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CONTENTS

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THE MANDING IN WESTERN LIBERIA:

AN OVERVIEW*

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Introduction

This article summarizes the interrelationship of peoples in Western Liberia with the Manding. Only the main events are given, but possibly more important, it is the first step, taking up Yves Person's challenge,[1] to begin forging connections between the histories of the peoples in Upper Guinea and those in Liberia.

Early history

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Manding peoples, particularly the Kamara from the Konian area of Upper Guinea, began to move out of their highland area where their sacred capital at Musadugu was located and into the coastal forest region. They first settled among the Loma peoples where they founded a number of chiefdoms while at the same time mixing with the local people.[2] From this base they established trade links toward the coast, forming what has been called the Mandinka corridor".[3]

The earliest mention of Manding presence among the Vai on the coast at Cape Mount comes from an account dated 1724.[4] It is not surprising that the Manding should be found among the Vai people. Linguists have classified the Vai language along with the Manding as part of the northern sub-division of the Mande languages.[5] Nineteenth century observers also saw the close cultural affinities between the Vai and the Manding.[6] In fact, the Manding of the interior even view the Vai as related, calling them the "western Dyula".[7] With an enclave of peoples similar in language and culture settled on the coast, the Manding peoples who settled in the Loma area were drawn in the direction of the Vai at Cape Mount, rather than to other points along the coast in order to obtain salt and to trade for European goods.

The founding of Bopolu

At this stage in the historical research on Western Liberia it is not possible to say very much that is definitive concerning the history prior to the

* Field research indicated in this paper was carried out under grants awarded by the Foreign Area Fellowship Program for work in Liberia in 1965-66, and by the American Philosophical Society and a Carnegie Grant through DePauw University for work in 1968 again in Liberia.

nineteenth century. It is fairly clear that by the turn of the century the Gola had completed their movements into the region between the Lofa and St. Paul rivers, remaining east of the Dei, and also had crossed the St. Paul river to form the chiefdoms of Den and Todi. It is also quite possible that they had taken control of the Fuama area, even though they must have been living in widely scattered small villages separated by large areas of high forest.

Sometime before 1800, a hunter named Bogai who was in the service of a Dei chief, Gamole, at Gawulun (on Bushrod Island) had a small village in the vicinity of modern Bopolu. At this time a trade route from the interior Loma and Bandi areas passed through or near his village on the way to the coast. In time the interior chiefs became displeased with hinderances which were placed by Bogai upon the free flow of their trade. Thus, several chiefs in the Loma and Bandi areas combined to rid the obstacles along the route. As they marched southward, having along with them Manding Muslims as advisors, they obtained support from the Kpelle leaders north of the St. Paul river. The warriors captured Bogai, then continued on toward the coast as far as Bushrod Island, where they defeated Gamole and subjected his people to their rule.[8]

For the first time, the area from the Loma and Bandi districts of the interior to the coast were under the control of the traders along the route. Thus began a pattern which continued for the rest of the nineteenth century. The traders from the north, most of whom were Manding, constantly strove to keep the trade route open, sometimes successfully, sometimes not.

As a consequence of the expedition, the Loma and Bandi chiefs decided to establish a town halfway between their area and the coast. This was Bopolu. It was a logical choice for the town, as it dominated the trade route and also provided a base in what had been essentially uninhabited forest from which armies could be mustered to force any intervening aggressors out of the way.

The most famous of the chiefs of Bopolu during the first half of the nineteenth century was Sao Boso (in Liberian histories known as Boatswain or Bosan), who was, however, the fourth chief to rule Bopolu after its founding. The first references to Sao Boso are from 1822, by which time, he was already powerful. Allowing for sufficient time to have built alliances, it is probable that the founding of Bopolu probably occurred sometime prior to the end of the eighteenth century.

According to oral traditions, Sao Boso came from Falako, an area in the Loma section of Guinea just to the west of Macenta.[9] He was supposed to be a member of the Manding clan called Kamara, his father's name being Koilifi Kamara. He was, however, raised by a Bandi chief, Litombe Seve, at Mambo, a town which used to exist along the Lofa river.[10]

Due to Litombe Seve's involvement in the opening of the trade route to the coast, Sao Boso was eventually sent to Bopolu where he finally settled and established a town of his own, Totokwele. Elsewhere I have described the so-called Condo Confederation, over which Sao Boso ruled until his death in 1836.[11]

The turbulent years

During the period from the time of Sao Boso's death in 1836 until the 1860's the western part of Liberia was in political turmoil. The slave trade which the Liberian settlers abhorred was being terminated with the assistance of the British slave squadron. Thus, the economic trade base in the area was destroyed. In addition, with the death of Sao Boso of Bopolu in 1836, and the death of Fan Fila Jenge, the leader of the southern Gola in about 1843,[12] the

peoples of the area were without strong leadership. These deaths were particularly crucial since this was an area where political leadership was focused upon the individual leader rather than upon a traditional position. During the 1840's and 1850's the peoples of the area searched for new leaders who could reconsolidate power. Most of those who tried did not last long. In the period from 1836 to 1866, the Bopolu area had at least six leaders.[13] Likewise, the southern Gola were unable to find stable leadership. The consequences for peaceful trade from the interior to the coast were obvious.

It was not until the 1860's that strong leaders emerged. For the people of the Bopolu area, stable leadership came under Momolu Sao a son of the former chief, Sao Boso.[14] In the Gola area between the Lofa and St. Paul rivers, a leader named Fan Kwekwe emerged toward the end of the decade. In fact, the two leaders were cousins; their Gola mothers were sisters.[15]

With the area between Bopolu and the coast in the hands of strong rulers, trade from the interior began to expand at a rapid pace. The traders by this time had adapted to the changed economic conditions, and from the reports of the time, it would seem that the trade was again as prosperous, if not more so, than it had been during Sao Boso's time.

As an indication of the increase in trade, a small Dei village near the colonial settlements on the coast, Vonzua, within a decade changed from a quiet village in which the Dei people were in the majority to a village completely dominated by Manding traders. Manding became the leaders of the town, they established a mosque and school, and turned it into a town of their own.[16]

Political stability prevailed along the trade route between Bopolu and the coast through the 1870's, even though there was an occasional outbreak of hostility. When conflicts occurred, they were in the rainy season and thus did not disturb the flow of trade which was carried on mainly during the dry season.

Relations to the east of Bopolu

For the first half of the nineteenth century, the documented knowledge of the area east of Bopolu is sparse. The kinds of products which originated from there and something about the geography were known. There is however hardly any mention of the peoples and of their leaders, and even less about the politics of the region.

In fact, one of the earliest references for the area comes from an unnamed Kpelle chief who complained to the Liberian government in 1851 that the people of Bopolu were hindering the free flow of trade. He stated that they "live by plunder - they attack defenseless towns, take away every thing they can find and make the inhabitants slaves."[17] It was probably true that the people of Bopolu, as middlemen who were powerful, treated the surrounding peoples with a heavy hand.

The earliest definite information about the far interior comes from the expedition of George L. Seymour and Samuel J. Ash in 1858. For the first time, it is possible to obtain a picture of what the Kpelle and Loma areas north and east of the Saint Paul river were like. In the Kpelle Gbalein country the explorers encountered many Manding, particularly in the town of Palata.[18] They also found a well developed market system. For instance at the town of Zange, they attended the market and saw a wide variety of products including such things as country cloths, palm oil, many kinds of pottery, tobacco, salt and slaves.[19]

Continuing their trip farther to the interior, Seymour and Ash entered the Loma country and eventually reached the town of Kwonka (Quanger), where

Dyanka-Kama (Camer),[20] the ruler for the Buzi area which lies in present-day Guinea, lived. He was the father of Kama-Kyekura who would later play an important role in the history of western Liberia. From the reports of Seymour and Ash, the area was prosperous and was clearly the source of many of the country cloths which reached the Liberian market as they found four or five looms in each town that they visited.[21]

With the return of Seymour and Ash in 1858, Liberians' continued knowledge of their interior came to a halt. It was a decade before another Liberia explorer, Benjamin J. K. Anderson, penetrated to the far interior again, this time as far as the Manding savanna and the sacred town of Konian, Musadugu.[22]

At the time of Anderson's trip in 1868, the trade route to the coast through Bopolu was open and the surrounding areas were under the strong control of Fan Kwekwe in the Southern Gola area and Momolu Sao at Bopolu. The Manding were clearly dominant in the trade from the coast to Musadugu, as Anderson found out much to his discomfort and delay.

Part of the reason for the peace in the Liberian section of the route was because Momolu Sao could appeal by descent and up-bringing to several different groups. He was half Gola and half Manding by birth and thus could use these ties for support. In addition, he had been raised in the Bandi country and thus could draw upon the Bandi for assistance when needed. Finally, the power and prestige which he held as ruler of Bopolu allowed him to intervene in the affairs of peoples surrounding his territory.

For example, in 1868 Momolu Sao became involved in trying to halt a war which was raging between the Loma, presumably of Buluyiema, and the Gbalein Kpelle. By the use of salt sticks as a sign of peace, he admonished the leaders of both groups to cease their hostilities. In addition, were they not to do so, he threatened to confiscate their goods in Bopolu and to join the party of the chief who first showed his willingness to stop fighting. It was a successful use of the principle of divide and rule.[23]

B. J. K. Anderson and the far interior

B. J. K. Anderson's two expeditions to Musadugu in 1868 and 1874[24] provide historians with the first accurate means of dating events of the area during this period. Thus, not only is it possible to understand the sequence of events which affected Manding peoples in Konian, but also to begin to inter-relate those events with what was occurring in the coastal area.

Sometime, probably at the beginning of 1868 during the dry season, the peoples of Musadugu (who had continued to have difficulties with people living to the east of them in the mountains, and who were non Muslims), found that they were no longer able to defend themselves. Thus, while Sere-Breme (Ibrahima Sise), the ruler of Madina, a state to the north of Musadugu, was on a visit to his uncle, Amala, he was asked to assist the Musadugu people in their war.[25] Sere-Breme returned to his country, but sometime during the early part of 1868, after being freed from difficulties which had taken his attention and his armies elsewhere, he returned to Musadugu and joined the warriors there in attacking the pagans to Musadugu's east. However, the presence of Sere-Breme's warriors in Musadugu was a mixed blessing. The people found themselves stripped of everything valuable and felt that they had been treated very badly by their allies from Madina.[26] Anderson's account clearly indicates that Musadugu considered itself independent of the Sise's authority, though equally clearly, they could not resist his armies.[27]

In 1874, six years later, when Anderson returned to Musadugu, he found that many changes had occurred. In about 1872, Saghadyigi (Sargee), a non-Muslim

Manding from Gbankundu, had rallied the peoples to the north and west of Musadugu, and posed a major challenge to both the Sise political domination on his eastern side, and on his western side to the rising power of Samori. During the early part of 1873, he turned his attention toward the southern part of the Konian area in particular on Musadugu. He surrounded the town's walls and besieged it for seventy-five days. The people of Musadugu at one point asked Saghadyigi what they had done to him that caused him to attack them. He is supposed to have replied:

> what had the chickens done to the hawks that the hawks were always seizing and devouring them.[28]

Eventually the people of Musadugu resolved to obtain assistance from Sere-Breme, even though he had acted teacherously toward them in 1868. In the course of a foray by the warriors of the town against the enemy, three messengers escaped pursuit from the enemy and reached Madina. About two weeks later, Sere-Breme arrived with his cavalry of a thousand men. He quickly came to an agreement with Saghadyigi. The latter would not attack any Muslim towns, and particularly Musadugu, but instead was free to wage war on any pagan town, Manding or Loma. Saghadyigi, realizing that he could not have defeated Sere-Breme, agreed and took an oath. He gave Sere-Breme 200 captives which he had caught in various wars, and returned to his own town, Gbankundu. His war bands, however, continued to attack small pagan towns in the area which were too weak to resist.[29]

Following Yves Person's account,[30] after the departure of Saghadyigi and Sere-Breme, Vafin Dole, the chief of Musadugu, sent a delegation to Saghadyigi. It is possible that Vafin saw that the fortunes of Musadugu and his people were better served under Saghadyigi than Sere-Breme. Sere-Breme at about this time also lost control of two other territories, Girila and Gwana.[31] Both of these territories refused to pay tribute to him. Thus, the southern area of Konian fell to Saghadyigi, and remained under his control until about 1883.[32]

To the south, the Koima (Waima) Loma were under the leadership of Dowilnyah. Anderson had visited him both in 1868 and again in 1874. The only change which Anderson noted during the intervening period was that Dowilnyah's last town, Vukka, in the northeast on the edge of the Manding country, in 1868 a small Loma village, by 1874 had become a large flourishing town occupied by Manding. These Manding, under the leadership of a man named Nyama, came from an area northeast of Musadugu.[33]

Nyama was an uncle (mother's brother) to Saghadyigi and when the latter made a demand on Nyama's people for troops, they decided not to agree and fled to the foothills of the Loma country, probably in about 1873.[34] It is very likely that Saghadyigi's demands for troops were tied to his seige of Musadugu, especially since it dragged out so long. It may have been the fear that these Manding might be attacked by Saghadyigi which caused Dowilnyah, on behalf of the Koima (Waima) Loma people, to sign an agreement with Anderson and the Liberian government on November 20, 1874. According to the agreement, they were to live in peace with each other and Dowilnyah would not hinder trade through his country.[35]

Anderson was the last Liberian to reach this distant point in the interior and leave an account until the Franco-Liberian boundary commission was established in 1903, when William Lomax travelled to the area. However, beginning in the 1890's, other European accounts are available.

Even though there was no further direct contact, by 1879 the political changes that were affecting the Manding in the savana country had repercussions in Monrovia. During that year, while Sere-Breme at Madina was being increasingly pressed by Samori, he seems to have made a vain attempt to gain support and assistance from the Liberians against Samori. He sent a messenger, Fumba Sise,

to Monrovia to ask for a treaty with the government as he desired to trade with the republic.

Liberian ideas about the interior also had undergone change. The government chose to interpret Sere-Breme's request as one of "union" between the two governments, that is, political incorporation into Liberia,[36] whereas in the past, the government had been interested in just trade and the spread of Christianity.[37] Part of this change of attitude may have been due to a growing realization on the part of the Liberian Government that it needed to press its claims toward the interior if it was not to lose the area to the British or French. Liberia had been involved in a long struggle for recognition of her rights to the Gallinas area on her northwest border with Sierra Leone. In addition, in 1879 the French were beginning to talk about making Liberia a protectorate, which surely must have heightened the officials' fears.[38]

During the latter part of 1879, Fuma Sise, the messenger from Sere-Breme, tried to return home, but found that he could not pass beyond Bopolu. Again, during the latter part of 1880, he made an attempt to return but with no success.[39] The area to the north and east of Bopolu was at war.[40] At this same time Medina came under attack from Samori's armies, which eventually defeated Sere-Breme. Ultimately, Fumba decided to remain in Liberia and during later years often acted as a guide for travelers to Bopolu.

Affairs between Bopolu and the coast

Between 1877 and 1883 the Bopolu area was politically unstable. In 1871 with the death of Momolu Sao whose rule had provided stability for more than a decade, his brother Bengo Kwelle, took over. Although the country as a whole remained relatively peaceful during his reign, he did have some difficulties with a chief named Weta and his Bunde Loma followers.

With Kwelle's death in 1877, however, a shift in power and territorial control occurred. So long as Momolu Sao was chief, Fan Kwekwe, his Gola cousin, remained friendly to Bopolu and its people. After Momolu's death, Fan Kwekwe began to reassert Gola control over several old Gola towns along the Bopolu-Monrovia route. Finally with Bengo Kwelle's death, a power vacuum occured in Bopolu. Not until the early 1880's was Semolu Saiyo, the Manding Imam of Bopolu, able to consolidate sufficient power to assert his position as chief of the local area. Long-standing suspicions and jealousies between the Manding and their Gola and Kpelle neighbors now began to flourish. Whereas Momolu Sao, as a descendent of both Manding and Gola lineages had been able to balance these forces, Semolu could not.

The inability of the new Manding ruler to create political stability in the whole area was due in part to the envy which the surrounding peoples had of the Manding peoples' great wealth and involvement in trade, and to the fact that the Gola, by the 1880's, had regained control of the trade route to the coast. As one Liberian observed at Boomboom, a town on the route which had fallen under Fan Kwekwe's control in 1877, "there seems to be a race jealousy or rather antipathy between the Mandingoes and the Gola."[41] This boded ill for the Manding during the ensuing decades.

