founded the village.
Three citizens and three strangers were present in the village.
Zo Misa Kòma was one of the three citizens,
Along with Jufa Kòni and Ngana Misa.
They were the three citizens.
- 25 The three strangers were Tumaningèmè, Fuomuo Dòle and Foningama.
They were the three strangers.

[The *molilu* make Zo Misa's *saafèlè* powerless]

- They founded the village.
They stayed for a very long time.
The *kòma* was...
- 30 The medicine...
The *kòma* was always going up into the town swallowing things.
They called and asked the *molilu* to make a *lisimu*.
They put it around the frog's neck.
That was because he had the *saafè* which was his medicine.
- 35 His *saafè* used to swallow children.
The imam made a *lisimu* and put it on the *saafè*...
Eh, he put it [the *lisimu*] around the frog's neck,
And it [the *saafè*] swallowed everything.
It shrieked after it swallowed the frog,
- 40 And lost its power as medicine.
That is what I know about that.

[Foningama the war *masa*]

Baba: What kind of job did Foningama do?

Donzo: Foningama?

Baba: Yes.

Donzo: Eh, he was a war *masa*, a war *masa*.

[Zo Misa the farmer and *daan*]

Baba: What kind of job did Zo Misa do?

Donzo: Zo Misa?

25 Foningama: The speaker said Foningama here.

27 'They': Apparently the three citizens and three strangers. The three citizens are usually associated with founding Musadu, with the three strangers coming later.

29-34 Mammadi Donzo equated the *kòma* with Zo Musa's *saafè* (App. 7.35, l. 262-69).

38 'everything': Zo Musa's *saafè* swallowed the frog and the *lisimu* that the imam wrapped around the frog.

- Baba: Yes.
45 Donzo: He was a farmer.
Baba: What was Zo Misa's clan?
Donzo: He was a *daan*.
Baba: What was his last name?
Donzo: I don't know that.
Baba: What does the name Zo Misa Kòma mean?
Dòle: Zo Misa was his name.

[Foningama's twelve children]

- Baba: How many children did Foningama have?
Dòle: He had twelve sons here.
Baba: Do you remember any of their names?
50 Dòle: No, I don't remember his children's names...

* * *

[Foningama's son breaks a law]

- Baba: We were talking about another topic. We want to know about Foningama's children who broke the law here.
Donzo: One of them [broke the law].
Baba: Okay. Can you tell us about his child who broke the law?
Donzo: No.

[Foningama's *waaken* sacrifice]

- Baba: Did Foningama come and make a big sacrifice here?
Donzo: Yes, he made a sacrifice for his descendants.
Baba: What kind of thing was that?
Donzo: He made a *waaken* sacrifice.
Baba: What?
65 Donzo: A *waake* - *waaken* sacrifice.
Baba: How did that happen?
Donzo: He gave the sacrifice to the people.

[Foningama's death]

- Baba: Did Foningama die here, or did he go and die somewhere else.

46 *daan*: means 'isolated' (see Yaya Dole 1986, ln. 73).

51 Donzo: The speaker said Dònzo here, and Dunzo in other places. According to the speaker and other sources, the Donzo and the Nyèn are the same (l. 54-55).

63-64 Others also said that Foningama made the *wiikèlèn* sacrifice for his sons (Ch. 7).

Donzo: He died here.
Baba: Who succeeded Foningama?
Dòle: After his death?
Donzo: After Foningama?

70 I don't know about that.

[Zo Misa's descendants move to the forest]

Baba: How did the matter with Zo Misa end?
Dòle: Zo Misa?
All of them died here.
Their descendants left and went down into the forest.

[CULTURE AND RELIGION IN KONIYA]
[Misa: the first imam of Misadu]

Baba: Who became the first imam of Misadu?
Donzo: The first Imam?
75 Misa, Misa.

[Sacrifices made at the cave at Koniya]

Baba: Can you talk about Koniya, the cave that is in Koniya? It can be
opened and closed. What do you know about it?

Donzo: Ah, it is on this side,
But a rock door covers it.
I have seen it but it has a rock door.
Nothing is inside,
80 But they used to give offerings to it.
When they gave offerings to it,
And when it accepted the offerings,
Then its door would open.

When it did not accept the offerings,
85 It would not open.

71-73 A gap of time seems to have transpired between the time that Zo Musa first confronted the new Manding immigrants and the time that many of the older Manding and non-Manding left Konya (Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, l. 1382-1542; S. Kromah 1985, App. 7.4, l. 201-207; Mammadi Donzo 1993, App. 7.36, l. 71-73).

72 'All of them died here': Presumably, Zo Misa, Jufa Kòni and Ngana Misa (l. 22-23).

73 'Their descendants left and went down into the forest': See Kromah 1985, App. 7.4, ln. 201-07.

76 'it is on this side': of Koniya Mountain.

80 'offerings' (*soola*): or 'to give' (see Vase Kamala 1985, App. 7.6, ln. 327).

[Doofatini]

Baba: What about Doofatini?

Donzo: Doofatini?

That is right here.

Baba: What about this block of cement?

Donzo: There is no cement [at Doofatini].

Only rocks are there.

90 There is no cement [there].

There is no cement.

There was no cement at that time.

[The *mori* and Islam]

Baba: How did Islam come on this side?

Donzo: Islam?

They went and called a *mori*.

95 He is the one who came.

He started to make the people pray where that big field is located.

[THE SEFU, KAMARA AND CISSÉ]

[Sefu Talata]

Baba: What about the Sefu?

Donzo: The Sefu?

The Sefu came very late.

Baba: Who was the first Sefu?

Donzo: His name was Sefu Talata...

* * *

[The Kamara and Misadu]

495 Baba: Eh, the Kamara. What do you know about them? Can those people build
 their house here?

Donzo: What Kamara? The Diomani?

Baba: Yes, the Diomani.

Donzo: Foningama told his descendants not to build a house here.

He said that they should protect the people,

But they should not build a house here.

88 'cement': Baba was asking about the cement that the French buried in the ground, but the Mammadi Donzo did not make the connection. Donzo talked about the cement in the right context later in the interview (l. 542-561; see Ibrahim Béété 1993, App. 7.35, l. 657-672).

95 'big field': This may or may not be a reference to the soccer field is located on the outskirts of Musadu.

Gbangunò Saji fought this place.
500 It was the people of Sinko who brought him here,
He and Vahu Masale from Damaro came here.
Saji left and then Guinea came.
They came, but this place has the power.

[Layi Vamba Cissé's pilgrimage to Mecca]

Baba: Eh, which rock did the person who went to Mecca sit on?
Donzo: Layi Vamba [Cissé].
505 It is on the other side of the river under the plum tree...

499 Gbangunò Saji: The nineteenth century Kamara warrior who sieged Musadu in 1873 (Anderson 1912/1971; Holsoe 1976-77; Person 1987:287; Fairhead et. al. 2003).

501 'Vahu Masale from Damaro': See Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8, l. 275, 448.

504 Layi Vamba: Ibrahim Béété (App. 7.35, l. 681-82) said that he was a Cissé. There is a boulder about three feet in height on the outskirts of Musadu on the road that leads to Sanyola where Layi Vamba is said to have rested when he returned from Mecca.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.37

WATA MAMMADI KAMARA

Acquisition of interview: Purchased by Amara Cissé in Monrovia on 18 September 1992

Background of the interview: Ansu Cissé purchased this tape in September 1992. The context of this interview is unknown. Wata Mammadi Kamara speaks Busekã. It seems that Wata Mammadi was either speaking from the Kuankan area where Busekã is spoken, or was from Kuankan (see l. 9, 964-74, 1086, 1262-65). In lines 9-10, the speaker said that he was ‘in the yard of the Kòòni people,’ and that his father’s name is Kòòni Moligbè Kamara. The speaker also said that he was old (l. 1225-28). The first half of his narrative is similar to some of the oral traditions that Vase Kamara narrated. Who borrowed from whom? Some aspects of Wata Mammadi’s interview are also similar to Kèwulèn Kamara and Jala Kamara’s history of Kuankan.

Translated by: Faliku Sanoe (handwritten pages 1-48); Boakai Yamah (handwritten pages 48-64); Ansu Cissé and Bangali Kamara (handwritten pages 65-94).

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek, Faliku Sanoe, and Boakai Yamah (transcript); Tim Geysbeek and Bangali Kamara (tape).

Translation note: The quality of the tape was poor, and the transcript is poor. Bangali Kamara and I went over the entire interview by tape and corrected certain parts of the original translation that were not accurate. We did not take the time to change the handwritten transcript/translation at the beginning, so the present translation over-rides whatever is found in the original handwritten transcript/translation when there is a difference. We had such a hard time reconciling the last part of the interview with what

Bangali was translating that Bangali and Ansu made a completely new transliteration and translation of the last section (pages 65-94). I unfortunately could not find the tape when I sought to check this translation in the summer of 1995 in Michigan, so I was unable to check the translation.

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Foningama prepares a *wulukèlèn* sacrifice to have children: 662-671
 Foningama's *wulukèlèn* sacrifice and the *molilu*: 672-700
 Kona Jabatè gives Foningama's *wulukèlèn* sacrifice to the *molilu*: 701-724
 The Fofana ancestor summons Alikali Cissé to help bless Foningama's sacrifice: 725-772
 The blessing of Foningama's *wulukèlèn* sacrifice: 773-782
Molilu waiting for banana seeds: 783-799
 Foningama's sixteen children: 800-808
 The twelve laws of Musadu: 809-823
 Foningama executes four sons for breaking the market law: 824-836
 The Fofana and the people of Nyèla substitute a cow for the Diomani: 837-864

FONINGAMA'S DESCENDANTS

Fènjala goes to Musadu and makes a sacrifice: 865-883
 Wata Mammadi Kamara's ancestors: 884-893
 Fasujan's descendants: 894-908
 The Kamara and Sayon *lasili*: 909-921

[INTRODUCTION]

[Twenty seconds of *jèli* music, then the first two lines of Sura 1 in Arabic]*

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>We slept well.
 May God bless us today.
 Today is Tuesday.
 May God give us Tuesday's blessing.
 5 May good health be given to us in the name of the Messenger.
 The town we...
 May the Prophet bless this talk so that it will not be confusing.
 Not all of us are talking.
 I, Mammadi, am talking in the yard of the Kòòni people.
 10 My father's name is Moligbè Kamara, Kòòni Moligbè Kamara.
 My mother's name is Wata.
 My name is Wata Mammadi Kamara.
 I am the one speaking today.</p> | <p>Amina.
 Amina.
 Amina.</p> |
|--|---|

*In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful,
 Praise be to God, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds.'
 9 Kòòni: Wata Mammadi Kamara's mother's name (l. 10).

- I am explaining what my father told me,
 15 And what my ancestors told me.
 When you explain a story like this,
 That is because your fathers or your uncles told you something.
 What I will explain is not from me.
 This is where I am today.
 20 I am not speaking by myself.
 May God agree.

[THE DIOMANI IN MANDE]
 [The first Diomani]

- Our ancestor,
 The Diomani ancestor,
 Came from Niani, Mali.
 25 Our ancestor Brahimah came from Mali.
 Our old ancestor came from there.
 His name was Wata Koho.
 He is the ancestor of the Diomani.
 The day he came to Mande...
 30 If you hear people say "Diomani..."
 The Diomani are our leaders.
 They came from Mali in a group.
 The Diomani today say, "I am in Diomani land - in Diomani land."

23-24 The famous Diomani or Kamara ruler of Niani who is said to have been a contemporary of Sunjata was Mansa Kara. Two Guinean historians wrote that Mansa Kara Kamara controlled a 'vast federation' from Niani, and that Mansa Kara's brothers were the chiefs of Selefou and Tangan who protected Niani. These Kamara were 'invincible because of their work in iron' (Moundekeno/Nay 1968:9). Several sources similarly claim that Mansa Kara was protected by protective iron clothing and sorcery, and that Niani was a blacksmith town (Moundekeno/Nay 1968:9; Sisòkò 1986:136; Johnson 1986:220, In. 3055; Ly Tall et. al. 1987:70-71; Conrad 1992:178,184-185; Diabate 1995:185). Many accounts additionally state that Niani Mansa Kara Kamara either did not support Sunjata, or that he defected during the Manden war. According to Moundekeno and Nay's sources, Mansa Kara successfully resisted Sumaworo's attempt to overthrow Niane (1968:10). Kamissoko and Cissé wrote that he abandoned Niane during the war and went to Sobe, and claimed that Mansa Kara refused to attend the grand meeting that Sunjata hosted at his capital Dakajalan after the war ended (1975:91, in Conrad 1994:375). In Ibrahima Kante's work, Mansa Kara allegedly hosted Sunjata in Wagadu (not Niani) when Sunjata went into exile (1963:14). Mansa Kara's hosting of Sunjata in a case like this, if taken literally, does not contradict other claims that he later opposed Sunjata; Mansa Kara Kamara would have viewed himself as the superior when Sunjata was going into exile, and only started to oppose Sunjata after he returned to the Manden and started to gain power. Several narratives state that Fakoli killed Mansa Kara because Mansa Kara did not remain loyal to Sunjata. Mansa Kara allegedly shot an arrow into an enclosure and killed someone who was near Sunjata (Vidal 1924:326; Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:95, n. 78; Condé 1974:88; Kamissoko/Cissé 1975:91-101; Ly-Tall et. al. 1987:69-70; Bulman 1990:350-351,368-370,438-443; Conrad 1992:173-174; Diabate 1995:185-187).

25 Mali: The speaker usually said Mande (e.g., l. 29, 46).

27 Wata Koho. Wata Koho is Vase Kamala's Wakasi, the person who he said was the primordial ancestor of the Kamara who lived in Niani (in Geysbeek et. al. 1998:28-29).

- That saying started a long time ago.
35 Our ancestor came from Mali.
He came and went down.
The first son he sired was Diomani.
When the people say “Diomani, Diomani...”
The first son he sired from Fanigbè was called Diomani.
40 The first son he sired was called Diomani.
His [Wata Koho’s] followers accompanied him and went further up.

[Early Diomani history]

- They separated further up.
Half of the people went to Côte d’Ivoire,
And the other half went to Mande.
45 Those who went to Mande followed our ancestor Foningama - èh, Wata Koho.
They went to Mande.
I already gave the name of the first child he sired.
Diomani sired a child named Foni.
They say, “Foningama, Foningama.”
50 Diomani sired a child named Foni.
Foni sired a child named Kaman.
He was the one who fought Sibi - èh, Tabu.
He captured Tabu and captured Sibi.
He left Tabu and went to Sibi.
55 He sired a child named Faan.
That is why they can say, “The children of Faan.”
If you see a Diomani anywhere and they say “Children of Faan,”
That is what they are talking about.
He sired Kaman.

[The Diomani fight Sumawolo in the Mande war]

- 60 They fought in the Mande war.
They fought Mani Sumawolo in the Mande war.
There were many clans in Mande,
And their history comes from there.
They are the ones who fought in the Mande war.
65 You can see that I won’t talk about that story until I finish the first one.
They are the ones who fought in the Mande war.

39 Fanigbè: This seems to be Wata Koko’s wife.

55 Faan (Fuhan): *faan* are blacksmith’s bellows.

[The Diomani ancestor in Sibi]

- After the Mande war finished,
After the problem with Mani Sumawolo was ended,
He [Kaman] went to his ancestors village, Sibi.
70 The first town our ancestor established was Tabu and Sibi.
Our ancestor...
That was the first town that he founded when he came down.

[THE DIOMANI IN JÈMU]

[The Diomani move to Jèmu]

- He sired a son after that happened.
His name was Sumata.
75 He sired a son named Mafinjan.
He left Mande after the war.
He went up to Kouroussa.
He went and settled in Kouroussa.
He left Kouroussa and went to Toron.
80 Then he went down to Wasolon.
He went down to Jèmu.
He settled in Jèmu.
He met the Konè people when he went to Jèmu.
The Konè who went to Kouroussa after the war went on to Jèmu.
85 Those were the people he met.
The Kromah came and met the Konè.
The Kromah met the Konè there.
Our ancestor met them there.
Our ancestor got married there.

[Sumata, Makula Daba Foloba, Kònsaba, and Foningama]

- 90 He sired a child named Sumata.
Sumata got married there after he was born.
The person he married was the daughter of the Kamè,
Makula Dama Foloba [Kromah].
He is the one who married Tumaningèmè's daughter.
95 He arranged for his son [Sumata] to marry his [Tumaningèmè's] daughter
[Makula Dama].

74 Sumata: Sumaka in Vase Kamara. Sumaka may be a corruption of Silamaka, one of the supposed early *funé* ancestors (Conrad 1995).

75 Mafinjan: 'tall (*jan*) black (*fin*) mother (*ma*).'

81 Jèmu: = Diemou.

92 Makula Dama: see line 390. Kamè: = Kromah or a Kromah lineage.

That is what Sumata did.
 Sumata sired five sons.
 Kònsaba was the first child.
 Fanyala was the next.
 100 Foningama was the third.
 Kònsama was the fourth.
 Kònsatu was next to him.
 That is how they are all linked.

[Foningama' s youth]

Foningama became very famous and well-liked.
 105 He was handsome and strong.
 He was more handsome than any other man.
 He was well-liked.
 His father loved him.
 His father arranged for him to get married.
 110 He married one of the Talawole children.
 Sumata gave her to his son [Foningama].
 She born a son for him.
 The son she born for him...
 After that happened...
 115 Foningama was loved by his father.

[Foningama foils the murder plot in Jèmu]

Everyone gathered together and said,
 "This man's father loves him too much.
 We must deal with Foningama."
 They went and dug a big hole in the house.
 120 They covered the hole with a sheep skin and set a stool over it.
 They said, "We can't give a seat to the Diomani,
 We can't give a seat to the Diomani."
 That is where that saying originated.
 They dug that big hole and said,
 125 "Let's punish this man since his father loves him."
 They went and sat down on the ground.

97 Kònsaba: 'hunger (*kon*) off (*sa*) doer (*ba*);' = 'person who stops hunger.' Kunsaba: = 'three (*saba*) big heads (*kun*).'

99 Fanyala: 'bellows (*fan*) with power (*gala*):' = a 'powerful blacksmith?' Fènjala: = 'lion (*jala*) things (*fèn*).' *fanya* also means 'to lie.'

101 Kònsama: 'hunger (*kôn*) [during] rainy season (*sama*).' *Sama* also = 'elephant' or 'pulling.' Was Kònsama named after the climate conditions in which he was born? Does his name indicate some of the difficult times that the Kamara faced as they migrated south?

- They said, "Foningama, you are the *masa* if God agrees and you agree.
Come and sit down."
Foningama said, "Ah, must I sit on the stool when all of you are sitting on the
ground?"
- 130 Han, he did not know that they had put the stool on the edge of the skin where
the hole was dug.
Foningama became suspicious.
Before that happened, his father, his ancestor...
His father had given him the gold-gold-gold bracelet that was on his wrist.
He, the child, put it on his wrist.
- 135 Foningama - èh-èh-èh...
He had also given his Diomani hat to his son,
But his [Foningama's] wife had it.
Foningama's wife was carrying his child on her back at that time.
He approached the edge of the skin with fear.
- 140 He stepped on the skin and his foot began to fall into the hole.
His gold bracelet that was on his wrist fell into the hole as he stopped himself
from falling into the hole.
[He angrily said,] "Is this why you people called me?
Why did you people call me for that?"
Nobody could defeat him in a fight.
- 145 Nobody could defeat him doing anything.
He got up and stood at the doorway and angrily said,
"Is this why you called me?
You never told me why you called me.
Is this why you called me?"
- 150 He went to his wife.
He took the hat from his wife that his father had given to him.
He said, "I am going."
My son should follow me after he grows up.
I am going."
- 155 Foningama loaded his baggage and took his razor to cut his hair.
He took it and went to Wolodu.