Adding to this atmosphere of hostility was the death during the early 1880's of Fan Kwekwe, ruler of the southern Gola people. Because no one individual was able to immediately fill his position during a time when the whole country was under attack by a marauding group of Mende warriors from Sierra Leone (the so-called Kpan war) political instability reigned in the whole area.

During this same period, the Liberian government under President A. W. Gardner (1878-1883) decided to pursue a more active policy toward the

interior peoples. As mentioned earlier, his government "annexed" Sere-Breme's country. In 1883, Gardner's successor, Alfred F. Russell (1883-1884), continued his policy. Thus, in 1883 Russell's government sent a sum of money to Semolu Saiyo, at Bopolu, in order that Semolu could have the paths to the interior opened.[42]

Instead of sharing these funds, as apparently the surrounding Gola chiefs believed he was supposed to do, he kept all the money for himself. This, added to the fact that the Manding already dominated trade and were by far the wealthiest individuals in the countryside, only increased their general unpopularity. In addition, their scorn of traditional religious practices, particularly Poro, in favor of Islam, did not win them favor. As a consequence various Gola and Kpelle chiefs united against the Manding, attacked Bopolu and overran it, causing the temporary dispersal of Manding people from the area. Among the Gola chiefs who united were Pounde of Den, Zulu of Fuama and Dwalu Zeppi, who was possibly the successor of Fan Kwekwe for most of the Lofa-St. Paul rivers area. It would seem likely that the Kpelle chiefs, Kpakla Tua of Tawalata and Yakpawolu Pee of Zahn, Bokomu, were also allied against the Manding.[43] The Manding presence in the area was temporarily, if briefly, undermined.

By 1891 the Manding were able to reassert themselves, partly with the assistance of Kuwaa (Belle) mercenaries, and a new force, the Sofa warriors, who were to have devastating consequences for the whole western area of modern Liberia.

The interior affects the coast

In 1889, according to Person, Kama-Kyekura, the son of Dyanka-Kama whom Seymour and Ash had earlier visited, was given command of an army to open the road to the coast for Samori,[44] and he sent his son and others with warriors into western Liberia. The results of these operations on the peoples of the forest region were profound. By 1891 the warriors had advanced westward into the Bunde country. When Alldridge visited Pandimai in that year, he found large numbers of warriors, "sofa", stationed there. They had ravaged the countryside.[45]

The main body of Sofa warriors, however, moved southwestward along the old trade route. The Manding of Bopolu welcomed their arrival, for they thought the Sofa would provide them with an opportunity to pry open the route to Monrovia closed by the Gola, and at the same time to retaliate against the Gola and Kpelle who had destroyed Bopolu in 1885. Thus, in early 1891, the Sofa warriors swept down upon the Gola and destroyed a large number of their towns and killed many people.[46]

The Liberian government tried to bring the war to a halt, and did more or less succeed in bringing peace in the lower Gola area, but the Sofa warriors continued fighting in the interior. The Manding of Bopolu had a particular grudge against the Goje Gola. Thus the war continued in that area and in time spread southward along the Lofa river, finally crossing over into the Vai country in 1892. This group of warriors was under the leadership of Jalla Kane, who remained in the area fighting sporadic battles along with his chief warrior, Bondo Potto, until 1894 when he was finally caught by the Liberian government and eventually hanged.[47]

The Manding and the Liberian government

Once the Manding in Bopolu saw that their cause was not successful, and in fact, that they had stirred up a hornet's nest, as the Gola and Kpelle retaliated in 1893 against them and again caused great destruction, the leaders of the original war, Semolu and Maliki, surrendered to the government. A high

bail was set, so they were forced to remain in prison where they finally died.[48]

In the meantime, Filabeyan, one of the original members of the Sofa group sent down by Kama-Kyekura, turned to the government and expressed a willingness to assist it in any way possible. It had become clear to the Manding that their best basis of support was the Liberian government, not armies which they themselves could muster. In addition, the political fortunes of Samori were now on the wane, at least as his influence in the Konian area was concerned.[49] Thus, the Manding had little choice, being cut off from their base of support in the rear. As a consequence, they cooperated with the government, particularly President William D. Coleman, whom they in fact identified as a Manding, seeing his name as a corruption of the Manding name Kroma.[50]

So, Manding fortunes in the western part of Liberia now were tied to the Liberian governement. In succeeding years, they remained loyal to the government, even when the peoples around them were hostile. Not until 1907 was the government finally able to pacify the area. A large conference was held at Bopolu where all the local chiefs swore loyalty to the government.[51] Another five or six years passed before the government effectively occupied the area to the interior.

Manding pressure for recognition

Nevertheless, during this period, the Manding were considered both by the Liberians and by the indigenous peoples as foreigners to the country. There were constant conflicts between them and particularly the Gola people. The Manding refusal to permit their sons to participate in Poro society functions displeased the Gola. Similarly, their involvement in trade and their belief in Islam also set them apart from the local peoples. Thus, increasing pressure began to grow among the Manding for a territory of their own.

In the middle 1920's, a group of Manding petitioned President C. D. B. King to set aside a portion of the forest area between Bopolu and Suen, which was essentially uninhabited, as a chiefdom for Manding. King assented, and Manding who had been scattered all over the western part of Liberia were encouraged to come and settle in the new chiefdom, which was named Mecca.

The Gola of course were most displeased with the loss of their territory. It was the old problem in this area. Not until 1945 were the boundaries between the Mecca Chiefdom and those of the Gola finally settled, and even then not without a great deal of misunderstanding.[52]

The Manding since World War Two

With the construction of the motor road to the interior of Liberia through the central part of the country in the late 1940's, the trade which in the past had come down through Bopolu was deflected. As early as the middle 1920's some Manding saw the shift coming and began to settle in Kakata, a Kpelle town in the central part of Liberia. After the Second World War, increasing numbers of Manding settled in the towns along this road. Gbanga and Ganpa now have major Manding quarters in them.

Most Manding of Bopolu and Mecca, their prosperity diminished by these economic shifts, turned to small-scale farming. During the 1950's Bopolu had a brief renaissance with the discovery of diamonds in the area. Since the middle 1960's the size of the town has continued to diminish, however, and it is now a small, sleepy place.

A further change occurred in the middle 1960's which can be seen as part of the age-old competition between the Manding and the Gola. In 1968, a new

political entity, the Bomi Territory, was created out of a portion of Montserrado County. It included all the territory between the St. Paul and Lofa rivers and extended from the sea to the boundary of Lofa County.

The creation of this new territory had been viewed as a bowing to Gola demands for political identity within the Liberian government. Thus, this new territory has been considered as an essentially Gola area. Included in it is the Mecca Chiefdom. So, the Manding again find themselves under the control of the Gola, providing the latest move in the long chess game between the Gola and the Manding.

FOOTNOTES

1. Yves Person, "Ethnic Movements and Acculturation in Upper Guinea Since the Fifteenth Century," AFRICAN HISTORICAL STUDIES, IV (1971), 669, 689.

2. Yves Person, "Le Soudan nigerien et la Guinée occidentale," in Hubert Deschamps, ed., HISTOIRE GENERALE DE L'AFRIQUE NOIRE (paris, 1970), I, 284.

3. James F. Hopewell, "Islam and the Forest: A Study of Muslim Penetration into French Guinea, Sierre Leone and Liberia before 1850," Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Colombia University, 1958, 84.

4. Jean B. Labat, VOYAGE DE CHEVALIER DES MARCHAIS (paris, 1730), I. 90.

5. William Welmers, "The Mande Languages," GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY MONOGRAPH SERIES, No. 11 (1958), 21.

6. "Address of the Rev. Ezekiel E. Smith, Late U. S. Minister to Liberia," LIBERIA BULLETIN, No. 2 (Feb. 1893), 23; "Dr. Tracy's Memorial," AFRICAN REPOSITORY (hereafter, AR), XLIV (1868), 44; W. F. Lynch to J. C. Dobbin, Sept. 5, 1853, U. S. House, EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 1, 33rd Cong., 1 Sess., 1853, 345.

7. Amadou Kouroubari, "Alimama Samori Ko-ma (Histoire de l'Imam Samori)," in, Maurice Delafosse, ESSAI DE MANUEL PRATIQUE DE LA LANGUE MANDE OU MANDINGUE (Paris, 1901), 163; and translation, BULLETIN DE l'IFAN, XXI (1959), 554.

8. Oral History by Seku Saiyon, Oct. 19, 1965 & July 20, 1970, Tape Nos. 6/2/4 & 28/2/2; Oral history by Boakai Sirleaf, elder, Madina, Bopolu Chiefdom, Oct. 16, 1965, Tape Nos. 6/1/1 & 6/1/2.

9. F. Bouet, "Les Tomas," BULLETIN DU COMITÉ DE L'AFRIQUE FRANÇAISE, Reseignements Coloniaux, No. 8 (1911), 189, map; Oral history by Seku Saiyon, Oct. 19, 1965.

10. Oral history by Seku Saiyon, October 19, 1965; Oral history by Boakai Sirleaf, Oct. 16, 1965.

11. S. E. Holsoe, "The Condo Confederation in Western Liberia," LIBERIAN HISTORICAL REVIEW, III, 1 (1966), 1-28.

12. S. E. Holsoe, "A Study of Relations Between Settlers and Indigenous Peoples in Western Liberia, 1821-1847," AFRICAN HISTORICAL STUDIES, IV, 2 (1971), 352.

13. E. W. Blyden, "The Boporo Country," AR, XLVII (1871), 258.

14. B. J. K. Anderson, NARRATIVE OF A JOURNEY TO MUSARDU (New York, 1870), 41.

15. Blyden, "Boporo Country," 323.

16. Bowen, ADVENTURES, 71-72; "The Arabic Language and Liberia," AR, XLII, (1866), 337.

17. "The Interior," LIBERIA HERALD (hereafter, LH), II (Oct. 15, 1851), 23.

18. A report from 1870 states that there were no Muslims in the town at that time. "Barline Country," AR, XLVI (1870), 282-83. Had the Manding been driven out of the area?

19. "Liberia Interior Exploration," NEW YORK COLONIZATION JOURNAL, 107, (Nov. 1859).

20. I am following here the spelling used by Yves Person, SAMORI (Dakar, 1968), 307, ftn. 42, and will do so with the subsequent names.

21. "George L. Seymour's Journal," LH, VII (Jan. 4, 1860).

22. Anderson, NARRATIVE, 29.

23. IBID.

24. The first expedition is described in Anderson, NARRATIVE. For the second expedition see, F. Starr, ed., NARRATIVE OF THE EXPEDITION DESPATCHED TO MUSAHDU BY THE LIBERIAN GOVERNMENT UNDER BENJAMIN J. K. ANDERSON, SENIOR, ESQUIRE IN 1874 (Monrovia, 1912).

25. Anderson, NARRATIVE, 95.

26. IBID., 95-96.

27. IBID., 99.

28. Starr, NARRATIVE, 29-30.

29. IBID., 30. As will be seen if one consults Yves Person's work on Samori, this interpretation differs to a certain extent from what he has written. He dates the attack by Saghadyigi earlier, that is in 1868, rather than in 1872. See: Person, Samori, 287-288. This is due to the fact that Person apparently did not have a copy of Anderson's second trip to consult. What is pleasing, however, is that the account which Person has obtained from oral traditions concerning Saghadyigi's attack is very similar to that which was recorded by Anderson a year or so after it occurred.

30. Person, SAMORI, 287-288.

31. Person says in 1869, it is possible that it was later with this revised chronology.

32. Person, SAMORI, 287-288.

33. Anderson, NARRATIVE, 85; Starr, NARRATIVE, 26.

34. Starr, NARRATIVE, 26.

35. Agreement with King Wymar Boozie Country, November 20, 1874, Liberian Government Archives, Monrovia (hereafter, LGA).

36. Smyth to Evarts, Dec. 12, 1879, FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES (Washington, 1880), 693; Translation of a Letter addressed by President Gardner to Ibrahima Sissi, King of Medina, LGA, Department of State, Local, 1879-1883, ff. 166-167.

37. G. W. Gibson to Leopold Carrance, Sept. 2, 1879, in, Chicago Historical Society, EXHIBITION OF OBJECTS ILLUSTRATING THE HISTORY AND CONDITION OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA (Chicago, 1914), 16.

38. "Annexation of Medina," AR, LVI (1880), 55-56; "The Six Decades of Liberia," AR, LVII (1881), 97.

39. OBSERVER, III (Jan. 22, 1880); "Notes," OBSERVER, III (Dec. 9, 1880).

40. Methodist Episcopal Church, SIXTY-SECOND ANNUAL REPORT OF THE M. E. CHURCH (New York, 1881), 35.

41. "A Trip to Bopora," OBSERVER, V, (April 13, 1882).

42. H. J. Moore to J. J. Cheeseman, March 1893, Executive Correspondence, 1893-1894, LGA: Cabinet Minutes, 1879-1882, Jan. 8, 1884, LGA.

43. Forty-Nine Petitioners to H. R. W. Johnson, Oct. 14, 1885, Executive Correspondence, 1883-1885, LGA; Moore to Cheeseman, March 13, 1893.

44. Person, SAMORI, 565.

45. T. J. Alldridge, SHERBRO AND ITS HINTERLAND (London, 1902), 227-233.

46. J. Johnson, TRADITIONAL HISTORY AND FOLKLORE OF THE GOLA TRIBE IN LIBERIA (Monrovia, 1961), II, 122.

47. Moore to Cheeseman, March 13, 1893; J. Hoff to J. J. Cheeseman, Jan. 27, 1892, Executive Correspondence, 1888-1892, LGA, f. 47; W. D. McCoy to J. G. Blaine, June 14, 1892, U. S. Ministers to Liberia, U. S. Archives, Vol. ii (1892-1896), No. 18; W. H. Heard to A. A. Adee, Oct. 15, 1895, IBID., No. 22.

48. W. D. McCoy to Sec. of State, Mar. 3, 1893, IBID., No. 58; W. D. McCoy to W. Z. Gersham, April 10, 1893, IBID., No. 63.

49. The question of the flow of arms to Samori's armies during the early 1890's from Monrovia, his supposedly last outlet to the Western world, is somewhat clouded as far as the Liberian documentation is concerned. None of the reports for this period mentions the flow of arms from the coast to the interior. In addition as has been seen, the period of the early 1890's with all of the political turmoil in the area from Bopolu to the coast could hardly have been conducive to trade. It is possible, of course, that the goods flowed instead through the Kpelle area south of the St. Paul river. This remains to be investigated. Nevertheless, the report of the Secretary of the Interior in 1896 in which he mentions that Chasseport rifles had been discovered in the northern Loma area, and which were attributed to French soldiers, did cause surprise and alarm. It would not have been so surprising if Liberians had been involved in arms shipments to the north. Person, SAMORI, 1149; REPORT TO THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO THE TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE (Monrovia, 1896), 7.

50. Oral history of Elder Sware, Kakata, Liberia, July 6, 1970, Tape No. 27/1/1.

51. Oral history of Boakai Sirleaf, Oct. 16, 1965.

52. W. L. d'Azevedo, "A Tribal Reaction to Nationalism," LIBERIAN STUDIES JOURNAL, III (1970-71), 5, 11.

KRU RELIGIOUS CONCEPTS - KU AND NYESWA

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Introduction

This article will examine two religious concepts of the Grand Cess Kru of Liberia. It will attempt to determine the original meaning of the terms and how they were used by the Grand Cess Kru. This will be contrasted with the present meaning given to these terms by the same people. This work is part of a larger study of the religion of the Kru people which is to include beliefs concerning birth, death, illness, witchcraft, the spirit world and religious practitioners.

The Kru have had a long and continuous contact with Europeans dating back at least as far as 1645.[1] The difficulty of trying to determine what were the original elements of their culture presents nearly an impossible task. This paper describes two religious concepts prior to the coming of Christian missionaries to Grand Cess around the turn of this century and contrasts them with current beliefs.

Methodology

The information in this article was gathered during a three month field investigation of Kru culture during June, July and August of 1974. The author has done research during previous field trips to Grand Cess beginning in 1959 and has conducted extensive interviews during 1969, 1971 and 1973.