[Foningama moves to Mau with Nakumayala Kuyateh]

When he went to Wolodu,
The Konè child who was there was [long pause]... Nakumayala.

159 Nakumayala: 'my (*na*) speech (*kuma*)' - *yala/jala* (see Vase Kamala, App. 7.6, l. 1080-1102). Nakumayala is a variant of Nyanuman (Jakuma) Duga; he is often said to have been Sunjata's father's bard. Nyanuman Duga's son was Bala Fasseke. In one version of the Sunjata epic that combines Nyanuman and Bala Fasseke, Nyankuman was sent to Sumaworo by Sunjata's step-brother Dankaran Tuman who wanted to rid the Manden of Sunjata's influence after Sunjata went into exile. Sumaworo rushed to his chamber one time when he heard his sacred *bala* or xylophone being played. He thought that the music was so good that only a *jina* could play it, but instead found Nyanuman Duga. After Nyanuman Duga flattered Sumaworo by singing his praises, Sumaworo changed his name to Bala Fasseke Kuyateh

- 160 The child of Nakumayala was...
 They are the ones called the Kuyateh.
 His ancestor's name was Nakumayala,
 But Mani Sumawolo is the one who took that name from him.
 He said, "That is not the name of a human being."
 165 They are the Kuyateh."
 Some of his children went and settled in Wolodu.
 Foningama went and met them there.
 He asked "What is happening?"
 [Foningama said,] "Trouble is following me and I want to come here.
 170 Do you want me to explain?"
 He [Kuyateh] replied, "You do not need to say anything about yourself."
 He had sired six sons.
 He said, "My sons and I have come so we can be adopted.
 If you say that you want us to go anywhere, we will go."
 175 This is when Foningama and the man went to Mau and settled.

[SUMATA AND KONSABA MOVE TO SOLONA]
 [Sumata prepares to leave Jèmu]

- Foningama's father said...
 Sumata said, "Oh, my child who I loved,
 The kind of child he was...
 Since the people of the land hate him and his brothers hate him,
 180 I am going to leave."
 Foningama's four sons - Fanyala, Kònsaba, Kònsatu...
 He said, "I am going to look for my child."
 They went to him and said,
 "You are going to the town of Koho that is situated by a mountain."
 185 You should settle there when you arrive.

[Sumata and Kònsaba settle among the Kpelle in Solona]

God agreed,
 And the old man's [Sumata's] children rose and left.
 That is where they went.

(Bird 1999:36,33-44,49; see Kouyaté, in Niane 1980:17,38-40; Bulman 1990:323,331, 343-344; Conrad 1999a:14, n. 11; Kouyaté 1987, in Conrad 1999a:186-187). Wata Mammadi Kamara similarly claimed that Sumaworo changed Nakumala's name to Kuyateh because Sumaworo did not think that Nakumala was a human being's name.

180 'I am going to leave': literally, 'I am taking my head.'

181 'Foningama's four sons': The speaker probably should have said Sumata instead of Foningama (see l. 90-93).

184 Koho: The same as Solona (Sona) in l. 201. 399-400. Solona is Sinko.

187 See lines 97-100.

- As soon as they arrived,
 190 They told the Kpelle people of Gbè why they came.
 The Kpelle lived from Wolodu and on up to Fuala and Samana.
 The Manding drove all of them from there.
 All of them were Kpelle.
 The Kpelle said, "You have come to our land."
 195 You have come to our land.
 Kònsaba, it is up to you and your father.
 The matter reaches you and your father.
 Anyone can live in this land.
 Anyone who wants to settle in this land must bring a cow.
 200 A sacrifice must be given to the mountain."
 That happened in Solona.
 That is the law.
 Foningama - èh, Kònsaba said, "We agree on the behalf of my father."
 He said, "We agree on behalf of my father."
 205 Then they brought a cow and gave it to the Kpelle.
 They [the Kpelle] sacrificed it to the mountain.
 The name of that mountain's *genie* was Tintinba.
 That *genie*'s name was Tintinba.
 They gave the items to the mountain which overlooks Koho.
 210 That is where they settled.

[Kònsaba seeks help from a *mori*]

- Kònsaba saw a *mori* one day when he was in Koho.
 He asked the *mori* man...
 He told him that he wanted him to do some work for him.
 [He said,] "I would like you to work for me so that none of Foningama's
 followers who pursue me will make me fail."
 215 The *mori* said, "I agree,
 But I can't do the work.
 I will send for another *mori* who will do the work.
 I am not able to do that work.
 Bring a young a white fish.

[The *mori* summons Mori Kanè Sumawolo from Tumutu]

- 220 He caught a young white fish.

196 Sumata was apparently too old or had already died, so Kònsaba represented the family.
 203 'We agree': literally, 'Our ten fingers are under it.'
 207 Tintinba: 'big (*ba*) sifter (*tintin*)?' Such as, sift or divine to see if a stranger is coming, and/or
 if one should live there? The *genie* or *jina* was a territorial spirit that was believed to protect the mountain.
 214 This is a unique statement that Vase Kamala did not say. See line 338.
 219 'a young white fish' (*jèègbèdèn*): literally, 'a child (*dèn*) [of a] white (*gbè*) fish (*jèè*).'

- He wrote on a paper.
 He put it into the mouth of the young white fish and place it in the river.
 He told the young white fish, "Go call a *mori* in Tumutu."
 He was a Sumawolo.
- 225 That is where it came from.
 The young white fish swam all the way up the river.
 The *mori* who he was calling was laying down dreaming,
 And he saw a young white fish coming to him.
 He [woke up and] said, "A young white fish is coming."
- 230 A young white fish is coming.
 The young white fish that is coming has a message for me."
 The towncrier called the people who fish at daybreak and said,
 "Please bring me any young white fish that you catch."
 The young white fish swam stopped at the entrance [of town],
- 235 And lay where the water is clear.
 The people who were fishing saw the young white fish with the *lisimu* in its
 stomach.
 They took it to the *mori* and said,
 "Here is the young white fish that we caught."
 He told them to open its stomach.
- 240 They opened the young white fish's stomach and saw the *lisimu* on inside.
 The *mori* opened the *lisimu*.
 [The message read,] "Kònsaba has said that you should go to Koho.
 He asked you to work for him.
 He wants you to work for him."
- 245 Kanè said, "I will not go alone.
 I will not go alone.
 I will not go alone.
 Someone else must go with me.
 I will not going alone.
- 250 Someone else must go with me.
 That will be Musa.
 Va Musa will go with me."
 They put Musa with him, Musa Baayo.
 They put Musa Baayo with him.
- 255 They traveled for nine months before they reached Koho.

[Kònsaba gives a red pan, gold, and an albino girl to be sacrificed]

When they reached Koho he said to Kònsaba, "I have come."
 "Are you the one who called me?"
 He said, "Yes, I called you."

232 'town crier' (*kèlèmajiakè*): literally, 'the person (*kè*) who cries (*kèlè*) to show (*jia*).'

- I want you to work for me.
 260 I want you to work for my ancestors and my descendants.
 I want you to work for my children.
 I want you to work for my grandchildren.
 I do not want any of my people to become lazy.
 From here to where the sun sets,
 265 My people should prosper.
 If you see the Diomani go anywhere,
 We will be with you.
 We will be with you.”
 That happened a long time ago.
 270 It did not start here.
 They started it,
 Even from the time of Mande.
 When that happened the *mori* man said,
 “If you want me to do the work,
 275 You should bring one red pan,
 And you should also bring one albino girl.
 You should bring them.
 I will do the work for you after you bring them.”
 Kònsaba quickly brought them.
 280 He brought the albino girl,
 And he brought the gold.
 The *mori* did the work,
 And those things went into ground.
 The girl and the pan disappeared.
 285 The people of Gbè gathered together and said,
 “We don’t understand this work.”
 The people of Gbè gathered together.
 They said, “The *mori* did the work,
 But we do not see any result.
 290 That is why we don’t understand.
 He did a big job but we don’t see the result.”
 Kònsaba said, “No, relax.
 The *mori* did the work,
 And the result won’t come quickly.
 295 Just wait.”
 They said, “We don’t accept that.
 He should give our things back to us.”

259 ‘work for my ancestors’: = honor ancestors; related to ancestral spirits and what they can do for living people?

263 ‘lazy’: *fōliya*.

276 ‘albino girl’ (*mòòlingbè simbilì*): literally, ‘white (*gbè*) human being (*mòò*) girl (*simbilì*).’

292 ‘relax’: literally, ‘hold your heart.’

- They told the *mori*.
 He said, "I agree."
 300 He did some more work,
 And the pan, the gold, and the albino girl came out of the ground.
 [He said,] "Here is what you gave me."
 The people became ashamed,
 So they begged the *mori* man.
 305 The *mori* man agreed.
 He was an old *mori* man.
 He said, "I agree.
 You people of Gbè,
 I will not tell you anything.
 310 If you people want money..."
 He said, "You people will never get money,
 Even if you are patient and travel around the world."
 The people of Gbè remain in that same condition.
 That is what God did.
 315 They begged the *mori* man.
 He did the work again and all of the items went back into the ground.

[Kònsaba rewards Mori Kanè with the goods from a market]

- Then he told Kònsaba that he was going to go.
 Kònsaba said, "I agree.
 Tomorrow, when that happens, I will pay you.
 320 I will take you to a place that is full."
 The youth surrounded the place after the place was filled.
 He said, "I will pay the *mori* all kinds of things today."
 He left the place and said,
 "You, old *mori* man, this is your pay."
 325 He took all of those things and gave them to the *mori*.
 He escorted him part of the way down the road.

[Mori Kanè gives palm nuts to Kònsaba]

- The *mori* put his hand in his pocket and pulled out a palm nut.
 He said, "This is your gift."
 No palm trees were in that area before that time.
 330 There were no palm trees from there to the ocean.
 The old *mori* gave the seed to the man.
 He took the palm nut and gave it to Kònsaba.

320 'a place': a 'market' in some narratives.

322 'all kinds of things' (*bilafin*): including cows, goats and chickens etc.

327 'palm nut' (*gbèkolo*): or 'palm wine tree.' Tap trees to make palm wine.

- Kònsaba planted it,
 And big birds took the seeds and scattered them.
 335 There were no palm trees in the area before that time.
 Kònsaba- èh, the old man was the one who gave the seeds to Kònsaba.
 Kònsaba went and planted them.
 Kònsaba sent some of the seeds to Foningama in Musadu.
 That is why you see palm trees in this area.
 340 That is how palm trees are in the area from here to the ocean.
 None of those palm trees were in the country before that time.
 Kònsaba gave a farewell gift to the *mori*.

[Musa Baayò settles in Koho Baayò]

- Then the *mori* and Musa Baayò started to walk on the road.
 When they reached the center of the road,
 345 The *mori* man told Musa Baayò,
 “Cut part of this cane that is in my hand.”
 He said, “Cut part of this cane and throw it away.
 You should go and settle where it lands.”
 Musa Baayò cut part of the cane and threw it.
 350 It landed somewhere.
 He said to Musa Baayò, “You should settle there.”
 He said, “What?
 Should I settle in a place where there is no water?
 Should I settle in a place where there is no water?”
 355 The *mori* blessed the man and a river formed.
 They call it Koho Baayò’s place.
 That is where Baayò settled - Koho.
 The name of the town is Koho, Koho.
 That is where they settled.
 360 They said, “Koho Baayò.”
 That is where he settled.
 God made it possible for him to settle there.
 The old *mori* went to his village.
 The old *mori* went to his village.
 365 Wii, ooh - the old *mori* went to his town.

334 ‘big birds’ (*konobalu*): ‘big (*ba*) bird (*konolu*).’

338 ‘Kònsaba sent some of the seeds to Foningama in Musadu’: Vase Kamara said that after Foningama grew the palm seeds, birds picked seeds from the trees that Foningama planted and spread the seeds all over the land (App. 7.6). This cliché seems to symbolically show the land that the Kamara later claimed (see l. 214).

357 Koho: = Koro.

363 ‘old *mori*’ (*mori kòlò*): These two words were hard to hear. The speaker could have said Mori Kanè. Hence, Mori Kanè went to Ferentela.

[KONSABA'S PLOT AGAINST FONINGAMA FOILED IN SOLONA]

[Fanyala Kromah of Musadu looks for Foningama]

Foningama was in Mau when that happened.

Foningama was in Mau at that time.

Foningama had not come at that time.

He had not come.

370 Foningama's uncle was living in Musadu while that was happening.

Makula Dama Foloba's brothers named Fanyala and Fakoli...

Fanyala said to his brother...

He said, "One of our nephews who used to be here whose name was
Foningama..."

He said, "We don't know where he is,

375 And they have told us that he may become a *masa* in this part of the world.

We don't...

We don't know where he went.

Let me...

Let me go and look for him."

380 His brother replied, "What?

You are going to look for him?"

The *masa* who founded this place is Zo Musa Kòma.

Are you going to look for another *nyana* and put them together?

We can't put both of them in the same place.

385 Don't bring him."

He said, "Eh, that is our nephew's child.

I am going to look for him."

That is when he got up and went and found Foningama.

[Fanyala takes Foningama and the Kuyateh *jèli* to Kònsaba]

Foningama was in Mau at that time.

390 He and the Kuyateh - the *jèli*'s ancestor, were in Mau.

His uncle said, "I have come to take you back."

Foningama said, "Okay, I agree."

If you don't want to go to your father's home,

You can go to your uncle's home.

395 All of them had gone and settled there.

You remember that there was a problem when he left Jèmu.

"Ahan, let's go."

He went before...

371 Fanyala: = Fènyabu in Vase Kamala's narrative. Fakoli: this is a praise name, like Tumaningèmè (see l. 94).

380 'Are you going to look for another *nyana* and put them together': *Nyana* is a masked dancer which symbolizes power and authority. Fakoli or Tumaningèmè was saying that the two men (Zo Musa and Foningama) were of such forceful stature that they could not peacefully co-exist.

- His uncles said, "They went to Solona to his older brother.
 400 When they went to Solona he explained why he came.
 He said, "I came.
 I brought your young brother so both of you can live together."
 He [Kònsaba] said, "Okay, I agree.
 Let's call everyone tomorrow."
 405 When everyone assembled at daybreak, he said,
 "They have brought my little brother to Mau.
 His name is Foningama,
 And he has come to settle.
 My uncle went to get him.
 410 But a man can't settle in this land unless the ground is asked.
 Let's ask the land before we [let him] settle here."
 They said, "We agree."

[The land tells Foningama to go to Koniya]

- They dug a big hole that night after that happened,
 And lowered a drummer inside.
 415 They lowered a drummer inside.
 All of them said, "You can't settle in a land unless you ask the land."
 They all assembled together at dawn.
 Fanyala explained the purpose of his trip,
 And the *jèli* [Kuyateh] interpreted for them.
 420 They said, "Nobody can settle on this land unless they ask the land."
 We will leave the land issue to you."
 [Kònsaba said to the land,] "Foningama has come,
 And our uncle has brought Foningama so he can settle here.
 Will this place be good for him if he settles here?"
 425 He had told the drummer,
 "If I ask, 'Will this place will be alright?,'
 Don't beat the drum.
 If I ask, 'Will this place be alright from here up to Mau?,'
 Don't beat the drum.
 430 If I ask, 'Will it be good if he leaves and goes to down to the region of Koniya?'
 Then you can beat the drum.
 The crowd will gather there."
 He [the drummer] said, "I agree."
 [Kònsaba said,] "Let me ask the ground."
 435 The drummer was under the ground at that time.

403 'I agree': literally, 'my ten fingers are under it.'

416 "'You can't settle in a land unless you ask the land'": A reference to territorial spirits?

419 'The *jèli* interpreted for them': Kuyateh repeated what Kònsaba and/or the land said, even though Foningama understood what Kònsaba was saying. This is part of formal speech making.

He said, "You, land.
 May God's will be your will.
 A man can not settle on land unless he gives something to the land.
 You can not settle on land unless you give something to the land."
 440 You land, my uncle...
 Eh, my younger brother came from Mau.
 If they stay here,
 Will I gain something through them,
 Or will he gain something through me?"
 445 "Du," "du," "du," "du" - the drum did not beat [like this].
 "This Foningama...
 We came from the same mother.
 Will it be good for him if he travels down?
 Will it be good for him if he goes down?
 450 Will it be good for him if he goes down to Koniya?"
 "Du," "du," "du," "du."
 "Ahan, the drum talked!
 Will it be good for him if he goes to down to Koniya?
 Ahan, the drum talked!
 455 Ahan, my father.
 Do you hear?
 The land said that you should go down to Koniya,
 And that you will prosper there."
 May God bless us,
 460 And may God give us good health and a long life.
 Let's sleep and wait.
 You can go early in the morning."

[An old woman uncovers Kònsaba's plot to kill Foningama]

An old woman was sitting on the veranda.
 They later gathered together secretly.
 465 [They said,] "They will rule us tomorrow if we leave them like this.
 Let's do something.
 Let's bring the *kòma* outside,
 And then we can kill them: Foningama, his uncle, and his *jèli*.
 Let's bring the *kòma* outside."
 470 An old woman was sitting on the veranda.
 An old woman was sitting on the veranda.
 She heard what they said.
 They had already sent a message to them at that time which said,
 "You people sleep here.

438 'give something' (*du sò*): essentially giving a sacrifice?

457 'down': Koniya is northwest of Mau, not down (south).

- 475 You can go at daybreak.”
 They talked about the *kòma* when the old woman was present.
 She called Fanyala and said,
 “Are you sitting down?
 The *kòma* that is coming this evening is your *kòma*.
 480 They will kill you and your uncle and your *jèli* today.
 You better leave and reduce your distance [to your next destination].
 Fanyala said, “We agree.
 We understand.”

[Foningama and the Kuyateh *jèli* rescued]

- Fanyala went and lifted Foningama on his shoulders in the evening.
 485 Then he went a ways up the road.
 The other people were praising and encouraging the *kòma*.
 He told Foningama, “Let’s go.”
 He said, “What!
 Do you want me to leave my *jèli* behind?
 490 I can’t do that.”
 If you see that there is a *sanangu* between the Diomani and Kuyateh,
 That is how it began.
 That is what he did.
 “Should I leave the person behind who came with me?
 495 I can’t do that.
 You must first go for my *jèli*.”
 Fanyala went and brought him.
 He wrapped a mat around him and lifted him onto his shoulders.
 Now, the *kòma*’s attendants came by and asked,
 500 “What?
 Who are you?”
 He said, “We are going to sleep over there.
 I left my load there.
 We are going to stay there.”
 505 They said, “Okay.”
 The *kòma* was making noises when that happened.
 Fanyala went and set the *jèli* down near Foningama.
 The *jèli* said to Foningama, “You are not a good man.
 You and I came together,

486 *kòma*: Manding and Kpelle?

491 *sanangu*: The speaker identified this as a *lasili* relationship in line 514.

503 ‘load’: Fanyala wrapped Foningama’s *jèli* in a mat, making Fanyala appear like he was just carrying his belongings from one place to another. On the possible significance of mats in this context, see the interview with Boakai Yamah in Appendix 7.17c.

506 ‘making sounds’: literally, *kasi*, ‘to cry.’

- 510 But you fled from the enemy and ran away.”
 He [Foningama] said, “Didn’t you come?”
 That is why they say, “Foningama and his old mat *jèli*.”
 That is where it began.
 There is a *lasili* between us and the Kuyateh.

[ZO MUSA KÒMA IN MUSADU AND ZOTA]
 [Zo Musa Kòma founds Musadu]

- 515 They left after that happened,
 And entered Musadu at night.
 Fakoli had founded the town before they came.
 Eh, èh, Zo Musa Kòma...
 Zo Musa Kòma was the one who founded the town.
 520 Zo Musa Kòma, however, did not found the town by himself,
 But he did it because of Mori Kanè.
 He was his fisherman.
 There was a river there called the Dion when he went.
 He went and caught fish there.
 525 He [Zo Musa] took them to his father [Mori Kanè] when he caught the fish.
 Musadu had not been built at that time.
 Musadu had not been built at that time.
 He said to the old man, “I am going back and forth too often.
 This is hard for me.
 530 It is a long ways between this place and the creek where I catch fish.
 I am going to build one small shelter there along the road.
 When I sleep there and dry the fish,
 Then I will bring them back to you during the week.”
 Mori said, “I agree.
 535 Hii - Musa, you are with me.
 What village will you find that is not mine?
 I agree.”
 Zo Musa went and founded the small village.

510 ‘enemy’: *julu*.

512 ‘old mat *jèli*’ (*dèvè kulun jèli*): ‘old (*kulun*) mat (*dèvè*) *jèli*.’

517 ‘founded’: The word is (*tè*), which literally means ‘to cut.’

521 Mori Kanè: helped Zo Musa, and/or authorized what he was doing. Kanè was Zo Musa’s master (l. 596) who gave medicine to Zo Musa.

523 Dion: The speaker said Jòn.

525 ‘his father’: = Mori Kanè.

531 ‘small shelter’ (*todani*): = ‘small (*ni*) shelter (*toda*).’

535 ‘What village will you find that is not mine?’ Musa’s slave owner, a Kanè in this account, was claiming the ownership of Musadu even though Musa was the founder. Musa’s owners are often identified as Kromah (Ch. 4).

536 ‘village’: *so*.

- Anyone coming from up would say, "I am going to sleep at Musa's place."
 540 I am going to sleep at Musa's place.
 Anyone coming from down would say, "I am going to sleep at Musa's place."
 Anyone coming going down would say, "I am going to sleep at Musa's place."
 When Musa caught fish,
 He would take them to the old man.
 545 The old man's wife said, "You, *mori* man.
 Aye, this is a problem.
 The person who is living with us has established a village.
 The village is becoming well known to other people,
 And we are still living in the wilderness.
 550 We must move close to Musa."
 That is what they told Musa.
 He said, "My land, the town that I established,
 Aren't I with you people?"
 That is why the old man left and joined Musa in Musadu.

[Zo Musa's *saafèlè*]

- 555 The *molilu* made a *saafèlè* for Zo Musa Kòma.
 That is what swallowed young sheep and human babies.
 Women at that time used to bathe their babies and lay them on an old mat...
 Hii, hii - in the center of the yard.
 It used to swallow babies.
 560 It used to swallow babies.

[Foningama travels to Musadu]

- Now, when Foningama came,
 When Foningama came,
 Foningama's *mori* said...
 "Hey," they said, "Foni - Foningama has come."
 565 His uncles called a meeting.
 He said, "We have come.
 I brought my nephew.
 I brought him from the land.
 We have come here.
 570 The owner of the town is Zo Musa Kòma.
 What can we do?"

549 'wilderness': *tolu* or *tu*. Heavier 'forest' is *wa* or *wo*.

[The *molilu* destroy Zo Musa's *saafèlè*]

- The *molilu* said, "That will not be difficult."
The *molilu* who were there were the Dukule,
The people of Nyèla,
575 And the Fofana.
They did the *mori* work.
They said, "We will spoil what he depends on.
That was the thing that swallowed toads.
It swallowed many-many things.
580 They did some work.
They put something that they made in the mouth of a frog and put it in the corner.
Zo Musa Kòma's *saafèlè* went...
The *molilu* were the ones who made Zo Musa Kòma's *saafèlè*.
He was his slave.
585 It used to bark.
It swallowed the frog when it went into the corner.
Then it fell down.
Zo Musa heard the people saying, "The *saafèlè* fell down!
The *saafèlè* fell down!"
590 Zo Musa said, "I will not stay in this land anymore.
The thing that I was depending on is ruined.
They have taken the thing that I was using!"

[Zo Musa curses Koniya]

- Zo Musa rose and said, "Aha, you people of Koniya are driving me away.
You are driving me away today.
595 I am the one who was in this land and founded this town,
And you are driving me away.
You have seen a new stranger.
By God's help,
By God's help,
600 This land now,
For now and forever,
God will make strangers become more admired than citizens in this land.

572 The speaker seems to have been describing a duel between the Kanè *mori* who made Zo Musa's talisman and the Dukule, Fofana and Nyèlaka *molilu* who worked to defeat it. Yet, as is in the case of the Vase Kamala traditions, it seems likely that Zo Musa is shown to have partly gained his power in this setting through a *mori* to Islamicize the narrative.

581 'something': a *lisimu* or talisman in other accounts.

584 'slave': *jòn*.

586 'corner': *dooda*.

602 'admired' (*kamadiya*): implies sweetness, *diya* ('sweet').

The strangers will become more important in this land.
 When you see strangers become famous here,
 605 That will be the reason.”
 That is where the saying came from.
 The people will believe a stranger when he lies,
 But if a citizen tells the truth they will say,
 “Don’t pay any attention to him.
 610 Anything that a stranger does will happen quickly.”
 That is how that saying began.
 Zo Musa Kòma went down.
 He said, “I am going down.
 Look at what you people of Koniya did to me.
 615 I established the town and then the stranger came.
 Foningama came,
 And you are driving me out because of him.
 I am going.”

[Zo Musa’s departure from Musadu]

Zo Musa Kòma rose.
 620 He said to his wife, “Let’s go.”
 His wife’s name was Jòò.
 He went and stood along the bank of the river and said, “I am going.”
 His wife became afraid.
 [Zo Musa said,] “I am leaving Foningama’s bad *molilu* today.

[Zo Musa goes to Zota]

625 *Kanikoke.*”
 That is how Kanikolela mountain got its name.
 May God save us.
 That is how Kanikolela mountain got its name.
 They left that place.
 630 He went and settled there.
 He took out his snuff can and put some snuff in his mouth.
 Then he forgot his snuff can [when they left].
 [Later] he said, “I forgot my snuff can.”
 The Kpelle call it *gbèi*.
 635 He went back after they left.

621 *Jòò*: this is special water like *nasi* that non-Muslims and some Muslims make that can be used for good or bad reasons.

The interview goes to the second side of the tape. The quality of the second side is not as good as the first.

634 *gbèi* (or *gboi*): The Maniyakā word for ‘snuff’ (tobacco) is *bòò*.

It is called the Gbèi river.
 It marks the boundary between Moana and Gbana,
 And it flows and joins Foloduba.
 Foloduba also flows and goes with the Gbeiba.
 640 That is the river that is named Gbèi.
 He left and went to the top of the mountain near Boola.
 He said, "I am going down the mountain."
 It's name is Jeiwu.
 That is the mountain that overlooks Boola.
 645 He left Boola and went to Duyaladu.
 He passed that place and went and founded his own town.
 The name of that town is Zota.
 Zo Musa Kòma got up and settled in his town.

[Zo Musa's *nyana* and the Kpelle in Zota]

If you see *nyana* in Loma areas and Kpelle areas...
 650 The Kpelle established that town.
 The Loma never brought it out.
 The Kpelle brought it out.
 The Kpelle brought the *nyana* out.
 The *nyana*...
 655 The leading *nyana* in the region of N'Zerekore comes from Zota.
 If there was a *nyana* that wanted to come out in the N'Zerekore area,
 And Zo Musa's *nyana* did not come out,
 Then the other *nyana* would not come out.
 When Zo Musa would tell the other *nyanalú* to sit down,
 660 They would sit down.
 The *molilu* were the ones who did the work and gave it to him.

[FONINGAMA IN MUSADU]

[Foningama prepares a *wulukèlèn* sacrifice to have children]

Foningama got married after that happened.
 Foningama married four times,
 And he had twelve sons.
 665 His twelve sons...
 The diviners told him, "Your children..."
 Only the girls will live [when they were born],
 Not the sons.

636 'Gbèi river': Other accounts say that Zo Musa left his snuff can by this river (Ch. 7).

650 'The Kpelle established that town': Maybe talking about Musa. Many Maniyaka claim that the Musa who founded Musadu was Kpelle.

666 'diviners' (*dukòòtòkè*): literally, 'men/doers (*kè*) cutting (*kòòtò*) sand/land/ground (*du*)' or 'sand cutters.'

They said, "If you want God to give you a son,
670 You must make a *wulukèlèn* sacrifice."
He made the *wulukèlèn* sacrifice.

[Foningama's *wulukèlèn* sacrifice and the *molilu*]

He made that *wulukèlèn* sacrifice and gave it to the *jèli*, Kòma Jabatè.
He was the *jèli*.
He was the one who came.
675 He was the *jèli* from that place.
He was the *jèli* when that happened.
Kòma Jabatè, hii, hii, was sitting.
Kòma Jabatè rose and went to Jan.
The four big men of Jan were the Kièlè, the Fofana, the Cissé, and the Dukule.
680 They were here.
They were here.
Kòma Jabatè rose and went to Jan.
He went to Jan.
The four persons in Jan...
685 The Kièlè ancestor, Jan Valayi Kièlè,
Offered a white horse as a sacrifice.
When they used to sacrifice a white horse,
They would put a bell around its neck and dress it well.
He [Komo Jabatè] went there and met [the ceremony].
690 The ancestor of the Dukule, Dukule Binya, came from Dukulela.
He [Dukule] said, "Give the sacrifice to me.
Give it to God and then give it to me."
Kòma Jabatè said, "I gave it to God and put it in my mouth."
They said, "One man [Dukule] said that we should give it to God and give it to
him,
695 And the other man [Jabatè] said that we should put it in his mouth.
Who should we give it to?
Why can't we give it to the person who said,
'Aye, put it in my mouth?'"
So they took it and gave it to Kòma Jabatè.

672 Kòma: This name was difficult to hear. It could also be Kromah or Kona.

685 Jan Valaye Kièlè: the name of the town where Valaye Kièlè (Kuyateh) lived was added to his name. 'white horse': *sogbè*.

688 'bell': *wèling*. 'dress it well': they placed a nice saddle over a beautifully designed carpet which was laid on the back of the horse.

693 'Give it to God and put it in my mouth': As a *jèli*, Kòma Jabatè was expected to say something in public even if it was foolish. The speaker appears to be saying that even though Dukule's request was more sincere than Jabatè's, the people surprisingly picked Jabatè to get the sacrifice.

700 He mounted the horse and went to Musadu.

[Kona Jabatè gives Foningama's *wulukèlèn* sacrifice to the *molilu*]

Foningama had already made his *wulukèlèn* sacrifice by that time.

He [Foningama] said, "Who am I going to give it to?

Which *mori* am I going to give it to?"

Kòma Jabatè said, "Give it to some *molilu* who I know."

705 I know some *molilu* who can make leaves fall off of a living tree when they swear,
And who can make the leaves grow on a dead tree when they pray.
I know those *molilu*."

He took the [*wulukèlèn*] sacrifice and gave it to Kòma Jabatè.

He took it to Jan.

710 The four men of Jan were the Fofana, the Kièlè, the Cissé, and the Dukule.

This is how they came in the land.

This is how they came in the land.

He went and met them in Jan.

He told them, "Didn't I tell you the other day that you should put the sacrifice
in my mouth?

715 Eh-èh, here is Foningama's *wulukèlèn* sacrifice."

Hii, hii, one hundred of each item.

That is what the old people used to call *wulukèlèn*.

One hundred of each item.

One hundred of each item.

720 That is what Foningama gave as a sacrifice -

Anything that human beings can think of.

One hundred of each were gathered at one place.

Kòma Jabatè went and gave it to the *molilu* in Jan.

The *molilu* came and said, "Let's go and bless it."

[The Fofana ancestor summons Alikali Cissé to help bless Foningama's sacrifice]

725 The Fofana ancestor said, "We are going to make the blessing.

I can't leave my *mori*.

I must go call them."

If you see that the Cissé came by way of the people of Sianò,

That is the reason.

730 "I have to...

I must call my *mori*."

They did the work.

700 'mounted the horse': this was the same horse that was used for the sacrifice. The white horse that was offered as a sacrifice was not killed.

708 Kòma Jabatè apparently had two sacrifices: the white horse and Foningama's *wulukèlèn* sacrifice.

717 *wulukèlèn*: means 'one (*kèkè*) thousand (*wulu*)' (l. 717-19).

- They tied it [a *lisimu*] under its [the crawfish's] arm and put it into the river.
The crawfish was tired when it reached Bakòngò,
735 The crawfish went and put one of its arms out like this.
Then the rice bird went and landed on it.
It grabbed it and pulled it under the water.
A fish took it when it went under the water.
The crocodile went and swallowed it.
740 The *mori* was dreaming when he slept.
He said, "Aha."
He said, "I have been called."
He said, "I have been called."
He said, "The thing that is under the river is here."
745 After that happened...
At daybreak he called the divers.
He said, "Go under the water.
Something is there that has a message for me."
When they dove under the water...
750 They saw the crocodile when they went under the water.
They caught the crocodile and brought it out.
They cut open the crocodile's stomach and found the spider inside.
The cut open the stomach of the spider and found the crawfish holding the rice
bird like this.
He found the *lisimu* under the bird's arm.
755 The person who loosened the *lisimu* was the ancestor of the Cissé.
The message read, "Ah, they have called me to come to Jan now.
I have been called.
I have been called.
I am going."
760 He pulled the skin out and shook it.
Then he laid it on the river,
And his people sat on it and went to Jan.
Solomani Siyan was standing by the river bank when they reached.
"Eh," he said, "we have been waiting for you for a long time.
765 We are going.
We waited for you for a long time,
And we were about to go.
They give us their sacrifice and we are going.
That is why we called you."

733 'under its arm' (*kaba kòlò*): 'under (*kòlò*) arm (*kaba*).'

734 Bakòngò: means 'behind/across (*kòngò*) the river (*ba*).' 'crawfish': *baya*.

736 'rice bird' (*kòò*): Assistants said that this is a bird with a yellow chest that makes nests in palm trees.

738 'spider': *taling* (*talè*).

746 'divers': *sòmòing*:

763 Solomani: could also be Folomani or Famai.

770 He said to them, “Ah, I have come.”
God made it possible for his people who were there to come together.
They came after that happened.

[The blessing of Foningama’s *wulukèlèn* sacrifice]

When they went to Musadu for Foningama’s *wulukèlèn* sacrifice,
God accepted the blessing that they gave to Foningama.
775 That is the blessing that is on us today.
They can say, “This is how it happened.
This is how it happened.
Eh, our blessing is not finished yet.
Our ancestor’s blessing is with us.”
780 That is why people say, “We are with you.
We are with you.”
That is the reason.

[*Molilu* waiting for banana seeds]

Foningama gave one banana to the Kièlè man and the Fofana man at daybreak
after that happened.
He took one banana and gave it to the Dukule man.
785 He took another one and gave it to the Cissé man.
They said, “Eh, the banana that the man gave us is sweet,
But it does not have a seed and we are looking for the seed.”
If you see them still living in this land,
That is the reason.
790 They never returned.
They are still looking for the banana seed.
Foningama said, “I agree.
The banana seed is coming.
You can come [get the seed] when the banana seeds come.”
795 If you see them living spread out all over this land,
That is the reason.
May God bless us and look at us with mercy.
Amen.
May God give us long life.

773-82 The Diomani are proud. When you see many people following a Diomani, that is the result of the blessing. Bangali Kamara said that the Diomani call Foningama - *chèmòògò*, ‘old (*gòlò*) man (*chè*) person (*mòò*).’

783-799 Some associated this ‘banana’ seed story with the Sware and the founding of Nionsamoridu (Ch. 7).

[Foningama's sixteen children]

- 800 Foningama settled when that happened,
And Foningama sired sixteen children.
He became wealthy.
He sired sixteen children after the blessing.
He had sired his first child in Jèmu.
805 I already talked about that earlier today.
He had one child there.
He sired sixteen children there [in Musadu].
Those sixteen children...

[The twelve laws of Musadu]

- He said, "No *masa* can make a sacrifice.
810 No *masa* can just settle in a land.
You have to pass some laws."
He said, "The first law is this:
You will be punished if you call someone a 'bastard.'
You will be punished if you tell someone, 'I will cut your butt.'
815 You will be punished if you beat someone in public."
He counted them.
There were twelve laws.
"If you attack the market...
We will punish anyone who attacks the market.
820 I will punish that person and kill that person.
If any chief in his land does not punish a person who does that,
God will punish that chief."
Those were the laws that Foningama made.

[Foningama executes four sons for breaking the market law]

- One of his sons broke a law after that happened.
825 He said, "People take their goods to the market.
The *morilu* take their cows to the market.
If you go and attack the market,
Consider yourself to be in a state of war [with me].
If you attack the market,
830 People will lose the things were taken during the fighting.
That is why I will kill anyone who does that."

813 'bastard': *nyòmòòdèè*.

826 The implication is that some *mori* subsidized their income by herding cattle or trading. The more wealthy *mori* sometimes used slaves or contracted labor. Jakhanke scholar-merchants like the Dukule and Cissé cited here similarly traded to supplement their incomes (see Sanneh 1989:7-9, 134-135).

830 Meaning that warriors would lose the goods that they looted during their own wars?

One of his sons did it,
And he killed that son.
Another one of his sons did it,
835 And he killed that son as well.
He killed them.

[The Fofana and the people of Nyèla substitute a cow for the Diomani]

That is what was happening.
Then the fifth son went and did the same thing.
He said, "Take him to where his brothers are lodged.
840 That is what I say.
You must love your word more than your son.
If anyone says something different to you,
You cannot change it.
The Fofana and the people of Nyèla came together.
845 They said, "We can't let this *masa* keep doing this.
He will kill all of his children if he continues to do this.
So, let's find a cow."
They found a cow and tied it to the pole where they used to execute human
beings.
Then they got up and went to the chief.
850 They said, "We are freeing him with this cow.
You must bring a cow when you do this.
You must tie a cow when you do this.
That is where the saying started that says,
"You should tie cows for the Diomani."
855 They brought the cow and said, "Whatever you have said,
Those [four of your sons] have already gone,
They have left.
Here is the one to free the rest of your children.
Please don't kill any more."
860 Foningama said, "I agree."
They say, "You must tie a cow."
That is how the cow business started.
After that happened Foningama said, "I agree."
His fifth son stopped half-way [when he was being led to be executed].