The information for this paper was gathered by means of written essays by Junior High School students and through personal interviews. Twenty-five Junior High School students were questioned on their religious beliefs and those of their ancestors. This was a group interview and done in a classroom situation. They were then told to interview the oldest living member of their panton[2] and to ask that person to describe religious practices. They were requested to ask what the words Nyeswa and Ku meant before the coming of missionaries to Grand Cess. Prizes ranging from one to five dollars were given for the best essays. Nineteen students wrote accounts of the Kru religion.

In addition to this the author interviewed fifteen elders of the Sikleo[3] people and asked them to describe their religion. All the elders were born before 1920. Special attention was paid to questions concerning Nyeswa and Ku. The same questions were asked of fifteen men and women born since 1950.

There are definite limitations to the methodology. Since the Kru people have had over three centuries of contact with foreigners, it is impossible using this methodology to find the original meanings of their terms or to determine

accurately what were the original religious beliefs and cultures of the Kru people. Yet the alternative seems to be to do nothing at all. All that can be done using this methodology is to show what changes took place in Kru religion during the past fifty years and to use these two terms to illustrate the changes.

Some written documents will be used. Again there are severe limitations. The documents are of two different categories. First there are the journals and writings of Christian missionaries. These have a definite bias against Kru indigenous religions. Yet they give us some insight into some of the religious beliefs of the Kru people at the beginning of this century. The second type of document will be accounts by anthropologists which mention Kru religion. Most of these remarks are of a passing nature and are not based on extensive research.

The author is a Roman Catholic priest. While he has made every effort to be "objective" and has no "ax to grind" he does have a definite focus and orientation in religious matters and this must be taken into account when reading this paper.

The Kru people of Liberia number about eight thousand out of a total Liberian population of about a million three hundred thousand.[4] They inhabit the southeastern Atlantic coastal area and have the reputation of being excellent seafarers. The earliest European traders in the area recruited the Kru as laborers, deck hands and interpreters. Ships called for the men along the Liberian coast. The men worked for two, three or four month periods while the European ships stopped at various ports along the west coast of Africa as far as Nigeria and the Cameroons. Gradually Kru colonies which persist to this day were formed at the intermittent ports of call.[5]

A Brief Summary of the Social and Political System of the Sikleo Kru.[6]

The Sikleo are relatively recent arrivals to the Atlantic coastal shores of Liberia. They arrived there approximately two hundred years ago. The town itself it called Siklikpo and is situated about forty miles west of Harper. The population of the town is approximately 2500 people and is divided into two principal sections, Krokpo (The Municipality) and Krofue (Big Town). Around the turn of the century the town was a thriving economic center. Trading vessels from Europe stopped at Grand Cess to recruit men to work as deck hands, stevedores, and stewards. For nearly half a century this was the principal source of income for the Grand Cess people. However, the large freighters stopped coming to Grand Cess before the Second World War. Since that time there has been a great deal of outward migration from Grand Cess and the population has declined to its present level. Several informants estimate that the population in 1920 was at least four times as large as it is today. The sources of income for the Grand Cess people today are fishing, marginal farming, and the harvesting of piassava. However, most of the cash flowing through Grand Cess comes as a result of salaries earned by various members of the town from the Liberian government.

Prior to 1921 the town was a single unit governed by a king. In 1921 a group of people petitioned the Liberian government to set up a municipal government and since that time people who live in The Municipality are not directly under the jurisdiction of the tribal authorities. Those who live in Big Town are.

Grant Cess is divided into thirteen patrilineal exogamous clans called pantons. The panton is the principal frame of reference when Grand Cess people are discussing their problems. Each panton has an elder called the panton nyefue, who presides over minor disputes and settles problems which are under his jurisdiction and pertain principally to matters concerning the internal affairs of the panton. He also represents panton members in disputes with

other pantons or panton members, as well as being their representative with higher tribal authorities.

Politically Krofue is ruled by the Paramount Chief, the Kroba. He is assisted by a council of elders. The most important ones are the Bobi (head of the army), the Brulio (the high priest), the Jugbe dio (the man who leads the army into battle), the Tugbe wa (the man who takes up the rear guard in the army), the Jecho (keeper of the calendar), and the Panton Nyefue of each of the active eight pantons. It is this group which makes the major decisions affecting the Grand Cess people. These might range from how to settle a boundary dispute with the neighboring Picinicess people to the rules governing the formation of new farms.[7]

The Concepts of Nyeswa and Ku from Written Sources.

Most of the material written on Kru religious concepts are extracted from missionary documents. Interested in the "conversion" of the Kru they made no real attempt to gather detailed observations on Kru beliefs. One of the earlier accounts is by Agnes McAllister who as a Protestant Missionary began her work in Garaway, Liberia in 1885.[8]

She says:

> The natives of Liberia call God 'Niswa'. They believe he is ever near and sees them and knows all they are doing. They always call upon him when offering a sacrifice or judging a 'palaver' (a dispute of any kind) or a trial. In case of trial by drinking 'sasswood', the victim, before taking the poison, thus calls upon God, with eyes uplifted, to hear his solemn statement to the people: 'God, thou knowest that I am not the guilty party; therefore I am not afraid to drink this 'sasswood'. I know that I might lie to these people and deceive them, but I could not deceive thee; and if I were guilty this 'sasswood' would kill me.' Thus they drink it, not fearing deadly poison, but believing that the all-seeing God will prove their innocence and make known the truth. In the case of sudden death or any terrifying calamity the heathens call upon the unseen God - Niswa - not upon their idols.[9]

Thus, according to McAllister's account the term 'Niswa' refers to what she believes is equivalent to the Christian term "God".

In George Schwab's study[10] we see a slightly different account of the term "Nyeswa".[11] Schwab was a Presbyterian missionary to the Cameroons. As an amateur anthropologist he was associated with the Peabody Museum at Harvard University for over thirty years. He did an eight month field expedition to Liberia in 1928. In his chapter on Religion: Metaphysical Concepts, he writes:

> In the Southeast one finds contradictory beliefs relating to two divinities, Nyeswa and Ku.
>
> According to one group of informants in Sapă and also in Tiẽ, their forefathers'knew only Ku, who is now the one the white people call devil. The idea of Nyeswa came to us down Half-Grebo way. Nyeswa is like what the white people call God.'
>
> Another group said: 'In the old time we had Ku, there was also Nyeswa. Ku had the power. He could help. He made all things. No badness could be done by him. Nyeswa called upon him for help, Nyeswa had no power; he could do nothing.' But in contradiction of this they later added: 'Fo' fus' time (in the beginning) Nyeswa bin help we fallah (fathers).'

> It was after Ku had created man and animals and shown man how to obtain food that Nyeswa became 'the old who said and did good.' How these god-like qualities were transferred to Nyeswa was not clear to anyone with whom we talked. Nor was anything definite said about Ku who, after having done so much good, became 'the one the white people call devil.'
>
> Ku is now 'The one who lives on the Hill of the Dead in Sapâ. It is he who gets into people's heads; they then have no sense left. He gets into their other parts and spoils them too. He humbugs people, telling them not to do something good and telling them something bad to do instead. He it is who sets people on the wrong path (spiritually).' This is clearly a case of the old god becoming devil when a new god comes in.[12]

Thus Schwab sees that the original concept of a diety was the Ku and the concept Nyeswa an innovation of white people. The result was that the positive attributes of Ku were transferred to Nyeswa and evil attributes were then transferred to Ku.

In talking about the devil McAllister says:

> The word 'koo' is their word for both 'devil' and 'white people'. When they first saw a white person they thought it was the devil of a spirit, and so they call the white people 'koo'.[13]

Schwab and McAllister agree that Ku refers to an evil force commonly called "devil". Nyeswa refers to a positive force called "God".

Written accounts of the meaning of Nyeswa and Ku among the Sikleo Kru are lacking. In Sieh Tagbe's[14] account of the social structure of the Sikleo Kru there is no mention of either Ku or Nyeswa. He does spend a good deal of time talking about religious matters but this is always in terms of social structure. He explains the function of the high priest, the brulio. He also explains the functions of the other religious leaders. Yet there is no mention of either Ku or Nyeswa. The most obvious reason for this is that the focus of the study was on social administration rather than religion. Yet in an M.A. thesis on social organization one would expect some mention of religion and religious beliefs.

Sie Tagbe was also interviewed extensively by Melville J. Herskovits who collected 193 Kru proverbs from Tagbe.[15] None of these proverbs mention either Ku or Nyeswa.

In a collection of 120 proverbs by P. Kla Juwle there is no mention of either Ku or Nyeswa. Since P. Kla Juwle was a Roman Catholic Priest and the first Liberian Catholic Bishop, one would have expected that if either Ku or Nyeswa were part of the proverbs of the Kru people, they would have been mentioned in his collection.

The absence of the concepts Ku and Nyeswa from the Meekel thesis, the Herskovits proverbs and the Juwle proverbs proves nothing, but one might speculate that the discussion of the concepts of Ku and Nyeswa is of more interest to foreigners than it is to the Sikleo Kru.

Information on the Concepts of Nyeswa and Ku obtained from Interviews

Interviews with Junior High School Students

On two occasions twenty-five Junior High School students were asked to discuss Kru religion. The questions were preceded by about an hour of discussion of Kru customs with the author through questioning and sharing of his own research data which showed the value of many of the Kru customs and positive

forces in Kru history. The contribution of the Kru mariners to the commercial trade along the West Coast of Africa for nearly three centuries was also discussed. The purpose of this was two-fold. First, it was a means of helping them to better understand their culture and history. Many of the young Kru people have little knowledge of their past. The second purpose was to have a positive setting for the discussion of Kru religion. They were told that their traditional religious values were something to be understood and treasured. It was hoped that within this positive setting that they would freely discuss their religious concepts.

When asked what the word Ku meant every student said it meant devil. They were asked what were the functions of the Ku. They attributed all types of evil to the Ku. This ranged from bad luck, to sickness and even death. When asked if they knew any other meaning for the word Ku none of the students could answer.

When asked about the world Nyeswa they replied that this referred to God. They further explained that Nyeswa was a creator and preserver of life.

Interview with young adults

Fifteen young adults born since 1950 were also interviewed. These were individual interviews. All of those in this group were illiterate. These people also said that Ku meant devil. They did not have any knowledge of another meaning for Ku. They attributed evil deeds and misfortunes to the Ku.

When asked about Nyeswa, they attributed positive actions to him saying that it is Nyeswa who brings good crops, who provides good fishing grounds and who blesses them with children.

From interviews with students and illiterates it seemed that there was agreement in the meaning of both Ku and Nyeswa. Education did not seem to be a factor.

Information obtained from older adults and from school essays

Fifteen adults born before 1920 were interviewed. Included in this section is also material obtained from the 19 essays written by the Junior High School students. The reason for this is that the students were told to interview the oldest person in their panton. All of these would have been born before 1920. Some of the 15 persons interviewed by the author were also interviewed by the students. Prior to 1920 the beliefs were as follows.

Ku is a god. He is a positive force. It is the Ku to whom the people go in times of trouble. For example, if a woman is childless, she will offer a white chicken as a sacrifice to the panton Ku and ask to be blessed with a child. When a person is bad, the Ku will speak through someone in the panton to warn the person to mend his ways. When the Ku speaks to someone in the panton, and he does not listen, the whole panton will suffer.

The word Ku is singular. The plural of the word is Kwi. White people are called Kwi people. Some informants say that the reason for this is that when their people first saw white people, they thought that because of the color of their skin that they must be one of the many kwi of the Sikleo Kru. Many more informants however gave another reason why white people are called Kwi. They said that white people resemble what they think dead people look like. If their dead did come back to visit them, they would think that they would look like white people. The word Ku is also used for body and the Sikleo Ku refer to a dead body as Ku Swan Gbe (literally-body stink small).

Whatever the etymology of the word, Kwi now refers to white people. It is also used to refer to those people from Siklikpo who have adopted the customs

of the white people. In a wider sense it is used throughout Liberia to refer to a higher economic and social class of people.

The function of the Ku was to bring blessings on the panton. It was the Ku who blessed them with children and made their crops grow. He protected them against evil forces. He was near and was quick to answer their petitions. The following is a list of the Sikleo pantons and their Kwi.

Each panton has its own Ku. These are:

Panton	Ku
Klepo	Jlaka, Kanwie
Jlepo	Klagbe
Chiepo	Snogbokali
Wesleo	Kungbeni
Tunyenpo	Kragbi
Nimeneon	Donyen
Nimene Papo	Doklokpo
Jlagbwipo-Nyanpo	Konion, & Sakle (This is the Ku after which Siklikpo is named.)
Tuan	Wonplu
ButoDupo	Susue Doemanah (feminine Ku)
Naypo	Satu-Kope, Satu, Kesogbo (This panton has three Kwi.)

While each panton has at least one Ku, there is a Ku who is over all the pantons, and he is called Matu. One of the five towns of the Siklikpo people is named after him. This is Matiye Matu who is more powerful than the other Kwi and is in charge of the well-being of all the Sikleo people. Matu was especially invoked in time of war, and the Grand Cess people would not go to war without consulting Matu and receiving his permission.

Individual Kwi also were very powerful. A man from the Pluka panton told the following story. A man named Nimene, about 45 years of age, had been praying to the panton Ku and the Ku told him to wear a white cloth. The man refused to, and he told the people that the Ku from the panton told him to wear the white cloth. The people of the panton begged him to wear the white cloth saying that, otherwise the Ku would be offended and there would be trouble in the panton. They kept begging him and still he refused. He walked into his house and died immediately. It was the Ku who killed him. When the informant was asked whether the Ku could do that now, he said that the Kwi are not working at this time. People now believe in God so they don't pay much attention to the Ku. The informant could not identify the Ku of his own panton. The following two accounts are taken verbatim from the essays of the school children.

> Our people were worshipping that Ku which was their god. They believed that he was a god who can do everything for them. Even if they sick, they get the believed [belief] that their God (Ku) will hear [heal] their sickness. If they want something they can ask Ku their god to make provision for them. Even if they were to cultivate yearly farm they will consult Ku their god to help them.
>
> And also in the time of farming when there is no food to eat, they will go to work to make a sacrifice to their god (Ku) so he will help them. This is [what] our people believed. And also they believed that there was no other god but only their god (Ku). They also believed that their god was live in the great big rock and they go there to worship their god (Ku). Some time under the great big tree their god (Ku) could be found. This was their believed of our people before the Western Civilization brought by the foreign missionaries who teaches us that there was a living God the Father, the Son, and

the Holy Spirit. But still our people were not interested in these three things because their God (Ku) was the one they were worshipping from the beginning of their living. So when our people hear that there was a true god instead of their god (Ku) they became afraid that their god (Ku) will go away from them so they will not get enough food in a year. So when the missionaries came to grandcess they chase the missionaries away because they do [not] want to hear something about other god but their god (Ku). So from the beginning our people were interested in their god (Ku) because (Ku) can do everything for them when time for farming. That's all I got to say about Ku.[16]

I have a quarter called Botodopo. My quarter have a kwi in the old days, and they also believe in her. And she can show them their country things for them to do. When God business never came here. They believe in their kwi and also their wifes their kwi name Su Sue Doemunah.

When the new moon comes up in the sky on the first day my quarter people will kill one white chicken. And the chicken's blood they will rub it on their kwi. After that they have to cook the chicken and two cups of rice together. After that they will put palm oil on the rice and mix all together in the soup. No one will put pepper or salt. The men and women will take the food to their God and the balance the Botodopo women and men will take handfull of rice and small meat. Not [none] of them will go to their houses. And our God will make us strong for what we will deliver. And when we go to brush farm our farm will be different. And then we ask her and she bring plenty of rice and cassawa. And what our people plan to do they must do it. After the new moon finish we get on [one] year. Time for brushing farm one girl she alone sees the kwi. And SuSue Doemunah, her spirit in that girl. Then she will tell the girl that time reach to brush farm. Then we the Botodopo will ask her what to do. Then she will say kill one white goat. Then we cut off the neck in front of her. We put the neck to the place where she sleeps. We dig under the ground and the blood we will rub it in her.