[FONINGAMA'S DESCENDANTS]
[Fènjala goes to Musadu and makes a sacrifice]

865 The child that Foningama had...

851 'when you do this': violate the law.
861 Was Foningama so angry that the people had to offer something substantial so he would cool
down.

- Fasujan was the first son he sired [in Musadu].
 Then Fanyala, who he sired in Solona, came.
 When he came Foningama said, "Eh-èh, my son has come."
 The *molilu* said, "Is this his real son?"
 870 After they argued they said, "No, this is not his real son."
 He [Foningama] said, "This is my seventeenth son.
 He is my son even if everybody else goes.
 He [Fanyala] then made his sacrifice.
 He said, "Father made the *wulukèlèn* sacrifice."
 875 I will also sacrifice one hundred cowry shells.
 I will go and establish my own yard."
 So he sacrificed one hundred cowry shells.
 He made a *wulukèlèn* sacrifice.
 No, he sacrificed one hundred cowry shells.
 880 May God bless us.
 When they came they went over there.
 They went and settled in the area of Koedu.
 May God bless us.

[Wata Mammadi Kamara's ancestors]

- When that happened...
 885 The child he sired was Kabinejan.
 He sired us.
 I am part of them.
 Every child that a person has will not necessarily sire someone else.
 Kabinejan sired us.
 890 Some of us are in Sumandu.
 Some of them went down from Musadu.
 Some of them went to this side,
 And others went to Liberia.

[Fasujan's descendants]

- Our ancestor's name was Fasejan.
 895 He had four sons.
 The first of the four sons are the people in Gbèsana.
 The people of Molidu came next.
 The people of Kalaka Gbangbunò were next to them.
 We Kèsèli are the last.
 900 [He had] four sons.

875 'cowry shell' (*kolon gèsè*): old unit of money, and used for divination.

882 Koedu: or Kòlidu.

899 Kèsèlidu: Kisidu?

We and the people of Molidu are from the same mother.
The Jabana people had one son.
The people of Bankò had one son.
We came from the same mother with them.
905 God made that possible.
When God is making something like that,
We who are talking about our ancestors,
We were not here so we can explain how everyone settled.

[The Kamara and Sayon *lasili*]

You will notice that there is a strong *lasili* between the Sayon people and us.
910 We all live here behind Nyonsamoridu.
I am going to the place that you are looking for.
We all live behind Nyonsamoridu.
They used to call that place Jakolò.
To say, "People of Jakolò,"
915 To say, "People of Jakolò,"
That did not begin here.
That Jakolò...
They and the Bangèlè people lived together at the same time.
They said, "Jakolò lives between the rivers."
920 Jakolò was **Bandè**.
God made it possible so that our ancestor went and settled there...

END OF TAPE: STORY NOT COMPLETED

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 7.38

VASE KAMALA

Date and place of Recording: date unknown, purchased in Diakolidu on 10 December 1993

Length: 664 lines

Number of story elements: 89

Transcribed by: Faliku Sanoe and Bangali Kamara (Monrovia, 1994)

Translated by: Faliku Sanoe and Bangali Kamara (Monrovia, 1994)

Checked by: Bangali Kamara and Tim Geysbeek (Monrovia, 1994) - transcript/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

I only checked this translation one time with my assistants in Liberia, so the translation needs to be checked at least one more time. This is especially true for the lines that are **bolded**.

Situation of purchase and the identity of the speaker: Although there is some question about the identity of the speaker on this tape, most of the evidence suggests that he is the same Vase Kamala who Djobba Kamara interviewed in 1985 (Appendix 7.6). I purchased this tape from a man who lived near the main mosque in Diakolidu. He had a box of sermons on cassette tapes, but this two-tape oral tradition was the only *taliku* or 'history' that he possessed. He said that the speaker on the tape was a Vase Kamara who was from Muana. Muana or Mahana is just northwest of the region of Kalagba where Vase Kamala resided; Kamala was from the town of Fombadu in Kalagba. Members of the audience also identified the speaker as a Kamala (l. 331,575).

I assumed that the speaker of this tape was Vase Kamala until one of my assistants, Amara Dole, disagreed. Amara was a kola trader who traveled throughout southeast Guinea in the mid-1980s. Amara said that he sometimes went to Fombadu, and that two men lived in Fombadu who were renown for knowing history - Kènase Kamara and Fèmu Dole. Amara said that the name of the man speaking on this tape was Kènase Kamara, and that Kènase was not Vase Kamala. My other assistants, however, thought that this was Vase Kamala's voice, and agreed that Vase and Kènase were the same person. They noted that Kènase is a form of Vase. *Kè* can be translated 'man,' and Nase could be N'Va Se - 'My father Se.' Kènase could thus means 'My father Se the man' or some variation thereof. As well-known as Vase was during those years, it seems unlikely that Amara could have gone to Fombadu and not have been told about Vase, even if Vase was not living there at the time. Returning to Guinea and replaying the tape should easily remedy this question. In the mean time, I tentatively conclude that the speaker on this tape is Vase Kamala.

The contents of this speakers' (called Kènase Kamara in this paragraph for comparative purposes) oral tradition is similar to the traditions that Vase Kamala narrated. Kènase and Vase were the only people to talk about the two sacred rocks that a Kanè cleric put over the hole in Gbèsuba after he blessed Kònsaba. They were the only persons who claimed that Fanyala became prosperous, and that he was forced to give his five sons to Kònsaba. Kènase Kamara, Wata Mammadi Kamara and Vase Kamala were also the only persons who explained how the Kanè and Baayo traveled to Gbè and blessed Kònsaba. Kènase Kamara did narrate some stories that are unique to this corpus of oral traditions. He mentioned a blessing that a Kònjejan Kamara made while the

Kamara were still in the Manden, and provided information about Fakoli's ancestors and the trips that he made to Mecca and Norasoba that none of the other speakers mentioned. The speaker of this tape also told a story about Seku Turé that is not present in the oral histories of Vase Kamara or any other speaker.

This tape comprises six major episode clusters which were spliced together. The tape begins with the later part of Samori Turé's life (l. 1531-2055), shifts to an early part of the late President Seku Touré's life (l. 2056-2284), moves to an earlier part of Samori Turé's life (l. 1531-2055), provides an account of Zo Musa's founding of Musadu and Foningama's early life (l. 401-664), discusses the earlier Kamara migrations to Musadu (l. 1-400), and concludes with an exact duplication of the Zo Musa account. This tape omits the accounts about the early portion of Samori's life, Foningama's role in Musadu, and the latter part of Seku Touré's life.

Instead of leaving the translation in this sequence, I rearranged the text in chronological order. The unusually long musical prelude before the section about the Jomani migrations to Musadu suggests that this is how the speaker would have begun one of his recordings. There are several breaks in the tape [...] where the tape recorder was turned off and on. If one desires to check the translation against the tape, or read the translation in the way that appears on the tape, they can follow the order noted in the above paragraph.

Except for one or two people who occasionally served as *namu*-sayers, the speaker was not interrupted when he spoke. The speaker did not indicate where he made this recording (or these recordings), and did not provide any information about himself. With respect to time, it seems probable that the speaker recorded this oral tradition after Seku

Turé died in April 1984 given his relatively unflattering discussion of Seku Turé. The Samori Turé and Musadu portions of the tape could have been narrated during or after Seku Turé's time. A *jiakamuso* or *jèli* woman's song about Sumawolo Kante of the Sunjata epic is played throughout most of the interview. This background music almost certainly comes from a tape recorder that was turned off and on, and lowered and softened during the interview. Vase Kamala employed this method with one of his own interviews.¹ A man and women were present during some of the interview/interviews. This is evident on two or three occasions when the audience laughed.

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¹Geysbeek/Kamara 1994.

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[JOMANI MIGRATIONS]
{Lengthy music piece about the Manding and Wolof}

[Loma exile]

- They [the Manding] have not been here as long as the Loma.
They were not strong.
God helped Islam.
God answered what they asked for,
5 And his work was accepted.
Even though the Loma were powerful and strong,
They left this place.
They went into the forest.

[Kònjejan Jomani's blessing]

- Our ancestor Kònjejan rested here.
10 They made a blessing (*duwawu*) for him here.
All of the Jomanu who were born here in the Koynyã *jamana*,
Are descendants of Konjejan.
When a bird does not have a place to sit,
It will not eat.
15 This was the blessing.
For this *jamana*,
For prosperity.
The blessing came from our ancestor,
And it succeeded.
20 They answered it and they prospered.
Then the *wiikèn* sacrifice came.
It came because,
Of you people.
I told,
25 My small brother Lusèni,
That he had been a doctor for a long time,
And had settled in many towns,
But the person who has settled in two towns can't live in two villages at the same
time.
If you put your feet in your own neck,
30 If you follow our advice,
What our father told us,
And what the other *badèn* (mother's children) are telling you,
You will surely cross the water.

10 'blessing': *duwawu*, here and in all other cases, except where indicated.

15 'blessing': *balaka* (*baraka*).

22 *wiikèn* sacrifice: of Foningama.

- May God grant that to us.
Amina.
35 This is your child.
You know, this is a town *masa*'s child.
Whether that person is a woman or a man,
He/she can be a town *masa*'s child.
We have deserted that person.
40 May God grant that to us.
Amen.

[Kònjejan sires Sumaka in Diemou]

- Kònjejan left,
And went to Jèmu,
Wuedu Jèmu,
And sired a child named Sumaka.
45 When Sumaka became a grown man...

[KROMAH MIGRATIONS]
[The Kromah ancestor goes to Mecca]

- Those Kromah,
Who were,
In the town of Misadu,
Their ancestor,
50 Fakoli...
When the Mani war was finished their ancestor went on a *hajj*.

[Fakoli Kromah goes to Norasoba]

- We will talk about that later.
When he returned from the *haji*,
He went to Nòlasoba.
55 There was a canoe called "*kuon-kuon*,"
And he took it up to the big lake,
That is there now.
The town that he built was called Nòlasoba.
All of the young Kromah in our *jamana*,
60 Their big man came from Nòlasoba.

[Fakoli Kromah's birth]

Fakoli's father's real town,

43 Wuedu: = Wolodu.
51 *hajj*: 'pilgrimage.'

- Was Yandā Wòlò,
Between Kankan and Gè.
That is where his mother delivered him.
- 65 **His mother Kasia was the daughter of Soso Chèmòò.**
Mani Sumawolo,
His young sister,
Was Kasia.
She got married to the Kromah,
- 70 In Yandā Gòlò.
The child who was born,
His name was Fakoli.

[Fakoli Kromah travels from Norasoba to Wolodu Tina]

- The child came from,
Nòlasoba.
- 75 He traveled through this *jamana*,
And went down to Hamana.
He left [Ha]mana and went to Sangalan,
Sanga Duakò,
Kulamini,
- 80 And left and went to Sòò.
From Sòò,
He went to Tina,
And then rested,
At Wuedu Tina.

[Fakoli Kromah settles near Misadu]

- 85 **He asked where Misadu was located,**
But Misadu was not established at that time.
The Kpelle still lived in that area.
When you come from Jiakòdu,
You can go to the side and pass the creek to your right.
- 90 He settled on that side of Misadu,
On the slope of the hill.
The children who he sired were,
Tumaningèmè Yabo, Yakujan,
Kanangbè [Fanangbè?] Sina, N'Va Yaagbò, Fayanbuò.
- 95 They were sent to Misadu,
Along with one woman,
Named Makua Dama.

77 Sanga Duakò: Said rapidly. Difficult to tell if this was said by one or two persons.

[Makua Dama Kromah marries Sumaka Kamara and delivers Foningama]

That Makua Dama,
Was married to Sumaka,
100 And went to Jèmu.
In Jèmu,
She born,
Kònsaba, Fanyala, Foningama, Kònsama, Kònsaku.
They were born in Jèmu.

[PLOT AGAINST FONINGAMA IN DIEMOU]
[Foningama sires Kènyala in Jèmu]

105 Foningama,
Everybody liked him,
Both men and woman.
He liked one Taawe girl.
She born a son,
110 His name was Kènyala.
He was the ancestor of our older brother.

[The people of Jèmu plot to kill Foningama]

A plot was made against Foningama.
The people said, "He is not popular for nothing,
And if we don't stop him now,
115 He will bring chaos into the *jamana*.
The house where all of them sat was called the 'big person's house.'
They went there and dug a hole.
They covered it with a skin,
And summoned him to come,
120 And sit on the skin.

[Foningama foils the plot]

He said, "Ah! All of the old men are sitting on the ground.
Should I, a small boy, sit on the skin?"
They said, "That was your ancestor's property,
Your ancestor's property."
125 He placed his foot on the edge of the skin,
And his foot began to fall into the hole.
He jumped away.

108 Taawe: a contraction of Talawole (also Traoré).

109 'girl': *singbili*. Normally considered a virgin.

110 Kènyala: = Fènyala, or Fanyala.

He went and stood at the entrance of the house.

[Sumaka gives a hat, iron bracelet and gold bracelet to Foningama]

- The Joma hat that was used for war,
130 The iron bracelet that was worn on the wrist,
[And] the bracelet that was made out of gold,
He had placed them somewhere,
And kept them from rest of his children,
And later gave them to Foningama because he liked him.
135 Eh, the bracelet fell into the hole.
It was gold.

[Foningama challenges the Diemouka]

- He stood at the door,
And asked the people,
“What do you want to do?
140 What do you people want to do to me?
If anybody thinks that he is a man,
Let him follow me.”

[Foningama instructs his wife about his son]

- That was how Foningama left.
He went to,
145 The Taawoe woman and,
Gave the Joma hat to her.
He told the woman,
“When the baby that is on your lap,
Grows up,
150 Give it to him and him to me.”

[THE KAMARA-KUYATEH BLOOD PACT]

[Foningama meets the Kuyateh *jèli*]

- When he left,
He met a *jiaka*.
He wanted to explain the story,
But the *jiaka* said,
155 “You do not need to explain because I know about the thing that is behind you.
I know that they have plotted against you,

130 ‘bracelet’: *nèè*, means ‘iron.’

142 ‘Let him follow me’: Challenging the people to fight.

Foningama.
 Let's go to my town."
 When they went to his home...
 160 He had six sons.
 He said, "God has put me and my six children,
 In Foningama's care,
 But we should not stay here.
 Let's go to Mau."

[Foningama and the Kuyateh form a blood pact in Mau]

165 That was why Foningama went to Mau.
 When they reached Mau,
 He cut Foningama's hand,
 With a knife,
 And cut the *jiaka*'s hand,
 170 And smeared their blood together.
 "From now on we are one person."
 When he left and went to Misadu,
 He left his children there.
 "*Joma dèn* (Joma's child), *Joma dèn*.
 175 You hear that our brother was,
 In the Mau *jamana*.
 "*Joma dèn, Joma dèn*."
 This was how they became part of the Jomani.

[THE KAMARA GO TO SOLONA]
 [Sumaka forecasts that Masini will rule forty towns]

Their father Sumaka,
 180 He said that his child who he loved the best,
 His name was Masini.
 His name was Masini.
 He will rule about forty towns,
 And the *jamana* will benefit because of it.

[Sumaka leaves Wolodu and encounters the Kpelle]

185 [Sumaka said,] "Those people of Wolodu plotted against my uncle,
 And put him out.

174 *Joma dèn*: 'Joma's children,' the Kuyateh's sons. The *jèli* traveled on with Foningama; the *jèli*'s children who remained behind were called Jomadèn or 'Joma's child[ren].' The *jèli*'s children had been put in Foningama's care; they became one after their blood was mixed. Another source said that Foningama adopted them (Ch. 3).

181 Masini: 'mother sitting.' Foningama?

I will not stay in Wolodu *jamana* any longer,
But you Wolodu people,
Plot against each other and amongst yourselves.”
190 It is anybody’s guess if that has happened,
From that time up to now. (several people laughed)

{Short musical interlude}
[Sumaka told to settle at the two-peaked mountain]

“They have told Sumaka about you.
When you are about to leave anytime,
When you see the heads of two mountains,
195 That is where you can settle.
God said that he will prosper.

[Sumaka travels to Solona]

When he left Wolodu,
He saw Gbèsinsèŋ,
The mountain with two heads.
200 He went straight to Gbèsinsèŋ.
He went to the town that was under it called Solona (Soona).
Those Kpelle used to make offerings at the mountain at Solona.
He went and settled with them.

[Kònsaba threatens the Kpelle]

Kònsaba,
205 He sent people,
To go around during the day,
In the *jamana*,
And in the evening,
And say,
210 “You children of this *jamana* who live here,
The real owner of the *jamana* is here.
If you don’t come out of hiding and leave in one week,
All of you will die.”

[The Kpelle flee into the forest]

The Kpelle were afraid.
215 They came out and left their big town.
They went into the forest.
Starting from,
Our region Beyla-Farana,
And to Jiila,

220 And to Wolodu,
And to Gbè,
And to Gbana,
And to Koynyã *jamana*.
All of them came out and went into the forest.
225 They left Kònsaba and his people there,
And divided the *jamana*.

[Kònsaba appeals to Donzo for help]

The Donzo man passed one Friday morning.
Kònsaba gave his only daughter to the Donzo man to be his wife,
So he would do some work for him,
230 So he and his descendants would prosper.

[MOE KANATÈ AND MISA BAAYO HELP KÒNSABA IN GBÈ]
[Donzo write a message to Moe Kanatè in Tumutu]

The Donzo man said,
“Go and bring me one catfish from the water.
They went and caught the catfish and gave it to the Donzo man.
The Donzo man wrote a *lisimu*,
235 And put it in the mouth of the catfish,
And placed it in the water.

[A catfish takes Donzo’s message to Moe Kanatè]

The catfish went as far as Tumutu (Timbuktu?) in Mali.
And called Moe Kana - the Sumawolo ancestor.
And N’Va Misa Baayò.
240 How did he call him?

[Moe Kanatè and Musa Baayò travel to Kònsaba]

He had a dream and told the fisherwomen,
“If you catch a catfish in the next few days,
Bring it to me because it has a message.”
After they caught the catfish,
245 They took it to him,
And he opened its mouth and took the *lisimu*,
Out of its mouth.
He read it and said, “They have called us to go to the *jamana* of Gbè.”
The *kaamòò* took Baayò with him.
250 They traveled for nine months,
Before they reached Kònsaba.

[Moe Kanatè works for Kònsaba]

- [He said,] “Jomande, I came because of the message that you sent to me.”
He said, “*Kaamòò*, I called you to come,
To do some work,
255 So that I in this *jamana* of Gbè,
And my descendants will prosper.”
The *Kaamòò* said, “Bring one albino virgin, a red pan, and gold.
Kònsaba and his people looked for those items and took them to the *kaamòò*.
The *kaamòò* went into the house,
260 With his prayer beads.
He worked until the ground split open and swallowed the girl,
The red pan,
And the gold.
The *kaamòò* came out,
265 And said, “Kònsaba, it is up to you and your people.
The work is finished.

[The people of Gbè punish Moe Kanatè]

- When the people learned about this,
They said, “Ka,
Kònsaba,
270 The *kaamòò* is deceiving us and telling us,
That the work has been completed so he can get our money.
Where is the mark that is on us?”
They started to look at their bodies.
“If he fails to produce our money,
275 We will punish him.”
They grabbed the *kaamòò* and forced him down on to the ground. (laughter)
Then they held his hands and feed and dragged him. (laughter)
They dragged him in mid-day in front of everybody, (laughter)
Just like they would drag a *jiaka*. (more laughter)
280 They said that he should return their money.

[Moe Kanatè curses the people of Gbè]

- The *kaamòò* took one of his beads and started to pray,
To God.
The ground opened back up,
And the virgin, the red pan, and the gold,
285 Resurfaced.
The people of Gbè rose one-by-one and left.

257 ‘albino virgin’: *mòò-ninghè singbi*. ‘small white person girl.’

They said, "Aye, the *kaamòò* spoke the truth."
 The *kaamòò* said, "You people of Gbè,
 Since you humiliated me,
 290 And said that my words lied,
 You, the people of Gbè,
 Will never lay your hands on your father's stomach or become wealthy,
 Whether you remain in Gbè or go somewhere else.
 That is because you humiliated me.
 295 You will get food to eat,
 And God will give you plenty of children."
 Kònsaba said, "*Kaamòò*,
 Go back to your house,
 And do your work."
 300 He returned and made the ground swallow the virgin, the red pan and gold again.
 He took two rocks and placed them over the hole,
 And called the place Gbèsuba.
 The Gbèsuba that you always hear about which **our *badèn*** the Kpelle pray
 towards,
 That is how it came about.

[Kònsaba rewards Moe Kanatè with Gbèsuba market]

305 The next day was the market day for Gbèsuba.
 Kònsaba called them,
 And they went and surrounded the market.
 "This market and everything that it contains,
 People, horses, gold,
 310 I give them to you in return for the good job that you have done.
 I give them to you."
 He gave all of the people who were in the market,
 To the *kaamòò*.
 Kaamòò Kanatè,
 315 Was the ancestor of the Sumawo people.

[Misa Baayò founds Koloba]

When they reached the main road,
 He divided the groups into two,
 And gave one to Va Misa Baayò.
 "When the cane that you have in your hand gets stuck anywhere,
 320 You should settle there."

302 Gbèsuba: or, Gbèsoba. Gbè may = 'palm wine.' *suba* = 'occult power.' Gbèsuba refers to the *suba* or 'sorcerers' or Gbè.

310 'I give them to you': This seems to have been Kònsaba's version of Foningama's *wakèlèn salaka* (Ch. 7).

His cane got stuck in a tree that is called *kuòn-guo*.
 That tree is called *kuòn-guo*.
 He sent a message,
 To his *kaamòò* saying,
 325 “There is no water or stream at the place where you sent me to settle.”
 The *kaamòò* prayed to God,
 And it rained that day,
 Throughout the night,
 And all the way to the next day.
 330 A river formed in the town before sunrise.
 They call that river Jilima.
 Today, they still call that river - Jilima. Kamala.
 That is how Koloba was formed.

[Moe Kana founds Fèlesula]

Kaa[mòò] Moe Kana,
 335 He established a town,
 Called Fèlesule,
 Mau Fèlesula.
 All of the Tiawu,
 In the *jamana*,
 340 Came from Fèlesu:
 The Bama people, Fula, Dòle, Quesia, Kanè, Kandè,
 They all came from,
 That Fèlesu.
 From the Talala...

[FANYALA’S OFFSPRING]
 [Fanyala’s sons given to Kònsaba]

345 Kònsaba settled,
 In Gbè *jamana*.
 His younger brother Fanyala had five sons.
 Their father said, “My Fanyala,
 I will be very sorry the day that you become *masa* and you do not have any sons.
 350 You may give your five sons to me,
 And let me give them to your brother.
 Then I will pray for you,
 So that God will make you prosper in life.

333 Koloba: = Koro.

336 Fèlesule: = Ferentela.

338 Tiawu: = Traoré?

341 All of these clans, except for the Fulbe, are closely related and sometimes considered equivalent. Bama is a contraction of Bamagana.

He gave them to Kònsaba.
 355 He took his five children and gave them to his father.
 Those five children were,
 Nyafunja, Baakè, Semanfia, N'Va Jiamuò, Kònsama.
 He took them and gave them,
 To his father,
 360 To Sumaka.
 They were given to Kònsaba,
And he said, "They are for you."

[Fanyala's descendants]

He blessed Fanyala,
 But he did not have any more children.
 365 He said, "Father, please allow me to go,
 And make a small farm,
 Behind this town,
 And also start a village.
 His father blessed him.
 370 He went and made a farm kitchen,
 And built a village there.
 They called that village Gbèsèné.
 This was how Gbèsèné was established.
 When his father prayed for him,
 375 He started to sire children there.
 Those children,
 [And] their descendants,
 Established many towns:
 Sèlebadu, Moefadu, Sòngba, Tiekomodu, Bòkòsedu, Mueya, Bèkuò, Jaani,
 380 Singueba, Jiasedu, Yamadu, Kolõguò, Sanadu, Gbandu, Muegbèsèndu, Siliya,
 Gbèngbètulò, Falala, Vasio, Yamadu, Kabadu, Mangbe, Timodu, Duugbè.
 The prayer was answered. Jina! (laughter, music)
 When you see somebody who overlooks a blessing,
 He has not seen a person who has been cursed.
 385 Blessings are very good.
 When somebody blesses you,
 You may answer.
 May God bless us. Amina.
 God who created us,
 390 God said that we may bless each other.
 Praise God.
 The man believed in God and his father.
 He knew that a chicken does not scratch bad food for its chicks. [...]

370 'farm kitchen': *toda*.

He took his five boys and gave them to his father.
 His father,
 395 Gave the children to his elder brother.
 He went to Gbèsèn without anything.
 Those are the towns that his descendants established.
 God is greater.
 At that time,
 Foningama was in Mau,
 400 With his *jiaka*.

[ZO MISA IN MISADU]
 [Misa founds Musadu]

Musadu was established,
 And the Kpelle had left.
 The Swala [Sware] man lived near Waani behind Misadu,
 Eh, on the Sinko road,
 405 Behind **Miyandui [Beyla?]**.
 Misa went and started to work with him.
 What did he do for him?
 He used to catch fish.
 One day,
 410 After catching fish for him,
 He said to the *kaamòò*,
 “I get tired when I go back and forth every day.
 Please bless me.
 Let me go and catch fish for one week,
 415 And dry them.
 I will build an outdoor kitchen near the riverbank.
 The *kaamòò* said, “That is good.”
 Misa built an outdoor kitchen.
 He later built a second,
 420 And a third,
 Outdoor kitchen,
 Until the place became a village,
 Called Misadu.
 All the traders who traveled into the forest and returned said,
 425 “We are going to sleep in Misadu.”
 We live in Misadu.”
 But because **they people speak quickly**,

400 *jiaka*, or *jiakakè*: *jiaka* = *jèli*, *kè* = ‘man.’
 408 ‘catch’ (*fa*): literally, ‘kill.’
 422 ‘outdoor kitchen’: *toda*.

They are able to speak more than us...
"We have come to Misadu. (laughter)
430 **We are leaving Misadu.**
God is greater.
That is how the name of Misadu was changed to Misadu.

[Kaamòò Swala and his wife join Misa]

Kaamòò Moe Kuo's wife said,
"That man there,
Kaamòò,
435 We are the people who are standing behind the slave.
They live at the junction.
They have everything at their disposal,
Let's move near them."
The *kaamòò* and his people went there,
440 But they did not take Musa's name from the town.
Musa did not stop working,
For the *kaamòò*.
They lived together like that.

[Kaamòò Swala makes a *saafê* for Zo Misa]

One day Musa said to the *kaamòò*,
445 "No matter how long we live together I will leave one day because I am Kpelle.
I want you to bless me.
Open your hand for me,
So that I and my descendants,
Will prosper.
450 The *kaamòò* wrote a *lisimu*.
He put it in a sheep horn,
And called it "*saafê*."
That is how they fixed that *saafê*,
That Zo Misa Kòma had in Misadu.
455 **That is how it was made.**
The Swala man,
His *faama*,
Was Kaamòò Mue Kuò.

[Zo Musa's *saafê*]

When it saw a sheep,
460 It would swallow it.

456-458 The speaker seems to be implying that Kaamòò Swala made the *saafê*.

When it saw a lamb,
 It would swallow it.
 When it saw a baby human being,
 It would to swallow it.
 465 It would swallow a baby when it was walking.
 During those days,
 People used to bathe their babies,
 Put them in the sun,
 And cover them with white cloth.
 470 That was when it used to swallow them.
 Everybody became intimidated.
 The slave father even became upset,
 So they called a meeting.

[KÒNSABA'S PLOT AGAINST FONINGAMA IN GBÈ]
 [Fènyabu Kromah gets Foningama in Mau]

Tumaningèmè -
 475 Jiabolo,
 He sent his younger brother Fènyabu,
 To get their uncle [Foningama].
 He is the one who had been foretold.
 They took one bowl of rice and sent it to him as a gift.
 480 He traveled and entered,
 Mau.
 He took Foningama,
 And thanked the family,
 And left with his uncle.

[Fènyabu takes Foningama to Kònsaba in Gbè]

485 [Fènyabu said to Kònsaba,] "I brought your little brother to come and live with
 you."
 [Kònsaba said,] "Ah, welcome!
 Ah, that is what I like.
 My brother has come so I will no longer be lonely."
 Huun.
 But that was not his real intention.
 490 He said, "Two hippos can't live in the same place."
 He said, "Tomorrow, I will take the matter to my people."

471 'intimidated': *gbènè*.

474-475 Are Tumaningèmè and Jiabolo two separate people or two names for one person? It is very difficult to tell on the tape because the speaker said them so close together.

478 'foretold': *lòòmase*.

But you can't live in the *jamana* of Gbè,
 Unless you ask the ground.
 495 You can't settle on your own.
 Huun.
 I will ask the ground tomorrow."

[Kònsaba plots to send Foningama to Konya]

Late that night,
 Tiyaama dug a hole in house.
 They threw out the dirt,
 500 And lowered a drummer into the hole.
 Early in the morning (*fagili*),
 They covered it and placed chairs over it.
 Then he told the drummer who was in the hole,
 505 "After the people finish talking,
 I will talk.
 When I ask, 'Is this place good for Foningama?'
 Don't beat the drum.
 If you beat it then,
 510 You head will fall to your feet. God is greater.
 When I ask, 'Will he prosper when he goes to Koynyã *jamana* where the sun sets,
 Then beat the drum with all your might."

[The "ground" indicates that Foningama should travel to Konya]

Ah, in the morning,
 The Kromah man delivered the message to the *jiaka*,
 515 And the *jiaka* delivered it to the people.
 He said, "Welcome.
 Welcome to you.
 Ah, I am not alone anymore.
 My friend,
 520 Has come today.
 And I am happy.
 You people who are my *badèn*.
 You people who are my friends.
 Do you hear?
 525 My uncle brought my brother from the forest [Mau],
 But the ground...
 We must ask the ground before you can settle here.

498 Tiyaama, or Kònsaba, may be the Tye-masa (Mansa Tye) or Tye-masa Siraman in the Ivorian accounts (App. 10: Introduction).

510 'Your head will fall to your feet': A reference to decapitation.

519 'friend': *duyòn*.

Even now, we will ask you whether this place will be alright for my brother.
 “Will it be alright if my younger brother settles,
 530 In the Gbè *jamana*?”
 Ground, you talk.”
 The ground did not talk.
 It did not talk.
 “Eh, I do not want my *badèn* to go any other place.
 Let me ask again.
 535 Will this place be suitable for Foningama?
 Ground, you talk.” [...]

He did that three times.
 The ground did not talk.
 God is greater.
 Kònsaba went down...

540 Eh, if Foningama goes down,
 To where the sun sets,
 To the Koynyã region,
 Will he face hardships,
 Or will he prosper?”

545 “Tin-tin--tin.
 Tin-tin-tin.
 Tin-tin-tin.”
 He said, “Ha!
 Eh, my *badèn*,
 550 The ground spoke!”
 The Kromah man said, èh...
 The Jomani man said, “Thank you.
 Thank you.
 We want to go on the road this evening.”

555 He [Kònsaba] said, “Sleep here,
 And leave early in the morning.
 It is a long distance from here to Koynyã.”

[Kònsaba plots to kill Foningama]

Now after they left,
 And went to sleep,
 560 Kònsaba assembled his people together in a different place,
 Except for the strangers.
 “If we leave these people,
 They will find out.
 Nothing can remain hidden forever.
 565 When they find out tomorrow what we did to them,
 They will retaliate on our descendants.
 It will be good for us to bring out the *kòma* this evening,
 For Foningama, his uncle, his *jiaka*,

To kill all of them.
570 That will be their end.

[An old woman reveals Kònsaba's plot]

While they were saying this,
An old woman was laying down near the wall.
You know that those old ladies can't lie.
They spend the whole day in the town,
575 And talk about whatever they see. (laughter) Kamala.
The old woman rose and went to the Kromah man.
"Kromah, my son, you people should leave quickly this evening,
Because the *kòma* that is coming this evening to celebrate,
It is coming for you."

[Fènyabu rescues Foningama and the *jèli* from the *kòma*]

580 The Kromah man tied a rope around Foningama that evening and said,
"Let's go."
He replied, "Ah, uncle, I forgot my *jiaka*.
He is lying down over there."
He said, "Wait for me and let me go for him."
585 The Kromah man went and climbed over the fence.
When he returned to,
Eh, awaken the *jiaka*,
That was the time that the *kòma* and his men started to play.
The Kromah man looked around,
590 And saw an old mat.
He wrapped it around the *jiaka* and hoisted him up on his head.
As he was going he met the *kòma* and his players.
They asked him, "What kind of old mat do you have on your head?"
He replied, "We are too packed where they lodged us,
595 So I am going over here to my lodging place."
They said, "Ah, we will see you later."

[*Sanangu* and *lasili* established between the Kuyateh and Jomani]

He jumped over the fence and laid the *jiaka* near Foningama.
He unrolled the old mat that was wrapped around him.
After the old mat was removed,
600 He saw Foningama.
He said, "Ah! Foningama.
Man, you are funny.

573 'those old ladies can't lie': They are very observant and know everything.

- You are a bad person.
 Did you run away and leave me with my enemies?"
 605 He replied, "Ah! Didn't you come out of an old mat?"
 Then they laughed and shook hands.
 That is how the *sanangu*,
 And *lasili*,
 Came about.
 610 That is why people say, "Foningama and his old mat *jiaka*."
 That is where that saying came from.
 May God bless the Kamara.

[FONI]GAMA AND ZO MISA IN MISADU
 [The *moewu* of Misadu divine for Foningama]

- After that happened the people went to Misadu,
 And told Tumaningèmè what happened.
 615 "I have gone for your little brother and here he is."
 "Welcome, welcome."
 They told the *moewu*,
 The Dukuwe, Kaba, Cissé, Dòle, Tule, Swala, Kòne.
 "All of you who are *moewu* and are able to use you hands,
 620 If God is willing and you are willing,
 Find a way for my uncle to settle here."
 They divined and said,
 If you want us to defeat him,
 So God will remove the fire from this uncircumcised child,
 625 Zo Misa Kòma,
 Summon Kaamòò Dòle from Chèwa."

[The *moewu* summon Fuomuo Dòle to make a *lisimu*]

- When he came,
 He agreed to do the work.
 "God will remove the fire."
 630 They went to Chèwa,
 And called Fuomo Dòle.
 The Dòle people call them,
 The Fuomosiasi [Famoesiasi?].
 They call the other ones the Moikānasi.
 635 They worked with the *moe*,
 To make a *lisimu*.

618 Dukuwe: = Dukule; Tule: = Turé.

619 'use hands': to write talismen.

633 Famoesiasi: 'descendants of father *moe* man.'

634 Maikanasi: '*moe/moi* voice (*kana*) interpreter (*si*).' Interpreter for the *mori*?

[The *lisimu* destroys Zo Musa's *saafê*]

They fastened it around the frog's neck,
And placed it on the path,
Where the *saafê* usually traveled.
640 The *saafê* liked to walk early in the morning.
When it went to walk,
It passed the frog.
It swallowed it,
And it exploded.

[Zo Misa curses Konya]

645 Zo Misa Kòma left his house,
And ran towards the *saafê*,
And stood over it.
[He said,] "Ah! Koynyã.
Ah Koynyã.
650 You have made the stranger more important the citizen.
After I have finished the work,
You are driving me away for Foningama who came two days ago.
You will live with Foningama.
But in this Koynyã *jamana*,
655 God will only allow strangers to be respected, not citizens."
God is greater.
From that time up to the present the citizens of Koynyã have not prospered
over a long period of time:
The Koyayã people will always attend a meeting to plot,
But they will not get sick.
They do not plot to shorten people's lives.
660 They plot against themselves so that will not gain higher positions.
But when a stranger comes,
They all put their hands together to help them prosper.
Then, when they leave,
They will go anywhere else in the world and prosper for a long time...

650 'citizen': Translated here and other places from *duulèn*.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 8

A PAPER, LETTER, AND DISCUSSION ABOUT MUSADU

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 8.1

EXCERPTS FROM S. JANGABA M. JOHNSON'S "THE INFLUENCE OF ISLAM ON PORO AND SANDE IN WESTERN LIBERIA," c. 1974

/2/ Poro is a friendly cult, and is very accommodating, hospitable and entertaining to even uninitiated strangers. The founding of the great city of Musadu in Guinea, a name corrupted into Mesardu by people unacquainted with the founding of the town, is a proof of the friendly attitude of Poro people to strangers, even to Muslims who hate the existence of the Poro cult.

The story of the founding of Musadu is as follows: There was a (Poro) herbalist of the Kpelle tribe by the name of Zo[t]a Musa. To be able to carry out his profession, he built a small town of his own and established himself there. He lived in his town all by himself and his family. One day, a certain Muslim priest, going on a tour, reached Musa's town and asked him to permit him to spend the night with him and pass the next day. Musa welcomed him and gave him accommodation. He proved himself so hospitable and so entertaining, that the latter neglected continuing his journey the next day. After spending several days, with Musa, he decided to abandon his plan of going any further, and to establish himself permanently in Musa's town. Musa agreed and he treated the stranger very friendly to make him feel at home. /3/ Soon other Mandingoes began to follow the priest and to settle with him. These strangers grew in such a large number, that they began to build quarters of their own. To give them sufficient space to build their houses, Musa evacuated his town and built another one for him and his people to live by themselves; but his name remained attached to the old one. This was how a Poro man of the Kpelle tribe treated a Mandingo man of the Islamic faith.

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 8.2

MOHAMMED CHÈJAN KROMAH'S LETTER, 12 FEBRUARY 1990¹

1) During my childhood I have heard about "Foningaman" like one would hear about

¹ Mohammed Chèjan wrote this letter in response to some questions that Tim Geysbeek asked him.

“Fakoli.” In the Mandingo tradition these two personages are the ancestors of the Kamara and Kromah respectively. Event [Even] in the son. And it’s alway[s] said that Kamara and Kromah are “Uncle.” And the Kromah would stand for Kromah in case of any problem.

It is said that after the fall of the empire of the Mandingue, And that every body went on his way. Fakoli Kromah founding member of “Mussadu” went back to bring “Foningaman” who had gone to Badoula presently [in] Siguiri in Guinea.