Men and women cook the food together without any peace [piece] going anywhere. Nobody put salt and pepper in the soup. Then the young girl will put the ... in her neck for four days. Her hair will be cut one side off. We will rub over her country medicine. The girl is holding the heavy spirit. They put the food in country plate and they shout here your food. And the men and women will eat the food together. During this, no different men eat the food or see them after that, everybody will go to their house. And next day the girl will go to the head man. She will say call all Botodopo together. She will take country medicine with her. Gave [gives] it to everybody each man will take it on the farm. None of them will not brush on that day. Then every Botodopo people will get plenty of rice and cassawa. We have to do these every year and every new month until our lives. But God business came into the world. So we drop all of them. And we take God business, but we still have it. But we don't worship it. Thank yours.[17]

The term Nyeswa refers to the god who creates. In Siklikpo there is no evidence that the term Nyeswa was a creation of white people. Schwab's information cannot be verified in Siklikpo. The Sikleo people hold that Nyeswa created the world. He creates individuals and controls the universe. The Kwi are subject to him. However the Kwi have a great deal of independence and are specificially charged with protecting the members of their individual pantons.

However there is evidence that the term Nyeswa was devised by the Sikleo Kru. The word Nye means egg. The word Swa means fish. Many informants said that the spirit was named Nyeswa because he gave fish. Since the Kru arrived

on the coast less than four hundred years ago, the term Nyeswa must be of recent origin. The following are accounts of what the term Nyeswa means. Again these are from school essays.

> Nyswa - means heavenly Father. Ther person who is in heaven bigger than ever things. Also means to give respect to.
>
> Years ago Grand Cess people were living in the north of Liberia. Then they came on the shore and settled on the land called Grand Cess. Their chief works were Fishing and Farming. Whenever they go to fish, they would kill plenty fish. In their minds, they had to kill one, two, or three fish. But when they had to fish they over plus what were in their minds. So they gave especial name to those type of an animals. Which is now call (Swalee) or (Swa). Therefore most of them took it to be their God (Nyswa). Today Nyswa is their chief God in Grand Cess.
>
> Nyswa means-fish eggs. Ny-eggs, swa-fish. The fish were the simbo of their living. Because the way the eggs are in the fish. That was the same way they were. They were far away from each other. When is time for war they would come together on one place. As fish's eggs are in the fish gathering. They were closed to each other, took care of each other and so on.[18]

> The short story I learnt from my people about the word "Nyeswa" is that in early day they were worshipping Kwi as their God. And also they considered God as the father of all the gods and the god (Ku) for almost all the earth are worshipping.
>
> How the word Nyeswa came to being. [In] My home was there hunger in the town. No money to buy food, there was no any other way to get food on that day. Therefore, all the quarter oldest men were asked to ask their Ku, for food they did so, but nothing was doing. There was an oldest man Tugba Tugba, who could understand every creature on those days. Dreamt a dream that words were from heaven said, let the people divided into two groups, one should fish, by fish you shall [have] all life. Again voice said, People will come many places when hearing about this news. They would come with types of food.
>
> The first thing fishing day, they made wonderful, so when they came back on land, the man named God. Nye which came from the words means fish eggs and holy. Swa means fish. The word Nyeswa means the person who can answer bad and good, because my people were war like people, so when christianity era began, they did not expect God forgiven of sins. This is all I know about God (Nyeswa).[19]

Conclusion

Only the Sikleo religious beliefs in Ku and Nyeswa have been discussed in this article. These beliefs are only a part of the religious beliefs which affect many areas of the Sikleo Kru Culture.

Prior to the coming of Christian missionaries to Siklekpo, the Sikleo people believed that the Kwi were powerful spirits or gods who protected them from evil and misfortune. The Kwi blessed them with children and ensured that their crops would grow. Each panton had its own Ku who spoke through members of the panton informing them of the wishes of the Ku. This functioned as a method of social control.

While each panton had its own Ku, the Ku for all the Sikleo people was Matu. He was consulted on major matters such as the decision as whether to go to war or not.

During this time the people also believed in a god who creates and rules

the universe. They called this god Nyeswa. It was he who created the Ku and they were subject to him, but each Ku was given liberty on how to deal with members of his own panton.

The term Nyeswa is related to the coastal Kru occupation of fishing. The people believed that the bountiful catches of fish were the result of someone putting the fish in the water. They named this someone Nyeswa (Nye=eggs, swa=fish). It was Nyeswa who had the total control of the lives of the Sikleo Kru. He was not involved with the daily lives of the people. This was left to the Kwi. Nyeswa's function was that of a powerful diety who was distant from but had control over the Sikleo Kru. The people would pray to Nyeswa as well as to their panton Ku.

After the coming of the Christian missionaries,the people's belief in the Kwi began to die out. While McAllister notes that the people of Garaway identified Ku as the devil as early as 1885, the Sikleo Kru saw the Kwi in a very positive sense as described above as late as 1920.

Among people born since 1950 the word Ku is identified with the devil, evil and misfortune. Not a single informant among this group had a positive notion of Ku. It is only when they talked with the panton elders that they learned of the more ancient and positive meaning.

At the present time the Sikleo people identify Nyeswa with the Christian God although even younger members of the clans recognize that their forefathers had a strong belief in Nyeswa long before the coming of the Christian missionaries.

While there is no conclusive proof it seems that a tentative hypothesis can be offered that the influence of Christian missionaries strongly influenced the shift from a positive to a negative function for the concept of Ku. Identifying Nyeswa as the Christian god assisted the missionaries in stressing the monotheistic theology of that religion. Identifying the Kwi as devils helped explain evil happenings in the Sikleo society and also functioned to do away with what might have been interpreted as polytheistic elements in Kru religion.

FOOTNOTES

1. George E. Brooks, Jr., THE KRU MARINER IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: AN HISTORICAL COMPENDIUM. Liberian Studies Monograph Series, No. 1 (Newark, Del.: Liberian Studies Association in America, Inc., 1972),2.

2. Panton is the Kru word describing what anthropologists call clans. There are 13 exogamous patrilineal and patrilocal clans in Grand Cess.

3. The Kru word for Grand Cess is Siklekpo: "Those who were left behind". The people of the town are referred to as the Sikleo people.

4. Republic of Liberia, Office of National Planning, Bureau of Statistics, 1962 CENSUS OF POPULATION (Monrovia, 1965), Table, 13, p. 13. The census lists the Kru tribe as having 66,743 members out of a total population of 1,016,443. The population figures quoted above were given to the author by an Assistant Minister of Planning in June 1974. They were based on the 1973 Census which was not published at the time.

5. Brooks, THE KRU MARINER.

6. This section is taken from an article titled "A Description of the 1970 Grand Cess Bo," by the author published in the LIBERIAN STUDIES JOURNAL, IV, 2 (1971-1972), 183-188.

7. For additional information on the political and social structure of the Sikleo Kru see Merran Fraenkel, "Social Change on the Kru Coast of Liberia," AFRICA, XXXVI (1966), 154-172.

8. Agenes McAllister, A LONE WOMAN IN AFRICA, SIX YEARS ON THE KROO COAST (New York: Hunt and Eaton, 1896).

9. McAllister, A LONE WOMAN, 116-117.

10. George Schwab, TRIBES OF THE LIBERIAN HINTERLAND. Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, vol. XXXI (Cambridge, Mass., 1947), 317-318.

11. The best spelling of this word seems to be Nyeswa, and this spelling will be used throughout this paper unless another author is quoted and then the spelling will be given as the author uses it.

12. Schwab, TRIBES, 317-318.

13. McAllister, A LONE WOMAN, 148.

14. Sie Tagbe was the only informant used by H. Scudder Mekeel in his work, "Preliminary Survey of the Social Administration of the Kru, Grand Cess, Liberia, and Comparison with the Grebo, Nimiah, Liberia." M.A. Thesis, University of Chicago, 1929.

15. Melville J. Hershovits & Sie Tagbe, "Kru Proverbs; with Music," JOURNAL OF AMERICAN FOLK-LORE, XLIII (1930), 225-293.

16. The informant was Johanna Panton, a ninth grade student.

17. The informant was Joseph Hah, a ninth grade student.

18. The informant is Gregory Gnoh Wakah, an eight grade student.

19. The informant is Parker Nah Sayeh, a ninth grade student. Another informant thought that the etymology of the word Nyeswa came from Nye, which means, give, and swa, which means, fish. Thus, Nyeswa means "give fish". However, he granted that the better meaning would be Nye, meaning, eggs, and Swa, meaning, fish. Phonetically the two meanings would be Nye = eggs, and Swa = fish, or Nye = give and Swa = fish.

WHO IS THE ZO?: A STUDY OF KPELLE IDENTICAL TWINS[1]

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The Keplle of Liberia, along with many other peoplês in West Africa and elsewhere, view the birth of twins with awe. Identical twins in particular are cause for wonder and a little fear. As anomalies, they blur categorical boundaries between nature and culture, since only animals have litters; and between sacred and profane, since they are clearly extraordinary. Retarded or deformed children are similarly viewed as "spirits" (jinaa) because of their deviant appearance, and are supposed to be killed at birth in order to ensure the general welfare. While twins are perceived in a similar fashion, they are not killed but are the subjects of special beliefs and behavioral rules and restrictions. They are considered a blessing, but are both dangerous and powerful. They undergo rituals at birth, and receive traditional names reserved for twins. In some parts of Liberia, twins are said to become medicine-persons (zonga) because of their affinity to the world of spirits.[2] However, in Nyafokwele chiefdom, where the present study was carried out, it is alleged that only one twin will become a zo; the zo twin will make himself known through his behavior, e.g., he will be bold, aggressive, and demanding.[3] There is some danger that a male twin will kill his brother, and perhaps even his parents if they are not careful. In Kien-taa, the village where I carried out field work, one adult identical twin, a powerful zo in one of the specialized secret societies, was said to have killed his brother through "medicine" (sale; loosely, "sorcery").

No one must ever knock a twin on the head even accidentally. Twins may eat neither "bush goat" nor a type of small antelope called "black deer". Twins must always receive the same gifts and the same amount of food to avoid causing resentment in the zo twin and thereby risking his retaliatory sorcery.

In 1970-71, I carried out a study of Kpelle learning and socialization. Among the children I observed was a pair of one-and-one-half-year-old (at the beginning of the study) identical twins. I did not include both twins in my early analyses of child behavior and training for fear of distorting the quantitative data. I would like to report my findings in this brief note.

I was first of all intrigued with the idea that the zo twin would make himself known very early in life. If this was indeed the case, people should behave differently toward the child and he toward them. His behavior should be more egoistic, especially aggressive, than his twin's, and this difference should affect the behavior of adults toward him.

All of the children in my sample (plus the extra twin) were observed, and the resultant protocols coded, according to methods developed by the Whitings and their associates.[4] My own variations on this methodology have

52 All of the children in my sample All of the children in my sample

been discussed at length in a recent monograph.[5] Each twin was observed for twenty-four fifteen-minute periods, adding up to a composite waking day. If an adult, for example, pleasantly teases a child eleven times in all of the protocols for that child, it is as if the child was the target of that type of interaction eleven times in six hours. For the purposes of this report, I have collapsed the various categories into nurturant, dominant, prosocial, and sociable behaviors when adults are subjects and children targets; and nurturant, dependent, dominant, and sociable behaviors when children are subjects and adults targets. These behavioral categories are defined in detail elsewhere.[6] In most, but not all, cases "adult" refers to "mother."

How do Kpelle identical twin boys behave toward adults? How does the zo reveal himself? Table 1 shows that one twin, whom I will call Mulbah, is more ego-dominant toward adults, i.e., aggressive, bold, willful. His brother,

Table 1

BEHAVIOR OF TWIN BOYS TOWARD ADULTS

	Mulbah		Sumo	
Behavior	Frequency	Proportion	Frequency	Proportion
Nurturant	9	11.4%	3	3.4%
Dependent	49	62.0	57	65.5
Dominant	14	17.7	0	0.0
Sociable	7	8.9	27	31.0
Totals	79	100.0%	87	99.9%

here named Sumo, was (incredibly) never agressive toward adults during observation. He was usually sociable when not behaving in an egoistically dependent manner. Mulbah was only rarely sociable.

Adults respond to, as well as shape, the behavior of children. Table 2 indicates the behavior of adults toward the twin boys. Adults were more dominant

Table 2

BEHAVIOR OF ADULTS TOWARD TWIN BOYS

	Mulbah		Sumo	
Behavior	Frequency	Proportion	Frequency	Proportion
Nurturant	57	47.1%	63	52.5%
Dominant	42	34.7	21	17.5
Prosocial	21	17.4	24	20.0
Sociable	1	0.8	12	10.0
Totals	121	100.0%	120	100.0%

toward Mulbah, the more aggressive twin. This does not necessarily imply corporal punishment, but rather actively seeking the compliance or obedience

of a somewhat unruly child. This category includes a sub-category of "seeking freedom from interaction" with the child. Adults tried to escape from interacting with Mulbah twice as often as with Sumo. Finally, adults were more sociable toward the tractable and pleasant Sumo.

Who is the dangerous and powerful medicine-man? Informants indicated that it may be Mulbah, but only time and another visit to their village will tell.

FOOTNOTES

1. This report is based on data collected in Bong County, Liberia in 1970-71 with the support of a Fulbright Research Grant. The analysis was supported by a Skidmore Mellon Faculty Research Grant.

2. See, e.g. John Gay, Red Dust on the Green Leaves (Thompson, Ct.: InterCulture Associates, 1973).

3. Although many beliefs, rules and restrictions are said to apply to females, I only have data on males; my references will apply to males only.

4. See, e.g., Beatrice B. Whiting and John W. M. Whiting, "Methods for Observing and Recording Behavior," in Y. Cohen and R. Naroll, eds., Handbook of Methods in Cultural Anthropology (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973).

5. Gerald M. Erchak, Full Respect: Kpelle Children in Adaptation (New Haven: HRAF Publications, 1977), 71-98, 206-216.

6. Ibid., 206-216.

THE GERMAN FACTOR IN LIBERIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS

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The historic link between Liberia and the United States is so well known, and American ties to the Republic--cultural, economic, and political--are today so obvious in every aspect of the life of the country, that its historians have tended to depict this relation to the United States as the predominant theme of Liberia's foreign relations, if not of all Liberian history. Such a view neglects not only the fact that the United States was last among the major powers to recognize the Republic and to establish formal relations with Liberia, but also the more important one that over more than half the Republic's history commercial, and to a lesser extent, political contacts with European powers have been far more intensive than trans-Atlantic ones. The language factor may go far in explaining why the very considerable role played in Liberian affairs by Germany, in particular, has been generally overlooked.

This is unfortunate, not only because this neglect distorts perspectives on Liberia's unique accomplishment in maintaining her sovereignty throughout the period of imperialist domination of Africa, and on the economic history of the Republic. It has also meant that substantial source material, bearing on all aspects of Liberian history, has escaped the attention of interested historians. This is a particularly serious oversight for the years from ca. 1895-1914, for which Liberian, but also British and American sources are quite fragmentary. The German documentation, on which this brief account is largely based, provides a more complete picture of development in Liberia for this period than any other single body of materials with which the author is familiar. It is to be hoped that this valuable body of information will be used to a greater extent, in conjunction, of course, with all other sources, in future work on late 19th and early 20th century Liberian history.

German relations with Liberia date back to the early 1850's, when the Hamburg merchant Carl Woermann established his first African trading venture in the struggling young Republic.[2] This trade prospered so rapidly that in 1855 the Hanseatic Towns (Bremen trade contacts began in 1854) concluded a commercial treaty with Liberia. Carl Goedelt, Woermann's local representative, was appointed Hamburg Consul in 1858, and later acted in that capacity for the North German Confederation and the German Empire.[3] The Germans soon controlled a lion's share of the trade of the Republic, not only as importers and exporters, but, especially after the turn of the century, as retailers as well. By 1906, a British estimate placed the German share of Liberia's trade at three quarters, a German naval officer in 1909 reported it as amounting to between 80 and 90%. Total Liberian exports to Hamburg (Direct trade with other German ports was negligible) amounted to 6,565,000 Marks in 1913, Hamburg exports to Liberia to 3,029,000 Marks in that year, not a particularly good one for the German Africa trade.