After they were in Mussadu, Foningaman were asked to make a sacrifice that we call *woulki* that consist of donating [a] hundred (100) of every existing things that you can get. Later he became chief in Mussadu.

2) It is popularly known that Mussadu is the oldest town of the Konya. It is the first town our ancestors builded after they leave Mali.

3) No, but I know that every Mandingo village here have some reserved forests or sites which were keep jealously by the elders and used during circumcissions. Every village have two, for men and women. Ex.: remember “Falaboloni” in Damaro. El-Hadji Ya-Ya Dolley told us that it was from the forest that was used in Mussadu that others inhabitants escaped to go settle elsewhere.

4) Zo Musa owned medicine (fetich) that used to swallow the children or anything else in this way. After Foningaman did send for the Sherif from “home” [in] Mali, he made the “Talisa” that was placed and swallowed by Zo-Mussa Medicine (*Bassi* in Mandingo) - which exploded. After that incident Zo-Mussa decided to leave Mussa[du] for the *Sud* [south]. The “Talisa” is made by the Molleyman or Marabout. (It derive from the Coran, And it’s stay [still] made today even in the Arabe countries).

10) Foningaman made Laws in Mussadu and these laws were:

- 1 - No body should High Jack or cause [a] riot in the market ground.
- 2 - No body should deceive his fellow man.
- 3 - No body should let his cows, ships [sheeps], gots [goats], or others animals go destroyed the others farms or crops.
- 4 - No body should follow the next man wife.

11) Been that Foningaman were brought in Mussadu by Fakoli and according to the Mandingo tradition, The Kromah are alway care taker [caretakers] of the Kamara as the[y] consider them as nephew. The tradition said that the “nephew” are given a certains “right” in the town of the “uncle.” This privilege start from crops, clothes, animals. The only frontier [exception] to this freedom is: not to follow someone wife or to kill.

Ex: If two children fight, the one from the Kromah family is stripped from [of] his clothing and given to the nephew Kamara.

12) In the mandingo history there were some clans like the Keita and Kauteh [Kuyateh]

that were strong like the Kromah and the Kamara. - The Sheriff and the Kanneh are the strong Muslim.

13) All “real” Kamara knows that Foningama is his ancestor that came from Mali to the south.

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 8.3

NOTES FROM A DISCUSSIONS WITH BABA DOLE, MUSADU, 7-9 DECEMBER 1993

I met Baba when I visited Musadu in 1992, and he gave me an interview on that occasion (Appendix 7.31). Baba was a farmer who was probably in his mid-30s at the time of the interview. He said that he was close to his father, and that he often sat and listened as his father told him stories.

While visiting Musadu, we attended a football game in Wanino. The youth association in Wanino was opening a new field, so they challenged Musadu to a friendly match and won. Wanino is about ten kilometers from Musadu. We passed the town of Sanyola which is about four kilometers from Musadu. The game was complete with the town chief (on his motorcycle), the youth leaders, microphone and many spectators. I took pictures of the game, the spectators and the Koniyyaba mountain range (Figure 35).

Distant past:

- Zo Musa Kòma = Kamara = Foningama.²
- A Kanè was Zo Musa’s slave owner.

¹Baba Dole was mistaken on this point: all of the other oral traditions claim that Zo Musa and Foningama were two separate people. Foningama was a Kamara.

- Konya is named after Mt. Konyaba. Konyaba is the mountain range that we saw when we went to Wanino where the football game was played.
- *Konyaka* = 'rock people'. It is a Kpelle name, but the Maniyaka continue to use the name.
- Elephants lived in the region a long time ago. The town Samana derives from 'elephant.'
- A Jabate was the person who revealed the secret road (to Saji?).
- Cassava and edo were grown in Foningama's time, before potato and oranges
- Mangos are also ancient foods
- Yams came from Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso. Elephants ate yams there, went to Konya and defecated. The seeds germinated and grew.
- Kabakòni: 'small (*ni*) rocky (*kaba*) creek (*kò*).' This is the creek that derives from a spring on the Dion River side of Musadu. The creek goes to the back side of Baba's farm. The story is that when the French visited Musadu and were given water from this creek to drink, they asked where such clear water came from. The French were brought to this creek. The bottom of this creek is rocky (Figure 36).
- Baba Dole said that Diadu ('the land of Dia') is the name of the rocky/small mountainous area that Yaya Dole took Mohammed Chèjan Kromah, his father Mustafa and myself to in 1986.
 - Diadu was the site of an old slave town where slaves lived: they farmed here after they were captured in war.
 - Diadu was the site where Zo Musa conducted the affairs of his "secret society."
- In 1992 and on this trip, a picture was taken of Baba and me standing on a rock in Donzola. This is the place where Zo Musa used to stand and shoot animals that were coming out from the bush. This is also the same quarter where Zo Musa built his first house (Figure 33).
- The grave of Yaya's father's Molikuma is in the yard of Yaya's house. This was the same man that Yaya talked about who Samori Turé did not kill in Fombadu.
- Kabakònitini of the 'mountain of Kabakòni' is behind Baba's house. This is the place from where Saji laid sieged to Musadu (in 1873). The siege, according to Baba, lasted six months.
- The old market that Saji attacked was called Lofèkòlò (Figure 37).

- Doofatini: This is a big hill outside Musadu that you reach before you get to Diadu. This is the hilly area that Yaya took us to in 1986.³
 - *doo* = 'secret' ... *fa* = 'die' ... *tini* = 'hill.'
 - circumcision was conducted in secret
 - some people who were being circumcised died during this time
 - this is an evil area associated with *kòma*
 - was not used during the time of the Kpelle
 - secrecy/circumcision started with the Mandingo

Dole family

- Vafin's father was Kòsu, and his mother was Matènè Dole (there are two branches of Dole in Musadu that can intermarry).
- Vafin had 40 children - the following is from oldest to youngest:
- Vafin's wife Yòngbè Dukuley born Molikumala and Chèmòò. Molikuma had contact with Saji Kamara and Samori Turé
- Molikuma's sons were Chèmò, Nyamamoli, Fatima Seku, Bindu Molifin, Mabindu Mammadi, Yaya, Seku, Molifin and Dakun. Baba is one of Yaya's sons; Moli Dole, the current chief of Musadu, is a son of Bindu Molifin. We interviewed Molifin with Bintu Mammadi Donzo on December 9, 1993 (App. 7.36).
- Makènè Sanoe born Lassana.
- Other children, whose mothers names Baba could not recall, were Lamini, Munyè, Dakun, and Vamunyè.
- Yaya Dole was burned on March 17, 1991 and died ten days later on March 27.
- Farming in Musadu: *tobacco, *rice, *cassava, *potatoes, *beans, benniseed, butter pear, palm nuts, paw-paw, yams, edo
- Animal names: crocodile (*bama*), python (*minyò*), cassava snake (*tulusa*), red deer (*minò*), type goat found in the forest (*kunanu*), leopard (*wala*), groundhog (*koena*), elephant (*sama*)
- Minerals: gold and diamonds have been found and mined in Konya in recent times
- Diemou (Jèmu) is in Wolodu, about 25 kilometers west of Sinko
- The Kpelle name for 'rock' is *koniya*
- The three imams of Musadu are Alhaji Musa Sherif, Alhaji Usman Kènè/Kante and Alhaji Ibrahim Béété

³If Baba differentiated between Diadu and Doofatini, I did not record the difference.

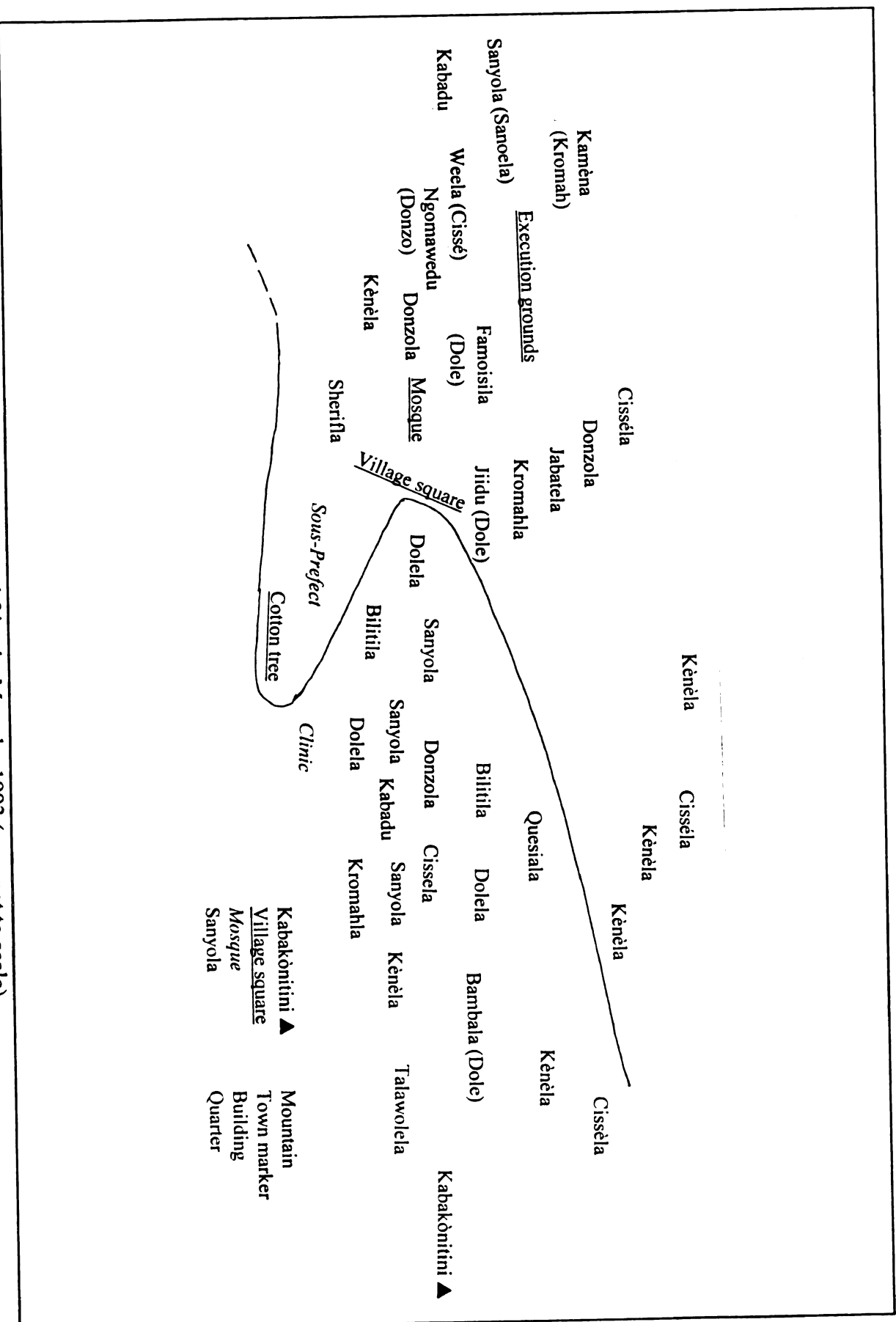
- Equivalent names:
 - Dumbaya = Kromah = Kamèna = Kamana
 - Biliti (Béété, Bèrèté) = Soyani
 - Dukala = Saro
 - Fofana = Donzo
 - Kaba = Jakite
 - Haidala (Haidara) = Sherif
 - Cissé = Kalisi
 - Dole = Sumawolo = Kènè = Kanè = Quesia = Bamba⁴
 - Weela = Cissé
 - Famoisia = Dole⁵
 - Ngomave = Donzo
 - Jii = Dole⁶
- Sumawolo's sons were Quesia and Dole.
- Dumbaya is a praise name for the Kromah.
- Haidala or Haidara is a nickname associated with Sefu Talata.

⁴Bama, not Bamba?

⁵Famoisia is a Dole lineage (Yaya Dole 1986, App. 7.8).

⁶Jii seems to be another Dole lineage?

Figure 57 Musadu's quarters, explained by Baba Dole and friends, Musadu, 1993 (map not to scale)



SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 9

SONGS OF BLAMA FOFANA

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 9.1

BLAMA FOFANA'S "KONIYAMA"

Transcribed by: Ansu Cissé and Amara Cissé (Monrovia, 1992)

Translated by: Boakai Yamah, with Ansu Cissé, Amara Cissé, Faliku Sanoe, and Kèlèti Fofana (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Faliku Sanoe, Boakai Yamah, and Tim Geysbeek (Monrovia, 1993) - transcript/translation

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/translation

Background: This is a popular praise song by Blama Fofana that is known throughout southeastern Guinea, Liberia and western Côte d'Ivoire. All of my assistants were familiar with Blama Fofana's songs, and one of them knew him personally. They said that Blama Fofana was about 45 years old in the early-1990s. One assistant was told that Blama was from Molandala, in the Sumandu region of Guinea. They said that Fofana drove commercially to supplement his income. The story is told of how Blama would sing to his passengers after his vehicle broke down so they would not get angry with him. Blama Fofana accompanied his songs with a western guitar, not a *ngoni* or other traditional instrument. Blama grew up in Guinea, but reportedly fled to Côte d'Ivoire after Seku Touré suspected that he was challenging him in his songs.

Amara Cissé and Boakai Yamah purchased this and some of Blama Fofana's other songs on a cassette tape in Monrovia in November 1992. We also translated another song on the same tape - "A world of many changes" (Appendix 9.2). Boakai Yamah and I also purchased a collection of Blama's songs in Touba, Côte d'Ivoire, in June 1992. I purchased another copy of his songs in Diakolidu, Guinea, in December 1993.

Importance of the song: Blama's song can be understood at many levels. In line six, Blama said that he was singing this song for the Jomani or Kamara who were the major *mansa* clan in southern Guinea. Blama mentioned Foningama in the next line, and scattered Foningama's name throughout the song. Foningama is a praise name that is normally reserved for Jomani men who perform heroic acts or attain significant positions in society. For instance, Kamanjan Kamara, the chief who is said to have conquered Sibi and helped Sunjata defeat Sumawolo, is sometimes called Foningama by the Maniyaka. The chief who conquered Musadu and whose sons and descendants went on to rule many other places is also known as Foningama. Jomani men today are also given this name.

Blama seems to use both Foningama and Koni-yama to refer to the Jomani chiefs. Those who helped translate this song said that Foni represents the *foni* (*fōni*, *fonio*) grain, and that Koni is the 'cotton' (*koni/kuòni*) that has not been separated from the seed (*yama*). Some suggest that Kama in Foningama (Foni Kama) is a shortened form of Kamara. Others say that Kama or Kamã is a name unto itself and that Foningama's full name was Foningama Kamara. In any case, Foningama (or Koni-yama) was difficult to conquer in the same way that it is hard to harvest and clean *foni*. One has to bend down to plant and harvest *foni*, and it is hard to remove *koni* from the seed. *Foni* is also difficult to chew, and one needs plenty of water to swallow it (Appendix G). The Kromah in the

Beyla region of Guinea joke with the Sanoe and say, 'Our father was eating *foni* until he choked and died. That is what killed our father.' In the proverb, the Kromah jokingly accuse the Sanoe of killing their father because many Sanoe live in Gbana where *foni* is known to be a specialty crop.¹ Some claim that *foni* was added to Kama's name after he was found hiding in a hole that was full of *foni* (Ch. 3).

Blama Fofana's song emphasizes the importance of the Jomani and makes some statements about Manding culture and politics. Beginning with line 55, the song explains how the leaders of Jamòdu prepared to welcome a commissioner and important chief as they passed by with their entourage to celebrate Bastille Day or French Independence (l. 138). The chief was Yanguba Fina Kamara, and the commissioner was a French administrator whom Blama called Jibbawulèn or 'light skinned Jibba' (l. 150,192,239). Yanguba Fina was elegantly dressed with his long flowing gown (l. 19-21), and the commissioner wore a white *kepi* or pith-styled hat (l. 181-187).

As word spread that Chief Kamara and Commissioner Jibbawulèn were to pass through Jamòdu, the leaders of the town gave special instructions: the women should prepare food and entertain (l. 31), the drummers and *nèfoba* should play music along the roadside (l.34-39, 49-50), and everyone else should jump up and down and clap their hands and sing (l. 199-201). A dilemma then ensued. While the town leaders needed to assemble plenty of people to welcome the chief and the commissioner, many of the people had some kind of physical deformity. Some were short, some were ugly, some had goiters, and some had emphysema. If the leaders prohibited these people from coming, they would not have enough people to welcome their guests (l. 77-79). So, they told them

¹Faliku Sanoe, personal communication.

to hide and stand behind the good-looking people (l. 68, 93). In addition to their numbers, these 'ugly people' were valuable and needed in other ways: the people with goiter had 'sweet singing voices' (l. 109), the people with emphysema might be able to sing (l. 115), and the short people could cheer better than everyone else (l. 141).

The chief and commissioner did not arrive until mid-day when the sun was hot, so those who had umbrellas and rain hats were told to put them away when the guests passed by (l. 202-16). Though everyone was tired by this time, the commissioner was singled out as having been the only person who went to sleep during the ceremony.

- Koniyama,
The bright commissioner,
And *jamana* chief.
The name of this welcoming song is,
5 "Koniyama."
It was sung for the Jomani *masa*.
Foningama,
♪ Aah Koniyama, ♪
♪ Koniyama, ooh - Koniyama. ♪
10 The women are after the back of the bed and the men are concerned about
Koniyama.
♪ Aah - Koniyama, ♪
♪ Koniyama, ooh - Koniyama. ♪
Women are after the back [of the bed],
And men are worried about Foningama.
15 ♪ Aah Koniyama, ♪
♪ Koniyama, ooh - Koniyama, ♪
Women are concerned about the back and men are concerned about

1 Koniyama: Sometimes this sounds like "Foniyama."

2 'bright commissioner' (*commana wulawin*): Jibbawulèn. Sometimes translated 'commander.'

3 *jamana* chief (*jamanati*): Yanguba Fina [Janguba] (l. 174). This is probably also Mammadi (l. 49). Both are said to have held the same position. If so, his name may have been Yanguba Mammadi Fina Kamara. The Fina (*fina*) are Kamara-Muslim *jèli*.

10 'women': = *musowu*. Some of the assistants said that Blama sang *musowu* throughout the song; others said that he sang *mòò-tò-wu* - 'the rest of the people.' The difference seems inconsequential. Since 'men' are classified under one category in line 10, then 'the rest of the people' includes women and children. Children here do not seem to be included. 'after the back of the bed:' this has sexual overtones. 'concerned' (*gbalani*): also 'worried.' The men wanted to do their best to make sure that Foningama would be their friend, or at least that they would not incur his displeasure.