Liberia's ties with the world were maintained largely by German shipping. Thus, in 1908, of 347 ships visiting Monrovia, 233 carried the German flag, 89 were British, and 25 of other nationalities. German shipping also provided substantial employment for Liberia's Kru deck workers and stevedores: Between November 1904 and Ocotober 1906, for example, when German shipping on the West Coast of Africa was exceptionally intensive due to the colonial wars in German Southwest Africa, no less than 21,000 Kru workers were employed on Woermann ships alone. In more normal years, between 5 and 10,000 were hired for single voyages. The role of the Woermann line in the maritime commerce of Liberia was so prominent that the firm exercised a government monopoly as agent for the procurement of this essential labor force for all shipping, and collected the Liberian head tax of $1 per man per voyage. The revenue from this tax (including that from a $4 levy on contract laborers shipped to other West Coast countries for plantation work) amounted to $10-12,000 a year in the pre-World War I period.[4]

In view of the German firms' predominant position in the limited economy of the Republic, and the Liberian government's chronic financial embarrassments, the German traders also functioned as a kind of informal national bank, advancing money against tax revenue (in Woermann's case against future head moneys), or even more dubious security. This floating debt, contracted in rather casual fashion, gave rise to prolonged and complicated controversies in 1906, when it was extinguished from the proceeds of a major British loan. Altogether, the claims of the various German firms then amounted to more than $200,000, a sum larger than the Republic's annual budget. By 1911, an Internal Debt Commission found that claims had again mounted to a total of $587,000, of which 243,000 was owed to German firms, $64,000 to British and Dutch businesses, and $279,000 to Liberians (including pay claims of government officials).

These financial ties and claims, whose basis was frequently extremely informal and obscure, gave rise to periodical irritations and frictions between the trading firms and the Liberian government. These were exacerbated by the extremely limited capacity of the latter to maintain law and order in outlying regions, especially on the Kru coast, where the merchants carried on a substantial part of their business. On several occasions Liberian authorities proved themselves powerless to prevent Kru villagers from looting shipwrecked vessels (1898, 1903, 1904). These incidents gave rise to financial claims against the Liberian government in which the German firms were backed by heavy-handed diplomatic pressure, including, after the fahion of the time, visits of German naval vessels to Monrovia. In the course of the "Grebo War" of 1910, and local uprisings against Liberian authorities on the Kru Coast in 1911 and 1912, damages to German property and trading interests led to similar complications, which climaxed in December 1912 in a full-scale incident of gunboat diplomacy: Some sailors from the German vessel SMS Panther, going ashore at River Cess, had been momentarily challenged by panicky Liberian militiamen. This "insult", and a supposed threat to German lives and property due to the disorders in the area, led to the dispatch of three naval vessels to Monrovia. In the German Foreign Office some consideration was given to an ultimatum and military steps, a course of action much to the liking of two of the commanders of the German ships. The confrontation, however, was concluded peacefully, due to the common sense of both the young German consul, F. Grote, and the Liberian government. Nevertheless, the threats and the subsequent discovery, in the course of hearings by an international claims commission, that most of the merchants had vastly exaggerated their damage claims, and had been guilty of a variety of breaches of Liberian laws and regulations caused much resentment against the Germans, and a decline in their prestige and trade. In August 1913 the consul in Monrovia informed the German Foreign Office that the Naval demonstration had been unqualifiedly harmful to German interests, and advised avoidance of such over-reaction in the future.

Despite this setback, however, German trade remained the dominant foreign economic influence in Liberia at the outbreak of World War I. The extent of the German presence, and the relative position of the various firms, is reflected in a report by the Acting Consul in Monrovia, Theodor Dopffel, to the German Foreign Office, of 8 February 1915: The Hamburg firm of C. Woermann, engaged in shipping as well as trade, had 25 German employees in Liberia. I. W. West (like most of the other Hamburg houses originally a Woermann offshoot) was the largest enterprise engaged solely in trade. With its 20 German employees it was represented in all major coastal settlements. The partnerships of Wiechers & Helm, and C. F. W. Jantzen each had 10 German agents in Liberia, the two Bremen firms Vietor & Huber and Bremer Koloniale Handelsgesellschaft (F. Oloff & Co.) seven and one respectively. As the largest commercial enterprises in the country, these firms of course also afforded one of the few opportunities for salaried employment, outside government, to the members of Liberia's elite. The generally easy and familiar relationship between the local Germans, many of whom stayed in Liberia for decades, and officals of the Liberian government, which at times exasperated British consuls, was undoubtedly largely due to this fact.

The overall position of Germany in Liberia was nevertheless weaker than these considerations and the proportion of German trade would lead one to expect. Basically, this was due to the exclusive emphasis of the Hanseatic houses on export and import trade and their extreme reluctance to become involved in ventures which would have required long-term capital investments. Thus, despite a number of Liberian overtures at the beginning of the century, designed to shore up the shaky structure of Liberian finances through a major loan, no German interest materialized in such a project, and the Republic was left to turn to the conclusion of a preposterous financial arrangement with the ramshackle "Liberian Development Company", headed by the ubiquitous African traveller, soldier of fortune, and erstwhile proconsul, Sir Harry H. Johnston. It provided for a nominal loan of £100,000, at 6% interest. However, only £30,000 was to be made available to the Liberian government, barely enough to cover its outstanding indebtedness. The remaining £70,000 were to be spent by the Company for the construction of roads and other improvements, and the establishment of a bank. The most extraordinary feature of the agreement provided that interest on the full amount of the loan (i.e., £6,000 p.a.) was to be paid as long as there remained any unpaid balance! The loan was secured against the entire customs revenue of the country, with 10% of any excess over £50,000 p.a. to be applied to the sinking fund. The administration of the customs revenue was to be supervised by two British customs inspectors.

Ther German firms trading in Liberia unanimously and vociferously deplored the arrangement, which they feared would give the British consortium a stranglehold on the Liberian economy. Their attempts to block its ratification by the Liberian Legislature failed, despite "presents", made "in more or less discreet form to certain legislators and high officials," and financial advances made to the government, to tide it over the most immediate difficulties. (Even the German Foreign Office made 3,000 Marks available to the Consul for bribes after he complained that he had nothing to answer similar "arguments" made on behalf of the British interests.)[5] In a joint memorandum to the German Foreign Secretary the heads of the Liberia firms suggested that direct British rule over Liberia would be preferable to domination by a private company, citing their experiences with the Royal Niger Company. Downing Street, however, sounded out on the suggestion, rejected any thought of establishing a British protectorate, and disclaimed any interest in the Liberian Development Company. The U.S. State Department, in response to a German inquiry, also declared itself uninterested and uninclined formally to protest against the terms of the agreement. The Auswärtiges Amt thereupon suggested that the German mercantile firms buy out the British company and conclude a new agreement with Liberia: Typically, however, they showed themselves uninterested in such a project.

In the event, the Johnston arrangement collapsed almost immediately, due to the inability of the under-financed company to carry out its obligations. President Arthur Barclay, who went to Europe in August 1907 to negotiate boundary agreements with Britain and France, also succeeded in reaching terms with the banking house of Erlanger & Co., under which the latter, which had been the main backer of the Johnston enterprise, took over the loan directly, with somewhat more reasonable provisions. Again the German firms were unhappy but, despite some Liberian feelers, proved unable to come up with acceptable counter-proposals.

Barclay's negotiations further extended British influence in Liberia: As a condition of the Sierra Leone boundary settlement, he agreed to the establishment of a Liberian frontier force, to be organized under British officers. The new financial agreement also increased the number of British customs inspectors to three.

In the event this strengthening of the British presence did not produce any major effect on German trade. The two British firms established in Liberia, Patterson, Zochonis & Co., and W. D. Woodin & Co. remained minor factors in the commercial life of the Republic. Ships of the Elder Dempster Line continued to trade illicitly on the Kru Coast. The volume of this trade is, by its very nature, difficult to estimate; it provided, however, a continuing irritant in relations with Great Britain. Liberia's finances had not been permanently improved by the loan; the German houses continued to be called upon to advance credit to the government. (The general arrangement was that the government paper they received was accepted in payment of customs duties.)

British political influence, as well as the prestige of President Arthur Barclay, declined abruptly when the British commander of the Frontier Force, Major R. Mackay Cadell, in February 1909 encouraged a mutiny of his rarely paid soldiers, which was suppressed with difficulty by the Monrovia militia. H. M. Consul, Braithwaite Wallis, improved the occasion by threatening to call in landing forces from a British man-of-war, delivering ultimative demands for reforms to the Liberian Secretary of State, F. A. R. Johnson, and threatening the President that, unless these demands were met, nothing could save the Republic "from the end which must surely in the near future await (it)."[6] Upon Cadell's dismissal, Wallis had the equipment and arms of the Frontier Force seized and transported to Sierra Leone. In the face of this threat, Liberia turned for political aid to the United States, and for the solution of its financial difficulties to the Germans.

It would be impossible, in a paper of this scope, to provide a detailed narrative of the extremely complicated negotiations, extending from 1908 until 1912, which eventually led to the re-establishment, after decades of indifference, of America as the paramount foreign political and financial factor in the Republic of Liberia. It should be stressed, however, that the Liberians originally clearly attempted to safeguard their autonomy by balancing, so far as possible, German against American influence. Thus in 1908 a Liberian mission visited both countries, requesting from the U.S. primarily political guarantees for the country's independence and personnel to replace the British military officers and customs officials, from Germany a new loan. Despite the interest and encouragement of the German Foreign Office, however, the Hamburg trading firms and German banks were, in the last analysis, unprepared to raise the capital required for such a venture. As the Taft administration, providing an illustrative small-scale paradigm of Secretary Knox' "Dollar Diplomacy", took a more active interest in Liberian matters than its predecessor, the initiative in the negoations rapidly passed ot the United States. German finance remained involved, as a minor partner, through the link between the Hamburg banker Max Warburg and his brother Paul, a member of the New York banking firm Kuhn, Loeb & Co., which arranged the loan. Formally concluded in November 1911, the new financial agreement vastly strengthened American influence in Liberia. It

provided for a $1.7 million, 40-year loan at 5% interest, to be used to extinguish all previous debts. The bonds were underwritten by Kuhn, Loeb & Co. in association with British, German, French and Dutch banks; most were actually acquired by British investors. The issue was secured by the entire customs revenue of Liberia. A Customs Receivership, consisting of an American Receiver General and British, German, and French Receivers, appointed by their respective governments, collected and administered the customs duties, and disbursed interest and sinking fund payments on the loan. The expenses of the Receivership and those of the Liberian Frontier Force (whose reorganization, under U.S. officers, was provided for in the loan agreement), as well as the service of the loan constituted prior charges on the customs revenue. Only the remaining balance was made available to the Liberian government for general purposes. Obviously, this arrangement constituted a considerable restriction of the Republic's sovereignty. The American Receiver General, who also functioned as Financial Advisor to the Liberian government, became perhaps the most powerful man in the country; as a member of a Board of Review he could in effect veto any expenditure budgeted by the Legislature.

The benefit of the loan redounded almost exclusively to the foreign (largely British) banks and individuals who held the bonds of the previous loans of 1871 (renegotiated in 1897) and 1906 (renegotiated in 1907). They were paid at face value for paper which had, in many cases, been acquired at considerable discounts. The 1907 bonds, in fact, were redeemed at 105%. Arrangements for the retirement of the so-called internal debt, most of it held by the German merchants, led to prolonged disputes between the latter, the bankers, the Receivership, and the Liberian and German governments. Eventually most of these claims were settled at 90%. Payment of all these obligations exhausted most of the loan, and the financial position of the Liberian government remained as precarious as ever: Even for the payment of its officials, for example, it routinely resorted to "audited bills", which the German merchants accepted in payment for everyday purchases. The total revenues transferred to the Liberian government by the Receivership (internal revenue was negligible) amounted to $156,000 in fiscal year 1913, $178,000 in 1914, scarcely enough to run a country, albeit a small one: Already in May 1914, to give one example, Wiechers & Helm (one of the lesser German firms) again had accumulated claims of more than $25,000 against the government.

In December 1913 the German Consul in Monrovia might bemoan the decline in German influence in Liberia over the previous ten years and feel that Germany now ranked third, after the United States and Britain.[7] By whatever arcane criteria points were scored in the game of imperialist competition, however, his opinion must have been far from obvious to most Liberians, who bought their provisions in German stores, sold their produce to them, travelled in German ships, and saw, whether in Monrovia or the smaller coastal settlements, far more Germans than Englishmen or Americans. In a political sense, it is true that official German policy (and British as well) tended to defer to the United States. Thus the German Receiver, Fritz Lange (who was stationed in Monrovia and acted for the Receiver General in the latter's absence), was instructed, on the urging of the German Embassy in Washington, to give general support to the American position in matters concerning the Receivership. One may generalize that this attitude arose from the fact that German interest in Liberia was purely economic, and that American political influence, unaccompanied by commercial links, posed no threat to German trade while guaranteeing stability.

Some Liberians, however, perceived a menace to the country's freedom in the strength of the German presence, which had been reinforced in 1911 with the establishment of a cable and wireless station and again, just before the outbreak of the first World War, by an agreement under which the Woermann-owned Deutsche Liberia Bank took over the business of the only other banking facility in the country, the Bank of British West Africa. Objections were raised by President D. E. Howard to the establishment of this monopoly; they proved

unavailing. Ex-President Arthur Barclay (generally regarded as pro-British and anti-German) viewed this development so seriously that he described it as "the beginning of the end," and predicted the establishment of a German protectorate within two years.[7]

The outbreak of war in August 1914 meant for Liberia, in view of Britain's ability and determination to deny the sea lanes to all German shipping, the abrupt reduction of her connections with the outside world, and especially of exports and imports, to a mere trickle. As the vast majority of the country's inhabitants participated only marginally in the cash economy, and hence in international trade, and as the war years yielded good crops of the main food staples, rice and cassava, curtailment of trade did not produce the disastrous effects on the daily life of the people which might have occurred in a more developed economy. Even for the Americo-Liberian elite, the inventories of the trading firms, and the limited imports that reached Liberia from British, Dutch, Spanish, and U.S. sources seem to have sufficed to prevent serious deprivation. Through a variety of devices, the German business houses in Liberia managed to keep their heads above water for a surprisingly long time, acquiring goods from neutral sources and even, occasionally, from their British competitors, and continuing to buy local produce, especially palm kernels and piassava, even though they were rarely able to ship them out of the country. C. F. W. Jantzen even managed the coup of bidding, through Liberian middlemen, for German property being auctioned off by the Sierra Leone authorities, thus restocking their inventory.

Gradually, however, the effect of ever tightening British restrictions on trade with neutral countries made itself felt: In August 1916 a member of the Bremen firm of J. K. Vietor wrote:

> Gradually I am coming to the conclusion that it would be better all around for Oscar [Huber, manager of the Liberia branch] simply to sell out his stock and then to close the factories. I cannot imagine that with all these difficulties and costs it is possible to make a profit. And our dear [British] cousins won't give up until they have cut off our countrymen from all connections.[8]

Nevertheless he was trying to get a consignment of goods into Liberia from the Canary Islands. A certain amount of German trade was carried on in Liberia until the official breach of relations in May 1917. Even then traders were able to liquidate their inventories, at a profit, prior to the Liberian declaration of war on Germany.

The truly disastrous effect of the war on Liberia lay in its impact on the tenuous public finances of the country, and threatened its very existence as a sovereign nation. During the early months of the conflict, the virtual paralysis of shipping reduced the customs revenue to an average of $3,000 a month, an amount not remotely sufficient even to meet the obligations of the Receivership, not to mention interest payments, the expenses of the Frontier Force, and the general budget. Approached by the U.S. State Department in September 1914, Kuhn, Loeb & Co. had no suggestions to offer for the relief of Liberia's finances, and insisted that interest payments be continued. In November 1914 the German Consul in Monrovia reported that the British and French Receivers had had to request the Liberian government to pay for their rent and travel expenses. By March 1915, the Receivership had been forced to reduce its Liberian personnel by half, and its remaining officials received only 50% of their pay. The Liberian government, instead of a pre-war average monthly remittance of $13,000, received $8,500 from the Receivership in October 1914, a nominal amount in January 1915, and thereafter nothing. Its sole source of income therefore consisted of the marginal internal revenue sources, including a special emergency tax, which netted some $30,000 for the entire calendar year 1915. (An attempt by the Receivership to take over the

administration of this revenue as well, and to apply it to its own deficit, was understandably resisted by the Howard administration.) In the face of this situation, the New York bankers not only refused to agree to a moratorium on interest payments (payments were actually made until June 1916), but also to issue $140,000 of bonds still held by the National City Bank, whose proceeds could have eased the crisis. In fact, the bankers urged that the shortfall of customs revenue be met from other income of the Liberian government!