- Jibbawulèn.
- Aah, the Jomani *masa*,
 With the rich man's gown.
- 20 He was busy, busy.
 His famous gown.
 ♪ Koniya, ooh - Koniya, ♪
 Women are concerned about the back and men are concerned about Foningama.
 Ah, Jonda's only son.
- 25 ♪ Koniya, ooh - Koniya, ♪
 Women are concerned about the back and men are concerned with Jibbawulèn.
 Haye -
 "Women, make them feel good today.
 You should greet them well.
- 30 Clap your hands and make it look nice.
 There should be enough salt."
 ♪ Koniya, ooh - Koniya, ♪
 Women are concerned about the back and men are concerned about Foningama.
 ♪ Hay - "Drum beater,
- 35 Leave the women and stand in a clear place. ♪
 ♪ Hay - Drum beater,
 I say, come stand at the drum beating site. ♪
 Women, prepare the *fez* hat on top of the drum beater.
 Tie the head tie under it and make it tight."
- 40 ♪ The men are concerned about Foningama. ♪
 Today's welcoming is not a play.
 Let me tell everyone,
 ♪ The region chief and the commissioner are coming together. ♪
 ♪ Aah - Koniya, ♪
- 45 ♪ Koniya, ooh - Koniya, ♪
 The women are concerned about the back and the men are concerned about
 Foningama.
 ♪ Aah - Koniya, ♪
 Chief Mammadi from Koniya,
 The *nèfoba*, send them to the side of the road.
- 50 All instrumentalists should go to the side of the road" - ha!
 ♪ Aah - Koniya, ♪
 ♪ Koniya, ooh - Koniya, ♪
 Women are concerned about the back and are concerned about Jibbawulèn.

24 Jonda: The chief's mother.
 28 'make them feel good today': Blama begins to tell how the town should prepare for meeting Foningama when he came to visit.
 34 'drum beater': *balatoba*.
 38 *fez* ('hat'): This is a round hat that is laden with small bits of mirrors and cowry shells. The women were instructed to keep the drummer's hat on his head while he was playing. Drummers can drum so hard that their hats fall off.
 49 *nèfoba*: = musicians who play iron instruments.

- Aah - Koniyaama,
 55 But there is one fault in the welcoming today.
 What is that?
 The person,
 Who positioned the people on the road,
 Did not arrange them,
 60 Very well.
 Oh, men are concerned about Foningama.
 What does he mean?
 He did not arrange the people well.
 He put the people in the wrong places.
 65 That will not be possible.
 ♪ Aah - Koniyaama, ♪
 You people should wash the faces of the bystanders.
 They put the ugly people in front of the good-looking people.
 ♪ Oh, men are concerned about Foningama. ♪
 70 ♪ Aah - Koniyaama, ooh, ♪
 The ugly people should not stand in front of the good-looking people.
 The commissioner will not be happy about that.
 But you can't remove all of the smoking wood from the fire.
 If you do that the fire will go out.
 75 ♪ Ooh - men are concerned about Foningama. ♪
 I am not saying that we should remove all of the smoking wood from the fire.
 We should just be concerned about how we can make it better.
 We only accept the ugly people so we can have plenty of people.
 Apart from that there is no need for them to come.
 80 ♪ Women are concerned about the back and men are concerned about
 Foningama. ♪
 Place all of the ugly people at the back.
 Send all of the ugly people to the back.
 ♪ The *jamana* chief and commissioner will not want to see them - ha!" ♪
 Let me tell you.
 85 ♪ Women are concerned about the back and men are concerned about
 Jibbawulèn. ♪
 "Aye, Ugly women, go to the back."
 ♪ Koniyaama, ooh - Koniyaama, ♪
 Women are concerned about the back and men are concerned about Koniyaama.
 Cover all of the people who have goiters.
 90 All of the people with goiters should go to the back.
 The people with goiters should go to the back.
 ♪ Aah - Koniyaama. ♪
 Hide all of the people with goiters.

57 'The person': Jibaba (l. 225)?

73 'You can't remove all of the smoking wood from the fire': If they took all of the ugly people out of the crowd, there would not be enough people to greet the chief and commissioner.

- The people with goiters should go to the back.
- 95 They have already put creme on their goiters and their goiters are shining.
Your husband's family does not love you and you want to greet them?
Women with goiters move to the back.
If you ask an ugly man to take his tail from the market he will say,
"Please help me.
- 100 Please help me find my dog."
♪ Koniya, oh Koniya, ♪
♪ Women are concerned about the back and men are concerned about
Foningama. ♪
"You, women with goiter,
We are talking about you.
- 105 Move back so they do not see your goiter.
Go to the back."
♪ Women are concerned about the back and men are concerned about
Foningama. ♪
They say that people with goiters,
Have sweet singing voices.
- 110 Ha, that is finished.
The goiter and the sweet voice.
Something is wrong.
♪ Oh, men are concerned about Foningama. ♪
The people who have problems breathing...
- 115 Will they belch or sing.
Han, the people say that the people with goiters are the ones that have sweet
voices.
Han, I am not saying that they do not have sweet voices.
But when they sing,
They should hide so the commissioner does not see them.
- 120 ♪ Oh, men are concerned about Foningama. ♪
The people who are singing should not be seen by the people who they are singing
for.
Is there anything more confusing than that?
♪ Koniya, ooh - Koniya, ♪
Women are concerned about the back and men are concerned about Foningama.
- 125 Ah, many things have happened in the world.
♪ Aah - Koniya. ♪
Hay, "You the women with goiters, go the back.

98-100 Ugly men will find an excuse to stay as long as possible. People will not have time to look for a dog in the market, so they will let him stay. The Manding also do not like dogs, and it is hard to see dogs roaming about in markets in Manding villages. Those who have dogs hesitate to take dogs to the market when the market is full because dogs can run freely and disturb things. Dogs are more likely to be seen in market areas when the markets are empty.

114-115 'The people who have problems breathing, will they belch...' Probably persons with emphysema.

Ah, men, can't you leave the women alone?
 You have given them many directions.
 130 My man, can't you see,
 The women have rubbed their goiters with creme in the sun.
 ♪ Oh, men are concerned about Foningama. ♪
 Hay, "You short men, leave the crowd.
 You are short like a cow that is only worth 2000 Guinea Francs.
 135 You don't know where your fame ends.
 The people who are not your size,
 You come to identify with them that way."
 The white people came to see it on July 14.
 They would catch all the short people and close the door on them.
 140 They would do that so the short people would not break their necks when they
 were happy.
 This is because short people get very happy too easily.
 "Take your tail from there."
 Oh, men are concerned about Foningama.
 "Hay, brother,
 145 Beat that short man on his bottom so he will leave you.
 ♪ Oh, men are concerned about bright Foningama.
 Men are concerned about Foningama. ♪
 Women are concerned with the back and men are concerned about Foningama.
 Ha!
 150 The messenger has come to say that they have reached Jamòdu.
 When they cross the mountain, everyone should stand in his or her place.
 No one should cross the street.
 Some of his bodyguards are coming one-by-one.
 They say that they have reached the "one hundred youth hill." ♪
 155 One hundred youth split the rocky mountain in two and made a car road.
 ♪ Oh, men are concerned about Foningama. ♪
 That was during the time of forced labor,
 During the time of the whites.
 At that time they referred to the young men as the *bilakolo*.
 160 That is still the name of the hill, the "one hundred youth hill."
 ♪ Oh, men are concerned with Foningama. ♪
 Many things have occurred in the world.
 ♪ Ahan, Koniya, ♪
 They say that they have reached, that they have already reached here.
 165 All of you have worn dirty clothes and are standing.
 It will not be good if this thing goes wrong.
 Let me tell you people...
 ♪ Aah - Koniya, ♪
 ♪ The men are concerned with Foningama. ♪

138 Describing the French celebration of Bastille Day, the day that thousands of people
 stormed the Bastille on July 14, 1789.

- 170 The people from the town checking the road have gone ahead.
They left a while ago.
Women are concerned about the back and the men are concerned about
Jibbawulèn.
“Hay! They have shown their heads.”
Yanguba Fina is at the front!
- 175 Is that Va Yanguba?
Oh yes, that is him.
Aah, all the talk is not over.
When you see Yanguba Fina you have seen the *jamana* owner.
♪ Ooh, men are concerned about Foningama. ♪
- 180 “Ha, it is true,
He and the commissioner are together.
The commissioner is wearing the white *kèpi* hat.
♪ Oh, the men are concerned with Jibbawulèn. ♪
The commissioner is at the front.
- 185 No, the *jamana* chief is at the front.
Han, it true,
But his hat is really white.
It is completely white” - fe-fe-fe-fe!
Women are concerned about the back and the men are concerned with
Jibbawulèn.
- 190 “My man,
We are not talking about you.
You hear the name ‘white man.’
Why must we talk about how bright he is?
You just want to spoil the talk.
- 195 Don’t you know that your tongue slipped?
♪ Women are concerned with the back and men are concerned about
Foningama. ♪
“Everyone jump up and down!
Everyone clap your hands!
All you men should clap your hands!
- 200 All of you should clap your hands!
Everyone be happy, jump up and down!”
At that time, sweat was dripping under everyone’s ears, under the hot sun.
Many things have passed in this world.
♪ Koniayama, ooh - Koniayama, ♪
- 205 Women are concerned with their back and men are concerned about
Foningama.
“Hay, you who have umbrellas!
Take your umbrellas down.
They are blocking the view of the people. ♪

191 ‘white man:’ *falaghè*.

- We are concerned about welcoming them and you want to put your white sticks over us.
- 210 Put your umbrellas down!
 ♪ Ooh, men are concerned about Foningama,
 And you are putting your rain hats in front of us. ♪
 ♪ Ooh, man are concerned about Foningama. ♪
 The people who did not have umbrellas used to say that.
- 215 “I say, you people should remove your rain hats so you do not block our view.”
 ♪ Oh, men are concerned about Foningama. ♪
 Aah, Koniyaama, ♪
 “Waba, waba, waba, waba, waba, waba, waba, waba.”
 That was the sound of the men and women clapping their hands under the hot sun.
- 220 Eh-èh, Yanguba,”
 “Naamu ba!”
 “Eh, Yanguba, you are going to Beyla.”
 “Yes, Father.”
 “You are going to Beyla.
- 225 When you left a message with the townspeople they never forget what you said.”
 Really, Jibaba, you have done a good job.
 ♪ Aah - Koniyaama, ♪
 The townspeople have praised us before the commander.
 Is it so, Yanguba, or not so? (singer laughs)
- 230 It has been done correctly.
 The counting has been done correctly.
 We like that.
 Your men are really happy.
 The commissioner does not know what Koniyaama means.
- 235 All he is saying is, *nyama, nyama*, this is good - bè-bè-bè-bè-bè-bè-bè-bè.
 “Eh, Yanguba.”
 “Naamu Baba!”
 Ho, the men are concerned about Foningama.
 The Jomani man said, “They are returning from Beyla because the commissioner is tired.
- 240 Let me make my report, Yanguba.”
 ♪ Women are concerned with their back and men are concerned about Jibbawulèn. ♪
 Jomani said that he is tired and the commissioner is tired.
 The horses are tired and the road is not good.
 “Since the commissioner is going to sleep, Yanguba” -
- 245 ♪ Ho, men are concerned with Jibbawulèn. ♪
 “All the singers should go under the mango tree.”
 Let me make my report.

225 ‘You’: Jibaba (‘big Jiba’) who organized the people to meet the chief and commissioner.

- The son of Jomani said, "The commissioner is going to sleep.
Let the singers go under the mango tree."
250 Yanguba, is it so, or is it not so? - hè-hè-hè-hè-hè.
Yanguba, it will not be good.
Let all the singers go under the mango tree."
Son of Jomani, the rest is for Yanguba.
Go under the mango tree, the commissioner is going to sleep.
255 Ooh, men are concerned with Foningama.
♪ Koniama, ooh - Koniama, ♪
Women are concerned with the back and men are concerned about Foningama.

248 'The son of Jomani': Probably the chief, Yanguba Fina.

253 'the rest is for Yanguba': let Yanguba be responsible for everything else.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 9.2

BLAMA FOFANA'S "A WORLD OF MANY CHANGES"

Transcribed by: Ansumana Cissé and Amara Cissé (Monrovia, 1993)

Translated by: Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1993)

Checked by: Faliku Sanoe (Monrovia, 1993) - tape and transcript

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek and Boakai Yamah (Monrovia, 1993) - tape/transcript

Checked by: Tim Geysbeek (Michigan, 1995) - tape/transcript

Purchase of the song: Boakai Yamah purchased the tape that includes this song in November 1992 in Monrovia.

Background: This is one version of a the popular song *Jèlèma Jèlèma So* or 'A World of Many Changes.' 'A World of Many Changes' is known in the Manding communities throughout Liberia, southern Guinea, and western Côte d'Ivoire. Boakai Yamah said that he heard this song in Kolahun, Liberia, in the 1970s. Line 288 suggests that the song was recorded in Molibadu, but this is uncertain.

Blama Fofana explains in the song that the only thing that remains on earth is the greatness of God. Everyone else dies in the world, even national leaders and great chiefs. Blama reportedly fled to Côte d'Ivoire after Seku Toure asked him to go to Conakry to explain the meaning of the song.

Blama used several titles for leaders: *so ti* ('town owner'), *duu ti* ('land owner'), *jamana ti* ('region owner'), *mansa duu ti* ('chief land owner'), and *mansa mansa*. *Jamana* and *mansa* are kept in the translation because they can be defined in so many ways. *Jamana* is a 'region' that can be as small as a few towns or as large as a province or a

country.

{Guitar playing}

Changes, a world of many changes.
Everything has its own end.
Changes, the world changes.
Everything has an end on earth.

{Guitar in the distant background}

- 5 The very first *jamana* owners and the very first land owners who were on earth,
In the *jamana* Beyla,
During the time of the white people,
During the time of the white people,
Here are some of their names.
- 10 Everything has an end on this earth except for God's greatness.
I, Blama Fofana, will mention their names today.
I have not seen any of these people with my own two eyes.
I have only heard their names with my ears.
[These things happened] the day before yesterday and yesterday.
- 15 Some were living at the time that my mother was not born,
But you can't tell a child,
"You resemble your father's shirt."
No, you can't tell a child,
"Your face resembles someone who has the same occupation as your father."
- 20 No, you can't tell a child,
"Your face resembles your father's food."
No, you can't tell a child,
"Your face resembles your father's long buildings,
[Or his] story buildings,
- 25 [Or his] big villas on the ground,
That are surrounded by a fence with one way to enter and one way to leave.
Your eye can't resemble that.
No.
What you tell a child, "You resemble your father,"
- 30 Or, "You resemble your mother."
That is what makes a true noble.
A person is known by his/her generation, okay?
That is the reason why people are made.

1-2 'A world of many changes' (*Jèlèma jèlèma so*): '[A] world (*so*) of changes (*jèlèma*) changes (*jèlèma*).' The *jèlèma jèlèma* ('changes changes') construction indicates emphasis, and is better translated 'many changes.' *So* is sometimes translated 'town,' but means 'world' in this song.

May God save all Muslims from it.

[Guitar more prominent]

- 35 Changes, a world of many changes.
Changes, a world of many changes.
Everything has to come to an end.
Changes, a world of many changes.
So this is how the world is!
- 40 Changes, a world of many changes.
Changes, a world of many changes.
All slaves have their own generations.
Chèmòò Kabajan was a *mansa mansa*.
From Kabajandu...
- 45 Haan,
Where are the Kasiya Joma that were the *mansa mansa* from Kabajandu?
Ahaan, where are they today?
Kasiya Kaba, the *mansa mansa* from Kabajandu,
Ahaan, where is he?
- 50 Chèmòò Yonboo who was the town owner of Yonboodu,
Ahaan, where is he today?
Bala Misa Kamara who was the *mansa mansa* in Bala Musadu,
Ahaan, where is he today?
Chèmòò Jonda who was the *mansa mansa* from Moligbèdu,
- 55 Ahaan, where is he today?
The elephant killer Singbè from Moligbèdu who killed many big animals,
Ahaan, where is he today?
So, everything has an end!
Jankalan Mori who was the *mansa mansa* from Fombadu,
- 60 Ahaan, where is he?
Mammadi, the lieutenant who was the *mansa mansa* from Fombadu,
Ahaan, where is he today?
Jamana owner Zoga who was the *mansa mansa* from Gbèaso,
Ahaan, where is he today?
- 65 Gbòso Donzo who was the *mansa mansa* of Tono,
Ahaan, where is he?
Makula Lazay who was *mansa mansa* of Kalagba,
Ahaan, where is he today?
Maya Bafelay who was the *mansa mansa* of Payakuna...
- 70 Ahaan, all of them have died.
Maya Bafelay was the *mansa mansa* of Feledu,
Ahaan, where is he?

34 'May God save all Muslims from it': May God make all children nobles with true fathers, not illegitimate children who only resemble the work in which their father's are involved.

42 'slaves': of God or man or both?

- Gikòlò Nyama who was the *mansa mansa* of Payakuna,
Ahaan, where is he?
- 75 Gikòlò Nyama who was the *mansa mansa* of Feledu,
Ahaan, where is he?
Duse Kamara who was the land owner Feledu,
Ahaan, where is he today?
Lasiden Fasu who was with the *mansa mansa* from Muana,
- 80 Ahaan, where is he?
Kongay Blama who was with the *mansa mansa* from Filedu,
Ahaan, where is he?
So, everything has its best time.
Masia Wusu who was the land owner in Jakolodu on the hill,
- 85 Ahaan, where is he?
Vakoloyuwe who was the *mansa mansa* in Jakolodu on the hill,
Ahaan, where is he?
Vasonafa who was the *mansa mansa* from Boola,
Ahaan, where is he?
- 90 Fanzuna Wolo who was the *mansa mansa* from Boola...
Behold, everything has an end.
Mori Dole who was the *mansa mansa* from Boola,
Ahaan, where is he?
Vasiya Mifele who was the land owner from Jamodu...
- 95 Aaah, all of them have died.
Chèmòò Kunadi who was the *mansa* land owner from Soyalò,
Ahaan, where is he today?
Nyama Soko who was *mansa mansa* from Gbana,
Ahaan, where is he?
- 100 Chèmòò Sokoba who was *mansa mansa* from Yangbala,
Ahaan, where is he?
The Gbana Chèmòò who was *mansa mansa* in Foleboledu,
Ahaan, where is he?
Gelela Siliki who was the *mansa mansa* from Silikidu,
- 105 Ahaan, where is he?
Jilila Kalamòò who was the *mansa* land owner in Silikidu,
Ahaan, where is he?
Jiila Amara who was *mansa mansa* in Silikidu,
Ahaan, where is he?
- 110 Gbendu Lansay who was with the *mansa mansa* from Jilila...
So, everything has its day.
Gbèkònò Tènè Mori who was the *mansa mansa* at Falawonidu,
Ahaan, where is he?
Konè Fakòn who was the *mansa mansa* from Fakoludu,
- 115 Ahaan, where is he today?