Over the period from 1 July 1914 through 31 March 1916, the government of Liberia scraped along on a total expenditure of $102,226.26. The total of assigned (customs) revenues collected in 1915 amounted to $248,009.15. (Much of it from a cargo of gin from Rotterdam which arrived in July, and was landed only over heated objections of the British Receiver, whose interest in paralyzing German trade exceeded his devotion to the financial well-being of the Liberian government, his nominal employer.) For the first half of 1916, receipts amounted to a mere $98,519.15, far from sufficient to meet the costs of the Receivership. In 1917 there was a further decline.

By 1916, officials of the Liberian government were not even paid the 40% of their nominal salaries they were supposed to receive under an Emergency Act. The trading houses found themselves inundated with requests for credit. The German consul in Monrovia suggested in June that his government take steps to persuade the American bankers to issue the balance of the loan. Some months later, Woermann approached Berlin with the suggestion that German financial aid be extended to Liberia, pointing out that such help could only redound to the benefit of future German trade, and would help to preserve the Republic from total dependence on the Allied powers: "It is . . . obvious that the German firms . . . established in Liberia have a special interest in Liberia's remaining independent." The German Foreign Office thereupon approached the U.S. government to inquire about its attitude to the possibility of a German loan, and specifically if the U.S. intended to continue to support Liberian independence if such aid were granted. No answer was forthcoming before the break of diplomatic relations between Berlin and Washington.[9]

Instead Liberia was left to turn to the conclusion of an agreement with the Bank of British West Africa. It provided for a monthly advance of $9,000 by the bank, up to a maximum total of $100,000 (later raised to $150,000), at 7% interest. All Liberian government revenue, including anything received from the Receivership, had to be deposited in the bank, with any excess over $9,000 a month paid in to be applied to the reduction of the debt.

Not only had Liberia lost, under this agreement, its last remnant of financial autonomy; the ability of its government to maintain its authority and control over the territory of the Republic was severely threatened. This is not the place for a discussion of the causes and course of the widespread Kru uprising of 1915-16, except to point out that the financial disaster which faced the Monrovia authorities had a double causal relationship with these events:

In the first place, the effort to raise an internal revenue, instead of depending, as in the pre-war years, almost exclusively on customs duties, meant the imposition of direct taxation on the tribal populations. This was doubly resented as the war had already deprived the sea-faring Kru of their chief source of employment and income, and as the methods adopted by unpaid, unsupervised local officials and soldiery in collecting taxes tended to be extremely irregular.

Secondly, the financial position of the government left it, at the outset, almost helpless in the face of any serious challenge: The Frontier Force, the only reasonably effective armed unit in Liberia, had been reduced to 225 men in early 1915. The fact that it remained unpaid for many months on end, even after the bankers had reluctantly agreed to give its minimum expenses priority

over interest charges, naturally affected its discipline and morale. The personnel of the only government vessel, the decrepit gunboat "Lark", had been laid off, and the Receivership had been forced to delay taking delivery of a new revenue cutter, even though it had been largely paid for, to save on expenses. The arms of the Liberian militia consisted largely of German rifles, for which ammunition could not be obtained.

While rumors of British involvement in the Kru rebellion were in fact unfounded, they deeply worried the Liberian government, especially in view of the tensions with Britain which arose from the Republic's efforts to remain neutral. (British diplomatic correspondence makes it quite clear that it was official policy not to encourage the Kru, some of whom adopted the British flag as their symbol, and who had approached the Consul-General in Monrovia and the Governor of Sierra Leone for aid. The attitude of the former, R. C. F. Maugham, and of other British officials and traders, is another matter. Especially Maugham was bitterly hostile to the Liberian leaders and tended to sympathize with anybody who opposed them.) Aided by American arms supplies, and the presence, at a crucial period, of USS Chester, the government managed, after a year of sporadic fighting, to defeat the villagers of the Kru coast. The campaign, however, worsened the financial crisis. Liberian soldiers were rearely paid, hence undisciplined and given to excesses. After the end of the fighting, in April 1917, even the Frontier Force troops stationed in Monrovia mutinied and virtually took over the capital, until some money was found for them.

Distracted by preoccupations of financial bankruptcy and tribal war, Liberia was also faced with the acute diplomatic dilemmas of a small and powerless neutral in a world at war. At the outbreak of the conflict President Howard had, upon the advice of Washington, formally proclaimed the neutrality of the Republic, and the major combatants, upon American urging, their willingness to respect it. Neutrality corresponded to the realities of Liberia's situation, but also to the preferences of her leaders. The British Consul-General, whose view of the latter was generally acerbic, saw it as a matter of balancing basic sympathies against calculated interest: Liberian officals who had been to Europe ". . . in their innermost souls . . . turn[ed] to Hamburg and Berlin with greater enthusiasm," but expected Britain to win; "The prospect of [Britain] emerging triumphantly from the conflict, endowed with still greater power and influence, has sufficed to indicate to the calculating negroes of this country a safer channel to navigate."[10] The attitude generally held by German circles interested in Liberia was reflected in an article in the Kölnische Zeitung of 13 December 1915: "The Liberian government has maintained a strict neutrality in the face of terrible difficulties. . . . This conduct is highly creditable to the small state and will never be forgotten by the Germans living there." After the Liberian government had energetically protested when a German trading launch had been seized by French forces on the Ivory Coast border, the German consul even suggested that the peace settlement should reward the Republic by extending her territory at the expense of France.

The overall atmosphere of tension between Liberia and the Allies, and its absence in relations with Germany during the early war years must of course be seen against the background of strategic realities: Britain and France were in a position to exert pressure in Liberia, Germany was not and depended wholly on the good will of the Liberian government (and the United States) for the maintenance of its interests. For the same reason, strict Liberian neutrality benefitted Germany marginally more than the Allies. Had Germany controlled the seas, and had her territory surrounded Liberia, she might well have been as irritated as the Allies proved themselves with the Republic's policy.

The primary problems in maintaining neutrality were presented by the presence of a relatively large German colony in the Republic, and the related question of German-Liberian trade. There was also the presence in Monrovia of

and import operations. Such activities netted some of them considerable incomes. Consul General Maugham, the British Customs Receiver, and English merchants attempted to foil such trade by denying shipping space on British vessels to suspect cargo. That, naturally, irritated the Liberians. The issuance of an Order-in-Council in 1915 forbidding all direct and indirect trade with the enemy, including German firms in neutral countries, provoked strong protests in Liberia, where it threatened to further reduce the remaining trickle of trade. Particularly resented was the formulation, by the British Consul-General, of a Black List of Liberian citizens suspected of involvement with the German traders. These measures, coinciding with the Kru revolt, in which British involvement was widely suspected, caused President Howard to adopt a sharply anti-British tone in his annual address to the Legislature, to the displeasure of the British, and the satisfaction of the German consul.

The screw was tightened further in April 1916 when new British regulations virtually prhibited all exports to Liberia. This new measure, according to the U.S. minister, ". . . fell like a pall upon the populace here, officials and civilians alike and (caused) fear that suffering for the want of actual necessities of life (was) sure to follow in the wake of its enforecement." The proclamation was seen as the "proverbial last straw".[13] In June 1916, Britain demanded the expulsion of all Germans from Liberia, and a declaration by the government of its sympathy for the Allied cause, as the price for the resumption of British trade. A French cruiser appeared at Monrovia the day after these demands had been communicated. Not surprisingly, President Howard appeared to the German consul to be deeply depressed by these developments. Faced with such pressure, the Liberian government yielded to the extent of forbidding Liberians to act as agents for nationals of all combatant countries, a measure which was protested by Germany.

Liberia's "exquisite neutrality", in President Howard's phrase, had been maintained over more than two years only with the diplomatic backing of the United States. It was bound to collapse when that country, too, became a belligerent and added its pressure to persuade Liberia to follow suit. What is surprising is only that it took several months before the Howard administration gave in.

After the United States had broken relations with Berlin, the German consul in Monrovia reported (via Madrid, the last remaining communications link) that at a conference between Secretary King and the U.S., British, and French representatives it had been agreed that the German businesses would be closed if the United States declared war. Dopffel requested the dispatch of a German submarine to Monrovia to strengthen the position fo Howard, who was still clinging to neutrality. (Nothing came of this request, as the Admiralty could not spare any U-boats for diplomatic purposes.) The President finally capitulated before a formal U.S.-Allied demand, presented in a joint note on May 7, that the Republic sever relations with the German Empire, and deport German citizens to France.

According to his own account in the war message to the Legislature of 4 August 1917, which is supported by British documents, Howard still balked at the latter step, pointing out that it was a clear act of war, and that Liberia would require protection against German retaliation. After the arrival of British and French naval units in Monrovia, the Germans in outlying settlements were, however, ordered to close their businesses and to come to the capital. Allied insistence finally prevailed over the President's scruples against sending civilians to a prison camp (he would have preferred evacuating them to Spain). On August 4 Liberia declared war. Shortly thereafter, 99 Germans were taken to France on the cruiser Desaix, while the Acting Consul, the Customs Receiver Fritz Lange, seven women, and a baby were allowed to go to Spain. (Lange died en route and Consul Dopffel was removed from the Spanish ship at Gibralter and interned in Britain, an action vainly protested by the

German and French communications facilities. These consisted of a cable station of the German South American Telegraph Company, and a similar installation owned by the French government, both with attached wireless facilities. They occasioned a great deal of local controversy early in the war. On the advice of the American Minister, the government first considered censorship of radio communications, then ordered both wireless stations closed in September 1914. The French station, operated by military personnel, at first disregarded the order. Upon the insistence of the German consul, who threateneed otherwise to re-open the German facility, it was finally closed down by Liberian authorities. Charges and counter-charges about secret radio operations continued nevertheless to be exchanged for over a year: In October 1915 an employee of the French station was brought to trial for contravening neutrality regulations, after the American Chargé had installed a radio in the legation and proved that the French were still transmitting. Similar charges that the German radio was active appear baseless: It is rather difficult to see with whom this short-range facility could have communicated, after the early fall of Togo to allied forces. As for the German cable, the link to the Canary Islands was cut in November 1914, that to Brazil in September 1915. Efforts thereafter to evacuate the cable company personnel to the Canaries proved unavailing, due to British unwillingness to grant safe conduct passes.

One might think that the British government would have been glad to see these Germans removed from Liberia, in view of the sinister activities imputed to them by the Allied representatives in Monrovia. To comprehend how 108 German civilians marooned in West Africa could have been deemd a threat to the Allied cause requires some empathy with war-time paranoia and the psychological peculiarities of consular officials attempting to justify their existence in a backwater while a world conflict is being waged. Nothing emerges from German archives to bear out the dark suspicions of the British and French representatives. In one of his calmer moods, even the former reported that there was nothing to rumors that tribal disturbances in Guinea had been instigated by German agents, and made light of French fears: "From time to time the young Germans vary the monotony of their unemployed existence by tapping imaginary messages with an unconnected transmitting key, to the consternation of the very excitable French superintendent, who rushes with all haste to his Consulate and lays charges against the Germans of illicitly using their wireless installation."[11] At other times, however, Maugham succumbed to the same kind of chimeras: When he accused the Customs Receiver Lange of secretly importing arms, the Liberian Secretary of State, C. D. B. King, understandably asked him ". . . rather disdainfully how (he) considered it possible, even if contraband were illicitly landed here . . . to forward it on to the Cameroons or elsewhere." Maugham suggested that the West trading schooner President Howard could serve such a purpose, a supposition that betrays an unduly low opinion of the capacity of the British navy.[12]

A French reaction to such fears in turn created serious concern in Liberia: In an article in the semi-official Annales Coloniales, whose substance was reported in the New York Times of 16 December 1914, Liberia was accused of harboring German warships, and sending armed bands into neighboring French territory. Referring to the Republic as a "simian state", the author demanded the "finish of that phantasmoria (sic) of a state" and its partition among the Allies. Secretary King protested the article to the Allied representatives, including the French Vice Consul, who may have been the author. The French government denied any responsibility for the publication, but it is understandable that visits by French men-of-war in 1915 should have occasioned some concern in Monrovia.

A more substantial allegation against the Germans in Liberia was that they circumvented British measures against German trade through the use of Liberian intermediaries. In view of the economic condition of the country, it is not surprising that Liberians rushed to act as front men for German export

Spanish government, which now represented German interests in Liberia.)

Participation in the war, albeit nominal, failed to bring Liberia the expected benefits. Due to the shortage of shipping space, trade, and hence the financial position of the government, continued to decline. The Republic also failed to receive from her allies the promised protection against German hostilities. This was illustrated by a curious episode, worth relating mainly because it appears, as the most dramatic incident of Liberia's involvement in the war, in various more or less fantastic variations in most standard accounts of Liberian history:

In February 1918 Max Dinklage, a partner in the Woermann firm who had long been Liberian Minister to Germany, forwarded to the German Admiralty a letter to a Mr. P. C. Parker, a Woermann employee in Monrovia. In a covering letter, the head of the firm, Curt Woermann, requested that the message be forwarded to Liberia if a long-distance submarine should find itself in a suitable location. He, Woermann, realized that most Liberians had opposed the declaration of war, and felt that the message would give "moral support" to this "large party of the friends of Germany" by providing "truthful information" and expressing "the firm intention of the German firms to return to Liberia."[14] The submarine cruiser U-154, outfitting for a commerce raiding mission in the South Atlantic, was pressed into service as a mail vehicle for this occasion. Accounts of her activities in Monrovia vary somewhat between German and Allied versions: As the boat was sunk on the return voyage, and the German reports are thus second-hand (via U-153, with which U-154 rendezvoused after her visit to Monrovia), the account of the British Consul in Monrovia must be given preference. According to it, the German vessel arrived early in the morning of April 10, 1918. Its crew seized, without opposition, the Liberian "navy", consisting of the former I. W. West trading schooner President Howard, which had been bought by the government in 1916 to transport troops to the Kru coast. The letter to Mr. Parker, and a message to President Howard were sent ashore, along with the prisoners from the captured schooner, which was then sunk. About noon the Liberian cabinet sent a message in reply to the sub commander's note, agreeing to close down the wireless and cable stations, but refusing to blow them up. (According to the German version, the entire cabinet visited the boat, did refuse to carry out the Germans' job for them, but facilitated it by providing exact situation sketches, so as to minimize civilian damage.) At 4 p.m., the submarine began shelling the French radio station and destroyed it. Despite the precautions that had been taken, stray shells cost the lives of four persons, including three children, and another young girl was injured. Even with this tragic footnote to a somewhat farcical incident, the British report concluded that ". . . the letter from the enemy submarine and the subsequent considerate action of her commandant have succeeded partly in bringing about exactly that impression which had been calculated for." (I.e., Germany was still a factor to be reckoned with, and Liberia was left defenseless by her allies in a war she hadn't wanted to be in.) U-154's stay in Monrovia was cut short by the fortuitous arrival of SS Burutu, an armed British merchantman, which engaged the sub with her deck guns and drove her off before its commander could put the cable station out of action.

After this brush with the actualities of war, Liberia wanted no more of it. A French offer to station troops in Monrovia was, understandably, declined with thanks---and alacrity. A request for British naval protection of the Liberian coast, on the other hand, brought as little result as an earlier proposal, in February 1918, to station a few seaplanes in Monrovia and Cape Palmas for protection against submarines. The Allies would not even spare Liberia some small arms ammunition. Aware of its utterly defenseless position, the Liberian government attempted to forestall further mayhem: It forbade the reopening of the French radio station and, when the French insisted, had the aerials removed. Britain showed understanding for the country's "hopeless position", but when the United States supported France, Liberia had to give in.

Enthusiasm for the Allied cause declined further as a result of this affair.

One may surmise that little enough remained by the summer of 1918 anyway: Liberia's attempt to use her status as an Allied power to obtain a $5 million U.S. government loan to solve the country's financial problems and rescue it from abject dependence on the Bank of British West Africa was treated dilatorily in Washington. Gradually it developed that the conditions attached to the loan were so burdensome that they amounted to the abnegation of the country's independence, or what was left of it. Not only all financial affairs, but the internal administration of the Republic would have been required to be put under the control of American officials. U.S. Minister Bundy, in fact, spoke quite frankly of a "period of tutelage under the United States."[15] The $5 million would have netted only about $2.8 million after previous debts were retired. From the remainder, Liberia would have had to pay, not only interest, but a total of $37,000 annually for the salaries of twelve U.S. officials. The country's position was so hopeless, however, that after long negotiations the government accepted most of these proposals, only to have the loan rejected, in 1921, by the U.S. Senate. It was thus not until the establishment of the Firestone interests in Liberia, and the loan agreement of 1927, that the development towards U.S. domination of Liberia's economic, as well as political affairs, for which the basis had been laid in pre-war and wartime developments, came to full fruition.

In the interval, German business returned to Liberia, very shortly after the war, and even regained for a time a leading position, especially with respect to Liberian exports. In 1923, Germany imported Liberian goods valued at $400,000, far more than any other country. (The U.S. imported $5,000 worth.)* Never again, however, did the Hanseatic trade play a role remotely comparable to its pre-war one. By the late 1920's, moreover, growing commercial and shipping links with the U.S., a result of the Firestone enterprise, and the arrival of the Lebanese, who came to dominate retail trade, further narrowed the sphere of German commerce.[16] Most of the business firms mentioned in this paper continue trading with Liberia to this day, having once again re-established themselves after World War II. Now, however, they consitute only one element among many in the cosmopolitan economic life of the country.

FOOTNOTES

1. GENERAL NOTE: In an account almost exclusively based on unpublished sources, one is tempted to attach a footnote to virtually every sentence. Their utility to most readers, however, would be quite limited. Hence, in order to expedite the physical production of this paper, all notes have been eliminated, with the exception of references to direct quotes, and to materials not listed below. I will gladly advise any interested readers individually on sources for specific statements.

The paper represents a partial distillation of a rather thorough survey of the following materials. (A few volumes of documents containing strictly incidental references to Liberia are not included in the listing.)

a. Bonn. Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes.

LIBERIA 1. This is by far the fullest, most informative body of documents on Liberian affairs in Germany. 32 volumes, chronologically arranged, cover the years from 1897 to 1920.

*In that year, Germany was second only to Britain among the country's leading suppliers.

LIBERIA 2. Seven volumes of documents on the Customs Receivership and related financial and economic matters. Chronologically arranged, covering the period 1911-1918.

BOTSCHAFT LONDON, A/W, Vol. 14. Material on English interests in and views of Liberia. Anglo-German correspondence on Liberia. Some of the documents are duplicated in LIBERIA 1.

b. Koblenz. Bundesarchiv.

R 7 (Reichswirtschaftsministerium).
VI 284 Material on trade with Liberia after World War I.

R 38 (Reichsministerium für Wiederaufbau).
274 Documents relating to German financial losses in Liberia during World War I, compensation claims by German firms and individuals.

R 85 (Auswärtiges Amt; Handelspolitische Abteilung).
120 Materials on a (very tentative) German railroad project in Liberia, 1913/14
696 Documents on postal relations with Liberia.
771 Documents on the establishment and operation of the German cable and wireless station in Liberia.
2541 Financial contributions by Germans in Liberia to the war effort, 1914-1917.
3628 Treatment of Germans in Liberia, 1914-1918.
5639 Disposition of German property in Liberia, 1917.
6672 Attitude of the Neutrals (Africa except Egypt). Liberian neutrality policy, 1914-1917.

c. Freiburg. Bundesarchiv - Militärarchiv (Marinearchiv).

R M 1. Kaiserliche Admiralität.

Fasz. 626. XII. 2.4.41. Vols. 1, 2, 5 contain reports from commanders of naval vessels on Liberia for the years 1880-1886. These reports cover a surprisingly wide range of political and economic topics. They constitute the best German sources on Liberian affairs for the period prior to the establishment of a full-time German consulate in Monrovia in 1897.

Fasz. 629. XII. 2.4.44 and
Fasz. 630. XII through 627. XII. Similar reports by commanders of German naval vessels on visits to African ports, including Liberia, 1866-1914.

R M 4. Admiralstab der Marine.

Fasz. 5075. Reports from the commander of SMS Panther on visits to Liberia 1909-1914.

Kriegstagebuch U-Kreuzerverband (Box 77, vol. 1)
U-Box 145. U-Kreuzerverband. U-154, U-153. Information on the mission of U-154 to Monrovia, April 1918.

d. Bremen. Staatsarchiv.

The materials on Liberia available in Bremen and Hamburg are disappointingly meager. Much was apparently destroyed in the course of World War II. The business firms trading with Liberia have preserved little from the

period before World War I. The firm of C. Woermann has annual balance sheets for the years 1877-1918, which provide a quantitative picture of the development of its Liberia trade. The author was told of the existence of some papers still in the possession of C. F. Wilhelmn Jantzen G.m.b.H. At the time of his visit, in 1970, they had not been sighted, and were not available. The Vietor materials in Bremen, mentioned below, are thus of particular importance, as the sole available large body of German business material relating to Liberia.

2. Ratsarchiv.

C. 32. Relations of the Hanseatic Cities to Liberia. Fragmentary collection of documents, 1848-1891, some duplicated in Hamburg.

3. Senatsregistratur.

A.3.L.2. Liberia. Miscellaneous documents and correspondence, very fragmentary, 1885-1928.

4. 70. Hanseatische Gesantschaft Berlin.

I.C.2.1. Some documents on German commercial interests' protests against the 1906 Johnston concession, largely duplicated in Hamburg and Bonn.

7. 2001. J. K. Vietor Nachlass. Copybooks and correspondence of a major Bremen trading house. Interesting and informative on the economics, as well as the methods of trade on the West African coast, on relations of the trading firms with each other and with German officialdom.

e. Bremen. Archiv der Handelskammer Bremen.

HP I 14 and HP II 100. Negotiation of the Hanseatic commercial treaty with Liberia. 1854-1856.

HP II 100. Correspondence relating to compensation claims of Bremen firms for property losses in Liberia as a result of World War I.

HP II 104. Some scattered correspondence, memoranda relating to commercial interests in Liberia, 1906-1928.

f. Hamburg. Staatarchiv Hamburg.

Senatskommission für die Reichs - und Auswärtigen Angelegenheiten.

A III d 14. Correspondence relating to the appointment of a full-time consul in Monrovia, and personnel changes in the Consulate, 1897-1910.

C I d 139-141. "Odds and ends": Claims of Hamburg firms against the Liberian government, 1897-1900. Complaint of a Hamburg citizen against Liberian authorities for unlawful arrest, 1899-1900. Some correspondence on general economic conditions in Liberia, 1905-1916.

Senatsakten. Cl. VI, No. 15, vol. 3. Fragmentary documents on Hamburg relations with Liberia, 1854-1925.

Bestand 132-5/4. Hamburgischer Bevollmächtigter beim Bundesrat in Berlin. III.3. A Few pieces of correspondence on Hamburg relations with Liberia, 1867-1886.

Bestand 132-5/7. Residentur in London. Scattered documents on Hamburg trade in Liberia, 1865-1866.

Bestand 371 - 8. XIX C 19.3.5 Miscellaneous: Rubber in Liberia (1890), Messages of the Liberian President to the Legislature (1887-1891), consular report on general conditions in Liberia (1902).

g. Commerzbibliothek der Handelskammer Hamburg.

Protokolle des Vereins Westafrikanischer Kaufleute. Only occasional references to Liberian matters. These minutes of an association of Africa traders are instructive, howver, in illustrating that the occasional carping of the merchants against the Liberian government and legislation paled beside their constant complaints against German colonial authorities.

h. London. Public Record Office.

The Foreign Office series 458, familiar to most historians of Liberia, is chronologically arranged, and covers the years 1847 to 1918 in its first 47 volumes. (There is a deplorable hiatus for the period between 1861 and 1892, when no British consul was stationed in Monrovia.) For the period dealt with in this paper, these documents include a great deal of information on German trade and other German activities in Liberia. This series in conjunction with the German reports provides a very full and clear picture of the history of Liberia for the period covered.

2. P. E. Schramm, Deutschland and Übersee (Braunschweig, 1950), 184-203, 239-240.

3. Staatsarchiv Hamburg. Senat. Cl.VI No. 15 Vol. 3, Fasc. 1,3. Staatsarchiv Bremen. 2. Ratsarchiv. C 32.

4. Max Dinklage, Liberia in seiner Bedeutung für Deutschlands Handel und zukünftige Versorgung (Hamburg, 1918), 9-23.

5. Franoux to Auswärtiges Amt 21 December 1905; Auswärtiges Amt to Franoux 3 January 1906. Politisches Archiv d. Ausw. Amts, Liberia 1, vol. 5.

6. "Report on the Situation in Liberia in 1909," with Baldwin to Foreign Office 26 January 1910. Public Record Office. F.O. 458, vol. 28. F.O. 458, vols. 23-26, passim. Pol. Archiv d. Ausw. Amts. Liberia 1, vol. 8, passim. An interesting sidelight to this crisis in Anglo-Liberian relations concerns the role of E. W. Blyden, early "Pan Africanist" and long-time critic of Liberian governments and all their works. In a letter to R. L. Antrobus of the Colonial Office, of 30 January 1908, he had urged Britain to "Subject (Liberia) to a limited independence such as Egypt now enjoys." In 1909 Blyden visited Liberia and urged Kru and Grebo groups to ask Great Britain to annex their country, as "the Republic was on its last legs." Baldwin to Foreign Office, 1 May 1910. F.O. 458, vol. 23.

7. Büsing to Auswärtiges Amt 14 December 1913. Pol. Archiv. Liberia 2, vol. 5.

8. Staatsarchiv Bremen. Vietor Nachlass. Copie-Buch XI. Riecke to J. K. Vietor 10 August 1916.

9. Dopffel to Ausw. Amt 6 June 1916, Liberia 2, vol. 7. C. Woermann to AA 25 October 1916; AA to Embassy Washington 15 November 1916: Liberia 1, vol. 31.

10. Maugham to F.O. 7 April 1915. F.O. 458, vol. 42.

11. Maugham to F.O. 16 Gebruary 1915, 7 April 1915. F.O. 458, vol. 42.

12. Maugham to F.O. 31 March 1915. F.O. 458, vol. 42. Cf. Lange to AA 10 June 1915. Liberia 2, vol. 6.

13. Curtis to State Department, 9 June 1916, 13 June 1916. Foreign Relations of the United States, 1916 (Washington, 1927), 458-459.

14. C. Woermann to AA 11 February 1918; C. Woermann to Admiralstab der Marine 18 January 1918; Dinklage to Parker 11 February 1918. Marinearchiv. U-Box 145. U-KREUZERVERBAND. U-154.

15. Bundy to State Department 15 January 1918. Foreign Relations of the United States, 1918 (Washington, 1929), 513.

16. Information Mr. Franz Nölke, C. Woermann G.m.b.H., Hamburg; Mr. Hans Tiefenbacher, Wiechers & Helm, Hamburg.

LIBERIAN MARKET PLACES IN 1970[1]

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Introduction

This paper outlines the social functions and the physical, authority, and commercial structure of Liberian market places as of 1970. In an earlier paper[2] I briefly reviewed the question of entrepreneurship in Liberia, with special reference to the traders in market places. The present paper expands that discussion to encompass the physical and social context within which the traders in market places conducted business.

Market-place distribution systems hold strategic positions in the economy of nearly every developing country. Yet the distributive functions of these systems often are not clear, or at least not appreciated. Within Liberia, for instance, markets attracted little official attention in 1970--except when a dispute broke out, or when the litter and rudely-constructed selling tables proved unsightly. The demographic consequences of ever-increasing numbers of peddlers, however, were widely felt. Sellers were ubiquitous, lining the streets, occasionally blocking the entrances to stores, spilling beyond the bounds of market places into adjacent residential areas and even into the roadway. Market places were useful sites for purchasing fresh produce. But one sent one's houseboy, preferably, for the congestion within markets made shopping uncomfortable. One official document[3] had labeled the system "primitive." "Quaint" perhaps better expresses the underlying attitude, especially of expatriates. At best, however, the distributive importance of markets was considered negligible. As elsewhere,[4] market places appeared simply to be crude agglomerations of equipment and haphazardly organized personnel, less important in understanding economic development than symptomatic of an undeveloped distributive system.

These views, and others like them, reflect a lack of information concerning the interdependencies among market and other trading sites, the systems of ideas and strategies on which traders base their behavior, and the circumstances within which traders must conduct business. This paper, like the earlier one, attempts to clarify some of these issues.

Economic and Non-Economic Functions

Liberian markets, as other markets in West Africa, clearly are economic phenomena whose existence implies that buyers and sellers are attracted to the site in sufficient numbers to rationalize keeping the market open. But the holistic nature of their discipline and training has led anthropologists to take cognizance of, if not to stress, the multi-functional nature of market places. Bohannan and Dalton[5] pointed out in their initial survey of markets in Africa that the social, political, and ideological aspects of market frequently assume marked importance:

..., market places--particularly in areas in which the market is

> economically peripheral--fulfill many social and cultural needs of the population. Indeed, some markets are not regarded as primarily "economic" institutions by the people. They provide a meeting place where at least a certain minimum of security is assured and hence they can be used for political, religious, social and personal purposes. In a land in which collections of people on non-kinship bases or non-age-set bases may prove difficult, the market provides the skeleton for a very wide range of social usages.

There are convincing logical and empirical grounds for regarding market places as economic phenomena irrespective of the importance of other activities carried on within, or coincidentally with, marketing. Although economics alone does not permit a full understanding of markets, only a focus on economics permits us to generalize about the origins, operation, and disappearance of market systems. However, occasionally, considerable explanatory potential is still attributed to non-economic functions.

Non-economic activities are associated with market places in Liberia as they are with markets throughout Africa. In rural areas markets assume properties of a holiday. People attending the market--including sellers themselves--wear fine clothes; men and women take the opportunity to visit with neighbors and kinsmen; children play (besides perusing the toys for sale); young men and women flirt; announcements of community-wide interest occasionally are made; and chiefs and elders sit at courts. The daily markets in Monrovia serve as nodes in a network of communication, for market sellers are linked by ties of neighborhood and kinship to traders working in different markets, and to non-traders living throughout the city. Discussing the Monrovia markets at the University of Liberia one day, for instance, a student exclaimed

> Oh yes! Our markets are important sources of information. Just the other day I heard from my Mother that my Auntie [who lived about 7 miles away in another section of the city] had... . My Mother heard about this at the market from one woman [a trader] who lived near my Auntie.

Predominantly, however, by their participants Liberian market places are conceptualized as economic phenomena and market places are attended in the course of economic activities: by people seeking food, by people checking prices and commodities available for sale, and by policemen walking their beats. Enquiries on this issue were formalized in Monrovia in the process of a household survey:[6] 90 per cent of the sample reported none but economic reasons for visiting market places. Although occasionally some people do go to markets to visit kinsmen or friends, most people are too busy, market places are too congested, and non-economic activities are more conveniently carried on elsewhere and at other times. Although enquiries on this issue never were formalized upcountry, my suggestions that people go to markets for non-economic reasons were considered frivolous. People attending markets did carry on a variety of noneconomic activities. But the issue was whether or not to attend the market in the first place. While residents of market towns might invariably attend the market, farmers from the surrounding areas tended to visit markets only if purchases or sales were to be made. Once business was transacted, people returned home.

Market places were conceptualized, and set apart physically, as centers of commercial activity for large numbers of buyers and sellers. The non-economic activities occurring within or adjacent to the physical plant were incidental to the operation and organization of the market itself.

Physical Structure

Liberian market places exhibit exceptionally diverse physical properties. The only two features consistent throughout the country are that markets are situated on or adjacent to roads, and are largely devoid of physical infrastructure except that provided by sellers.

Markets in the contemporary system are dependent on commodity shipment by motor vehicle and must have ready access to roads. However, with few exceptions--concession sites and the market at Gbarnga--vehicles carrying traders and commodities have not been allocated distinct parking space. Taxis, trucks, and buses park immediately adjacent to the market, or as close as is practical. The frequent lack of adequate parking space leads to severe traffic congestion, even in rural areas. Congestion is especially severe in the few periodic markets (Kolela and Voloba, for instance) in which vehicles drive into the market grounds, and at the Waterside market in Monrovia, where traffic coming from Bushrod Island frequently is backed up for several miles.