79 Lasiden: = Lassana.

96 Kunadi: = 'lucky.'

- Gbana Muyan who was the *mansa mansa* from Gbangònò,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 Gbana Muyan who was the *mansa mansa* at Famoila,
 Ahaan, where is he?
- 120 Kuni Mammadi who was the *mansa* land owner from Misadu...
 Ahaan, they have all died.
 Nyama Mori who was the *mansa* land owner from Misadu...
 So, this is how the world is!
 They have all left this world.
- 125 They did not have any quarrel with God.
 They left the world,
 Even though they did not disobey God.
 They left the world.
 Those who still remain can't give anything to God.
- 130 Changes, a world of many changes.
 So, this is how the world is!
 Changes, a world of many changes.
 Everything has an end.
 Changes, a world of many changes.
- 135 Changes, a world of many changes.
 Every slave has its own generation.
 Changes, a world of many changes.
 All slaves will replace themselves.
 The Duwalu Sangba who was known as Tolamale from Basanò,
- 140 Ahaan, where is he?
 Duwalu Sangba from Sangba who danced with horses...
 So everything has its time.
 Jèlabani Kotò who was famous from Basanò,
 Ahaan, where is he?
- 145 Siafelbele who was the *mansa* land owner in Siafeledu,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 Sani Fangbè who was the *mansa* land owner of Seibalò...
 They are all missing.
 Sani Samaji who was the *mansa* land owner of Sebalò,
- 150 Ahaan, where is he?
 Mansa mansa Bòò who was the *mansa* land owner of Bolondu,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 Gbè Nabo who was the *mansa mansa* in Gbèsanadu,

120 Kuni Mammadi: may be Kunimoi (Ibrahim Béété, App. 7.35, l. 386-390).

122 Nyama Mori: this is Lai Yamah Mori (Ibrahim Béété, App. 7.35, l. 290-291).

139 Duwalu Sangba: was well known.

141 'danced with horses': Duwalu Sangba may have participated in stunt riding, horse racing and competitions, or been a warrior in earlier times.

147 Sani: = mother, or 'gold.' Fangbè: = 'light skinned (*gbè*) Fan.'

152 Kolodu: A sub-region located just south-east of Macenta.

- Ahaan, where is he?
 155 Va Gbinkòji who was the *mansa mansa* in Gbèsanadu,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 Gbetekò who was the *mansa mansa* of Gbèsoba...
 Ahaan, they have all died.
 Bòlòji Mori who was the *mansa mansa* Sinko,
 160 Ahaan, where is he today?
 Vabèllè Koroma from Tema who used to be a member of the army,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 Chèmòò Suluko who was the *mansa mansa* from Wolodu,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 165 Chèmòò Suluko who was the *mansa mansa* from Winyanò,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 Fasu Kaba Kondè who was the *mansa mansa* from Wolodu,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 Fasi Kaba Kondè who was the *mansa mansa* from Kolokòlò,
 170 Ahaan, where is he?
 Varma Suma who was the *mansa mansa* from Wolodu...
 Ahaan, all of them died.
 Famoi Suma who was the *mansa mansa* Sokulala,
 Ahaan, where is he today?
 175 Boki Misa who was the *mansa mansa* in Sokulala,
 Ahaan, where is he today?
 Bolonkè Misa who danced with horses in Fabilè Hèndòn...
 So everything has a time.
 Fandu Amara who was the *mansa mansa* from Wolodu,
 180 Ahaan, where is he?
 Fandu Amara who died in prison...
 So everything has a cause.
 Fandu Va Kaba who was the *mansa* land owner from Fandu,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 185 Vasekò of Kolodu was the *mansa mansa* of Fasiso,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 Sakonè Amara who was the town owner of Sokulala,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 Yan Konè Mili who was a *kalamòò* in Sokulala,
 190 Ahaan, where is he today?
Kalamòò Nuho who was the *kalamòò* at Sokulala,
 Ahaan, all of them have died.
 Sumaila Dukule who was powerful in Sokulala,

159 Bòlòji: = mother.

169 Fasi: = mother's name.

173 Sokulala: = 'the (*la*) new (*kula*) town (*so*).'

175 Boki: = mother.

189 *Kalamòò*: = 'teacher' or 'scholar.'

- Ahaan, where is he?
 195 Laji Sumaila who was an elder in Sokulala,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 So this is how the world is!
 They left this world,
 And they did not have a bad attitude towards God.
 200 They left this world.
 Those of us who are left have not given anything to God.
 Changes, a world of many changes.
 Everything has an end.
 Changes, a world of many changes.
 205 Changes, a world of many changes.
 So this is how the world is!
 Changes, a world of many changes.
 Changes, a world of many changes.
 Every slave has its generation.
 210 Suma Kalifa who was the *mansa mansa* of Beyla Farana,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 Suma Kalifa who was the *mansa mansa* from Dubadu...
 Ahaan, they are all missing.
 Vabo Blama who was the *mansa* land owner from Fuala...
 215 So everything has an end!
 Kòblama Fofana who used to dance on the horse...
 Nothing is big that can't get old.
 Ahaan, where are they?
 Va Blama who was the *mansa mansa* in Beyla-Farana,
 220 Ahaan, where is he?
 Va Blamansa Mansay who was the *mansa mansa* from Jasodu,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 Vama Dazay was *mansa mansa* for eight years.
 So everything has a time.
 225 Chèjan Gonè was the *mansa mansa* in Beyla-Farana.
 So everything has an end.
 Chèjan Gonè who was the *mansa mansa* from Salibadu,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 Chèmòò Soli who was the *mansa mansa* in Kasayaladu,
 230 Ahaan, where is he?
 Soningbè Wawu was an important person in Massabolidu.
 Ahaan, they are all missing.
 Lingò Amara who was the *mansa mansa* from Lingò,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 235 Vayalake who was the *mansa mansa* from Simandu,

223 Vama: = mother.

233 Was Lingò Amara a Konè? The Konè are an important clan in Linkò.

- Ahaan, where is he?
 Vayalake was the *mansa mansa* of Yakedu,
 Ahaan, all of them have laid down.
 Kèmè Blama who was the *mansa mansa* from Sabatimandu,
 240 Ahaan, where is he?
 Kèmè Blama was the *mansa mansa* from Damaro.
 Ahaan, they are all missing.
 Va Jiba Wulèn who was the *mansa mansa* from Simandu,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 245 Jònda Jiba was the *mansa mansa* of Damaro.
 Ahaan, all of them have laid down.
 Jònda Alifa the *mansa* land owner in Konisèdu,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 Yankuba Sine was the *mansa mansa* from Damaro.
 250 Ahaan, so everything has its best day.
 Va Koni Kaman from Beyla danced with horses.
 Ahaan, everything has its end.
 They left this world,
 And they never gave any gifts to God.
 255 Changes, a world of many changes.
 Everything has an end.
 Changes, a world of many changes.
 So this is how the world is!
 Changes, a world of many changes.
 260 Changes, a world of many changes.
 Changes, a world of many changes.
 All slaves have their generations.
 Vaja Fole who was the *mansa mansa* of Nyusomolidu,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 265 Makalisa Boakai who was the *mansa mansa* of Nionsamoridu.
 Ahaan, where is he?
 Koroma Mammadi was the *mansa mansa* in Nionsamoridu.
 Ahaan, they are all missing.
 Yanlay Mammadi who was the *mansa mansa* of Nionsamoridu.
 270 Ahaan, where is he?
 Yusufu Layi who was the *mansa mansa* of Nionsamoridu,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 Kalamòò Wasani who was the chief in Nionsamoridu,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 275 Kalamòò Kasama was the *kalamòò* from Kolela.

239 Kèmè: = mother.

243 Va Jiba Wulèn: a Kamara.

245 Jònda Jiba: Dyigiba Kamara, the late *mansa* of Damaro who wrote a history of the Kamara and Sumandu (n.d.). He died in about 1964.

254 'gifts': = bribes.

- Ahaan, they are all missing.
 Vama Kamo who was *mansa mansa* in Jakodu,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 Nakafin Boakai who was an important person in Jakodu,
 280 Ahaan, where is he?
 Nema Vafin who was *mansa mansa* in Jakodu,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 Va Mori Baki was here in Molibadu.
 Ahaan, oooh, death is not good.
 285 Va Mori Baki was *mansa mansa* in Jakodu.
 Ahaan, all of them have laid down.
 Dawuda Koroma who was *mansa mansa* in Gbapa,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 Jaka Misa who was *mansa mansa* in Gbapa,
 290 Ahaan, where is he?
 Misa used to cross the street and go to Saniquelle.
 Behold, everything has its own time.
 Filani Wulèn who was *mansa* land owner from Beyla,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 295 Bulayi Kondè who was *mansa* land owner from Beyla,
 Ahaan, where is he?
 Seku Duwa used to beat people down in Gbana here.
 Everything has an end.
 Duwa Keita tried to force his way to Koniya.
 300 So, everything has an end.
 Fode Chèmòò who had a whip that was called “workman,”
 Ahaan, where is he?
 Fode Soso’s whip was named “nothing is finished.”
 Behold, everything finishes.
 305 Fode Makani whose whip was called “sorcery destroyer.”
 Ahann, where is he?
 Fode Makani’s whip’s name was “sorcery destroyer.”
 Ahaan, all of them are gone.
 So, this is how the world is!
 310 They left this world,
 And they did not do anything bad to God.

277 Jakodu: Diakolidu.

286 Gbapa: Ghanta, Liberia.

291 Saniquelle: A large town in northcentral Liberia’s Nimba county near Guinea.

293 Filani: = ‘twin.’

301 ‘workman’ (*baalekè*): ‘work (*baale*) man (*kè*).’

303 ‘nothing is finished’ (*kotè ban*): = ‘no (*tè*) thing (*ko*) is finished (*ban*).’

305 ‘sorcery destroyer’ (*dabali bana*): = ‘sorcery (*dabali*) destroyer (*bana*).’ Fode Makani had a whip that could penetrate other sorcery that was made to protect people. The word *bana* is generally translated ‘finisher,’ but is translated ‘destroyer’ in this context to demonstrate the power of Fode’s whip.

They have left this world,
 And we have done nothing to give God.
 Changes, a world of many changes.
 315 Everything has an end.
 So, this is how the world is!
 Changes, a world of many changes.
 So, this is how the world ends.
 Stubbornness is not good.
 320 Changes, a world of many changes.
 A bad time is not good.
 Changes, a world of many changes.
 Pride is not good.
 Changes, a world of many changes.
 325 Selfishness is not good.
 Changes, a world of many changes.
 Having a big head is not good.
 So, this is how the world is!
 Changes, a world of many changes.
 330 Changes, a world of many changes.
 Pride is not good.
 So, this is how the world is!
 Changes, a world of many changes.
 Every slave has his own descendants.
 335 Everyone has to be careful with himself.

[Tempo of the music changes]

Everything has an end in this world except for the might of God.
 God has the treatment for stubbornness and unreasonableness
 But he can't give it to human beings.
 There are two names on the earth,
 340 Your front and your back.
 Someone was with your father,
 As a slave being used day and night.
 There may be a time when the children of wealthy people,
 Will become enslaved by the children of slaves tomorrow.
 345 That is how the world is.
 Life has three days:
 Yesterday has already passed,
 We are living today,
 And we don't know about tomorrow.
 350 Yesterday was our ancestor's day,
 Today is ours,
 And tomorrow is our children's.
 If you hear that the world is a town of many changes.
 The world is not changing,

355 But it is the things in the world that are changing.
Everyone should be careful about what he does.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 10

TRADITIONS FROM LINDA NAGEL, BARALA, CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Linda Nagel is a missionary with WEC International who lives in Bouaflé, Côte d'Ivoire. In February 1997, Nagel kindly sent me three pages of oral traditions that she recorded and typed when she lived in Booko in the region of Barala from 1978-1995. She collected these stories from the chief of Booko who was a Soumahoro (Sumaworo), and from one of the Diomandé (Kamara) elders. Nagel conducted most of the interviews in French.

As a preface to the traditions that Nagel gathered, I note her comments about the oral traditions that are being told in Barala: "There is quite a debate in the Booko area between the two main family groups (the Diomandé and the Soumahoro), on who actually came into the Booko area first and therefore has the right to possess the land. This is a common struggle all over."¹ Later she added: "The Diomandès see themselves as the chiefs of the earth in the area where they have settled. This is a big source of conflict between them and the Soumahoro who say that they are the first. Nonetheless, the Soumahoro are not known as the chiefs of the earth."²

Marie-José Derive and Linda Nagel collected some oral traditions in Côte d'Ivoire that explain how the Kamara established Barala. Some of the names like Kònsaba and Sumaka that Derive and Nagel's sources mentioned correspond to names in the Guinea versions. One of Derive's sources was a *mansa* in Barala named Tiemogo Diomandé.

¹Personal communication, 21 February 1997.

²Personal communication, 29 July 1997.

Diomandé said that the Diomandé immigrated from the Sankaran, and that their ancestor was Soumaka (Figure 25). He said that Soumaka's son was Kansaba (Kònsaba), and that Kansaba's son Mya Soue was the first Diomandé to reach Barala. Mya Sou's son Tye-masa Siraman³ sired Syraman (Siraman) Mey, and Syraman Meya sired Va Diamu and Bue-tye. Bue-tye allegedly founded Booko, and Va Diamu's children established several towns in Barala.⁴

Nagel collected four traditions that also explained how the Diomandé settled in Barala, but she did not clearly identify any of her sources.⁵ According to the accounts that she recorded, Kementyema Diomandé was the 'founding father' of the Booko Diomandé. Kementyema might be the Tye-masa Siraman who Derive learned about, though more information is needed before this link can be established. Nagel learned that several Jomandé brothers supposedly lived in Gbè, but that the middle brothers sought to kill the youngest brother because

he was knowledgeable and popular... [So] they made a big sacrifice and when the feasting was over and they were about to do the evil deed, the oldest brother stood up and declared that if the youngest brother died, there wouldn't be any [Diomandé] left - he would kill the rest and then himself (Appendix 10.3).

After the older and younger brother fled to Tienko, the younger brother went to Massala in Barala where a Sumaworo was living. He married Sumaworo's lame daughter, and she gave birth to a boy a few miles away from Massala. They named him Diala, and named the town where he was born - Diala (Appendix 10.3).

Recall that the informants who Derive and Nagel interviewed claimed to explain how the Diomandé settled Barala. If Diala is the same person as Va Diamu, then the

³Tye-masa Siraman is probably *mansa* Tye Siraman.

⁴Derive 1990b:51.

⁵See Nagel 1986:11-13. She wrote that source was "V." He might have been a Soumahoro.

younger Diomandé might be Syraman Meya. Is Syraman Meya or one of his descendants Foningama? The younger brother in the story that Nagel collected was, like Foningama, 1) from Gbè, 2) the youngest Jomandé, 3) threatened because his brothers feared that he might someday become their ruler, and 4) fled to save his life. This is a cliché, but one that is remarkably similar to the story that the Maniyaka tell about how Kònsaba and Foningama in Gbè.

Vase Kamala told how Kònsaba supposedly tried to kill Foningama in Gbè, and reported that Tiyama was an alternative name for Kònsaba in one of his versions (Appendix 7.38). Tiyama is similar to Tye-masa or Mansa Tye and could be the same person. Tiyama may be a holdover in the oral traditions that is more useful for historical reasons than a praise name like Foningama that can apply to any Kamara male.

The format that follows is close to the one that Nagel used. The only additions are the appendix numbers and some of the footnotes.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 10.1

THE DIOMANDÉ AND THE CAMARA

In Guinea, the Diomandé originated from the Camara family. The Camara had a child called Dioman; his children were called “Dioman den,” thus Diomandé. A. from Touba says Dioman was a woman. This is a well-known story - there were many offspring.⁶

* * *

⁶These would be the traditions about the Diomandé migrations to Barala, Gbè, Koro, Mau and other regions that are the focus of Chapter 3.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 10.2

CLAN RELATIONS

The Soumahoro and the Méité are of the same clan.⁷

The Diomandé, Koné and Camara are from the same clan.

A Soumahoro may marry with a Diomandé and vice versa, but they must never marry with the lower class such as the Bamba, Doumbia or Diakité. These are the blacksmith, shoemaker and potmaker clans. They are also griots who praise the higher clans.

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 10.3

THE FOUNDING OF BARALA - PART I

The Barala came from the Gbè tribe in Guinea.⁸

The Gbekan chased the Bressé from their villages and that's where they got their name. 'Gbè' means 'to chase'.⁹

In the Diomandé family there were several brothers. The oldest and the youngest¹⁰ got along well, but the brothers were jealous of the youngest brother because he was knowledgeable and popular. They said, "If we let him live, he'll rule over us, so let's kill him." They made a big sacrifice and when the feasting was over and they were about to do the evil deed, the oldest brother stood and declared that if the youngest brother died, there wouldn't be any [Diomandé] left - he would kill the rest and then himself. After that, he fled with the youngest brother and founded the village of Tyenko (in Guinea).

From there, the youngest brother came to Massala where he found a Soumahoro. They lived together and the young Diomandé did a lot of hunting. He would go out on his own and not share the meat. The Soumahoro counseled him: why didn't he tell anyone? One day a lion might attack him and no-one would know. Also, he would share some of the meat with his host, out of respect. So Diomandé agreed to bring him a piece, but then to carry fresh meat a long distance was a real problem, so he asked if he could dry it first. Soumahoro agreed, but who was going to help him? He looked for someone who would dry the meat for him. How Soumahoro had a daughter who couldn't walk, but she could sit by the fires and supervise the smoking of the meat. So she did this. Diomandé eventually took her as his wife. Her first child was red - a boy - and everybody said "a

⁷The Méité are the same as the Sumahoro (Person 1960:55).

⁸This statement implies that the Diomandé who formed Barala came from Gbè. Nagel also wrote that "The Gbekan in Guinea are the brothers of the Barala."

⁹Bressé: = Pesse or Kpelle.

¹⁰The youngest brother could be Syraman Meya (Derive 1990b:51), or Foningama of the Guinea accounts.

diala” (he’s nice), and that’s what they called the village.¹¹ They had five sons, who became the founders of the Barala villages.¹² According to this account, the founding father of the Barala is Diomandé and the founding mother is a Soumahoro.

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 10.4

THE FOUNDING OF BARALA - PART II

V. said that the first son of Diomandé¹³ and his Soumahoro wife founded the villages behind the mountain - Dialla - and so fourth. The second son founded Torano, the third son founded Baralasoba, the fourth son founded Moambasso and the last one founded Booko.

There is a muddy-swampy area below the mountain, and the youngest son was told to settle on the other side of the Bogo (mud). Thus the name Booko, which literally means, ‘behind the mud.’¹⁴

The youngest brother was told that he could establish the market. Now the other main centers are jealous because Booko then became the sous-préfecture and the central town for the Barala.

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 10.5

THE FOUNDING OF BARALA - PART III

It is the seventh generation of Diomandé - that is in Booko now. The founding father was Kementyema¹⁵ Diomandé. The Diomandé were fetishers - it is in the last 50 years that the people have become Muslim. V.’s grandfather¹⁶ brought the teaching into the area. He was a big marabout. He built the first mosque out of mud bricks, which is still in use.

¹¹The name of the village, like the son, was Diala. Diala may be Va Diamu in the Derive collection. Derive wrote that Va Diamu was the father of the sons who founded seven villages. The speaker here stated that Diala was the first of five sons who founded the ancient towns of Barala.

¹² These villages are listed in the next account (App. 10.4): Diala, Torano, Baralasoba, Moambasso and Booko.

¹³This Diomandé could be Syraman Meya and the ‘younger brother’ of the previous story (10.3).

¹⁴Derive gave the same translation.

¹⁵Kementyema may be Tyemasa Siraman and Tiya.

¹⁶Was V. a Soumahoro (App. 10.7)?

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 10.6

THE FOUNDING OF BARALA - PART IV

The owners of the land in Booko area are the Diomandé.¹⁷

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX 10.7

THE FOUNDING OF BARALA - PART V

The Koné and Dosso clans were the warriors or fighters for the Diomandé in conquering new areas.

The Soumahoros were the marabouts and spiritual leaders.

¹⁷The Diomandé elder might have made this claim.

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