The Firestone Plantation Company market at Harbel features excellent, open market buildings, slaughtering facilities for cattle, well constructed tables, and convenient water and toilet facilities for sellers and consumers. But most markets have no buildings, and even those that do include little else in the way of physical infrastructure. Communications facilities (telephones) are non-existent, and few markets are served with electrical outlets for lights or refrigeration. Except for the market building itself, where one exists, and specialized concrete stalls and slaughtering facilities, where they exist (at Gbarnga, in the Central markets in Monrovia), sellers themselves must provide their own equipment: mats, tables, shelters from the sun and rain, bags, bottles, pans, tins and (rarely) scales, paper for wrapping, and so forth. Water for drinking or keeping vegetables fresh must be brought to market, frequently from considerable distances. Toilets--the absence of which at the Waterside market bringing forth an occasional indignant editorial in one of the Monrovia newspapers--are non-existent.

Physically, markets are differentiated principally on the basis of enclosure in roofed buildings and the kinds of structures sellers provide at markets not so enclosed. Roofed buildings are exceptional, expensive, and are differentiated on the basis of having enclosed walls (e.g., Saniquellie market, the new building at the Waterside market in Monrovia) or open walls (e.g., Harbel, Plibo, Buchanan, Gbarnga, Voinjama and the old building at the Waterside market in Monrovia). Open-walled buildings are excellent adjustments to tropical areas. Taking advantage of breezes, they are cooler, less smelly, and less humid places in which to work or shop. However, their structure precludes storing commodities overnight. Tables inside the new building at the Waterside market frequently had cupboards with locks, and a watchman had been hired to lock the building at night and open the market in the morning. Reportedly, the market at Saniquellie also could be locked up, but no watchman was reported when data were collected in June, 1970. Although it was indicated that commodities could be stored overnight, apparently no one actually did so. Except for a locked, concrete block structure partially roofed with zinc sheets that was used for storing wholesalers' stocks of palm oil at the BTC market, no other market place had storage facilities. It was common practice everywhere to store commodities at home, or elsewhere outside of market places in structures rented or owned by the individual trader.

Provision of buildings is expensive, beyond the ability of market sellers to accomplish except over long periods of time and with great difficulty. The building at Salayea, and possibly that at Fisebu, and a concrete-floored, roofed shelter at Kolela, however, were local projects. The buildings at Salayea and Fisebu were completed by the local community with instigation of Peace Corps Volunteers. The shelter at Kolela was constructed by the Town Chief

with funds collected for the purpose of improving the market grounds. These efforts appear to be exceptional. More commonly, funds collected for these purposes have thus far been insufficient or, occasionally, have been diverted from their intended purpose by the collector of market fees. Most market buildings have been constructed by concessions or by the Government of Liberia, and it is expected that future construction of market buildings will come about mainly through government-sponsored projects. Because the construction of market buildings has been the activity of government, and the government itself has been faced with spending this scarce good in areas with greater national priority, market buildings invariably are found in major administrative towns (Gbarnga, Sanniquellie, Buchanan, Voinjama), and rarely elsewhere. As with other govenrment buildings, such markets have been created with an eye to maintaining and building civic pride in these communities, and as examples to other areas.

Due to the expense of even the most bare market building, the most common physical plant for markets is an open lot. These markets, however, are differentiated on the basis of the physical facilities market sellers themselves have constructed: (1) there are markets at which there are no shelters at all, and sellers provide only mats on which to sell (e.g., Borkeza), (2) there are markets at which an open space is encircles, wholly or partially by permanent shelters (usually thatch--occasionally zinc--roofs supported by wooden frames) (e.g., Totota, Yanekwele, Filela, Sanoyea, Kolela, and most other markets along the Monrovia-Gbarnga highway); and (3) there are markets at which selling is conducted from rudely constructed tables, often protected by thatch or zinc roofing (e.g., Zorzor, Ganta, Cavalla Plantation, Harper, and all market places in Monrovia).

Structural variation appears to be explained by the activities undertaken at the market places. Markets having no physical structures are those meeting only once a week, and which either are not frequented by the same traveling traders, or have begun to be so frequented only recently. Because shelters must be provided by traders themselves, at a cost of $2-4.00 yearly for thatch roofs, and $22-23.00 or more for a more permanent zinc roof, the presence of permanent shelters at markets presupposes a commitment to a particular market. As one man noted, "When you set up a shelter you have invested in a market and are not inclined to go elsewhere." These traders are professionals. They sell more-or-less daily, throughout the year. When asked, they respond that trading "is my profession." Although these traders may make use of other sources of income (perhaps a small farm), they are committed to trading for the bulk of their money income. Where periodic markets are located sufficiently close to permit traveling traders to visit the same set consistently, week after week, throughout the year, permanent shelters can be justified and are found as defining physical features of market places.

The inability to visit particular markets regularly accounts for the absence of permanent shelters among women professionals dealing in food stuffs, even in the periodic markets of central and northeastern Liberia. Not only are these female traders hindered by capital reserves smaller than the dealers in cloth and household wares, they visit fewer markets, and visit particular markets less reliably (see Table 1).

Table 1.--Market visitation patterns, Liberian periodic markets*

Number of Markets Ever Visited	Trader			
	Producer[a] Seller	Female Intermediary[b]	Male Intermediary[c]	
1-2	209	39	8	256
3-4	7	47	15	69
5-6		1	28	29
7-8			3	3
	216	87	54	357
Avg. No. of Markets Visited	1.6	2.6	4.5	

* Gamma = .939, Standard Error$_{95\%}$ = .068

[a] Producer sellers are farmers selling the foods they grow, collect, or hunt

[b] Females Intermediaries are women buying and selling on a professional or semi-professional basis, mostly foodstuffs (rice, salt, bouillon cubes, palm oil)

[c] Male Intermediaries are men buying and selling on a professional basis household wares, cloth, clothes, and sundries

Likewise, the regularity or irregularity of market visits, and a professional commitment to trading, accounts for the presence or absence of tables or shelters among sellers of farm produce. Unless trading is undertaken regularly and forms the major basis for livelihood, the effort and money required to construct tables and/or permanent shelters is not justified. Consequently, tables and shelters are found only among professional retailers or wholesalers-retailers in market places meeting daily, and frequently are found together with government-constructed market buildings. Where producer sellers retail in such markets, however, they do so without benefit of shelters or tables.

Authority Structure

The existence of any organization implies lines of authority and influence by which internal conflict is minimized and controlled and in terms of which the social unit is articulated with other, perhaps more encompassing social units. However, as Hill[7] has noted for West African markets generally, the concept of market authority is elusive. A variety of personages are "authorities" of one kind or another. But the responsibilities and influence of the "same" kinds of authorities vary with the market place, and to some extent with the person interpreting the phenomenon. Consistency among markets in Liberia is achieved only with regard to the nature of market fees, the

secular jurisdiction of the Government of Liberia, and the peripheral nature of the latter in organizing markets.

Market Fees

With few exceptions, market sellers have their own spot to which they regularly return to sell, and for which they are assessed a fee ranging from a few cents (1¢, 2¢, 5¢ per day, 5¢ every two weeks, or 50¢ per month) in rural areas to $1.00 or more monthly or 10-25¢ per table per day in Monrovia. Market fees are a rent entitling the payer to a spot somewhere in the market, and the privilege (usually only by consensus of other sellers) of occupying that spot to the exclusion of other sellers. Although fees usually were assessed in standard amounts of money for given markets, there was some variation.

In a few markets upcountry, for instance, fees were assessed in small amounts of produce (e.g., Borkeza) or in a combination of produce and money (e.g., Kolela). In Voinjama, market fees varied according to the marketing functions performed that day: the fee was 5¢ for the periodic market day and 2¢ daily for the rest of the working week.

In Monrovia, some variation in fees assessed for different areas within markets was encountered. In the mid 1960s the Government of Liberia turned over the operation of the Waterside market (and BTC market: see below on the Liberia Market Association) to the sellers themselves. Traders working out of the new building assessed themselves 15¢ daily for the purpose of hiring a night watchman. Sellers on the periphery of the market and outside the market building paid no fees. Similarly, traders working out of the old building and adjacent areas paid no fees if they had "owned" their tables for many years. But new sellers not infrequently paid fees to "owners" of the sites at which they had set up business. Dealers in produce paid 15¢ per table per day; dealers in salt and soap paid only 5¢ per table per day; dealers in cloth paid 25¢ per table per day.

Sub-letting tables or established trading sites, however, is exceptional. Usually there was room for additional sellers. However, at the Old Road market in Monrovia, sellers had expanded to the physical limits of the lot on which the market was situated. To ward against spoilage of their homes and to repair any damage that might occur, houseowners in one area demanded a $1.00 "insurance" fee of the sellers jammed up against their houses.

In Monrovia sellers were held responsible for paying market fees in the full amount even if they did not attend the market every day. If a seller was absent, her friends might pay a daily fee and be reimbursed. If a seller was sick, busy with other matters, or simply did not want to trade one day, not infrequently she permitted a friend to use her spot. In these cases, the market fee was paid by the friend. If fees were collected daily, the friend would pay the fee for that day; if fees were collected monthly, the friend would give the trader a small sum to cover the period for which she was in the market. Although not mandatory, for her consideration the trader might receive an additional small sum.

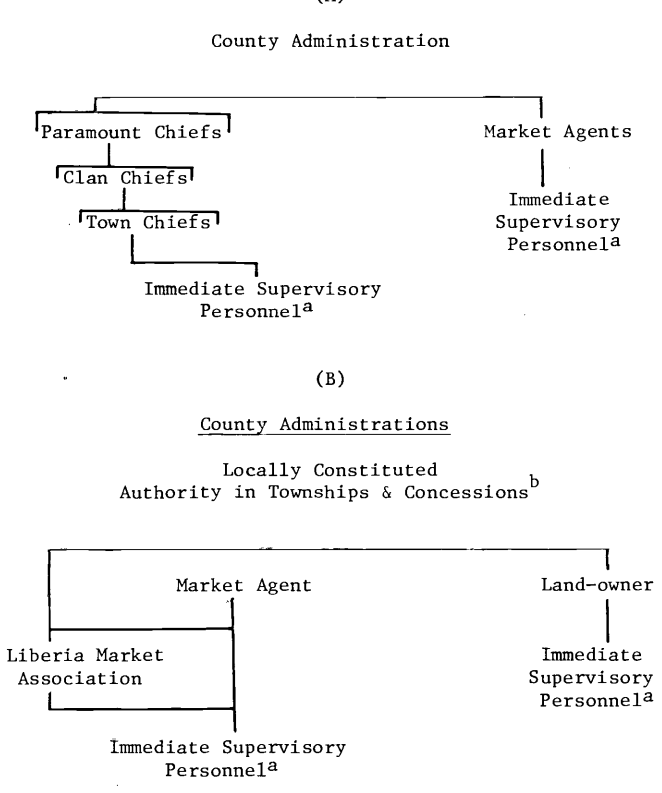
Although their rent function was invariable, the purposes to which market fees are put and the grounds on which they were assessed vary considerably. In one market in Monrovia, for instance, no market fees were paid. But prospective sellers were required to approach the market head with $.50-$2.00 and pay equivalent amounts each month to obtain and maintain their place in the market. As indicated above, fees may be used to hire a night watchman, be considered a gift to an old man who cleans up the market, or may only involve subletting a market table or a marketing site. Most frequently, however, one or a combination of two alternatives justifies the payment of fees. On the one hand, market fees are paid for purposes of improving or cleaning the market ground. And in one

market, no fee was assessed (my impression was that sellers refused to pay) because the Clan Chief did not clean the market grounds. Often, fees were collected specifically to raise money with which to construct a market building. And, in at least one case market sellers refused to pay further fees when it was learned the accumulated funds had been diverted to other, personal, uses. On the other hand, since many markets in towns and cities are situated on private land, fees are justified as a rent assessed by the owner. In a few markets, however, no one knew clearly for what reasons they paid market fees. Although not unquestioned, it was the acknowledged prerogative of the local Paramount Chief.

Market Authorities

All market places fall under the jurisdiction of the Government of Liberia. But, however clearly a market may be incorporated into governmental structures (the variation is illustrated in Fig. 1), its link to government largely is incidental to the operation of the market.

Figure 1.--Market Authority in Liberia, 1970



[a]Immediate Supervisory Personnel may include: (a) collectors of market fees, (b) janitors, (c) night watchmen, (d) tribal representatives.

[b]For instance, the Mayor of Monrovia, or the Labor Affairs Office of the Firestone Plantations Company at Harbel.

Clan Chiefs, Paramount Chiefs, or other higher officials, for instance, may be the eventual recipient of market fees. But such people do not collect the fees themselves, nor do they receive market fees because they are market authorities.

Similarly, officials high in the administrative hierarchy usually are cited as those having control over market disputes, and may adjudicate disputes originating in markets. But jurisdiction and settlement of market disputes is neither implied by a market authority nor will disputes be settled within markets.

Informal lines of influence restrain disputes, and most disputes originating in markets are handled by sellers themselves. Although a neighboring seller may interject a comment to the effect "if you don't like the price, go elsewhere," complaints about high food prices, for instance, largely are treated as issues solely the concern of the buyer and seller. Disputes among market sellers themselves usually are handled solely within the market place by respected older women, or tribal representatives (in the few markets in which they exist). The mediation of such people is illustrated in the following, written by a Liberian research assistant:

> When I got to this lady's table, a friend of hers next to her table was not around. I started interviewing her, and then her friend came, and I was standing in the place where the friend was supposed to stand and sell her market. Seeing me standing there she got mad and said: "My friend, move yah, what you doing?" Hearing this, the lady I was interviewing also got mad, and said that she should not have talked to me that way. Rather, she should have used a little nicer tone, because it was the first time she had seen me. I moved from the second woman's table, and their quarrel continued. An old Bassa lady came along. They were both friends of hers. Each went over the whole argument to the old lady. After hearing both stories, she said that both should forget and shouldn't make palaver about small things like that. The woman I was interviewing then attended to me and I ended the interview.

Not all disputes are as minor as the one described above, of course. But even disputes eventually passed up the jurisdictional hierarchy appear to be mediated initially by other market sellers, and may never move beyond the market place into the regular judicial channels. Such cases are illustrated by the following field notes of dispute over access to a trading site:

> One of the sellers at Old Road did not pay her market fee last month. Since that time she has not been to market and a new seller selected the vacant table and shelter at the spot from which to conduct business. One of the friends of the original seller told her of the new seller's business. Obviously angry, the original seller came to the market and confronted the woman conducting business from "her" site and table. She vehemently demanded that the new seller move her market. Taken a-back, the new seller did nothing--made no move one way or another. The original seller then began to move the new trader's market for her. And the new trader reacted violently. The two fought furiously for 10-15 seconds (?a short, but frenzied fight) before

> neighboring sellers and some buyers separated the two. Two older women came over to hear the argument. Both sellers presented their stories. But the issue cannot be decided by the old women. The two combatants are referred to the "collector". The collector is sent for, arrives shortly, and each states her case again. The original seller is told she cannot sell in the market if she does not pay her market fee and that she cannot leave her shelter up (and expect no one to use it?) if she is not going to use it. The original seller moved her table; the new seller moved her market to another location.

Stealing, serious fights, destruction of produce or market stalls, and so forth, fall immediately and directly under the jurisdiction of the Government of Liberia, and its police representatives and move into formal judicial channels. And, since informal mediation is not granted judicial status, those dissatisfied with the outcome of such settlement may appeal to the police and court system. But even where the jurisdiction of the police and courts are clear, market sellers may participate. The apprehension of "rogues" (thieves) is an outstanding example. When a rogue is detected in a market, sellers arise en masse to give chase, and (once detected), one has the impression of rogues actually seeking out the police for their own protection.

Jurisdiction over markets is implied by governmental positions existing independently of markets. And administrative hierarchies and business or civic regulations impinge on market and market sellers only in restricted realms of activity. Consequently, they have little bearing on the actual operation of markets. The most direct contact traders have with government in their capacity as businessmen or women, for instance, comes when they acquire "Peddlars Licenses" or when they are subject to health or other civic regulations. During 1970, for instance, as a part of a city-wide beautification project all Monrovia market places that were not enclosed were required to construct concrete block walls separating the markets from the street. And, looking in back files of newspapers, periodically one comes across stories relating to the "lightning swoops" of police and city cleaners demolishing market stalls in prohibited areas. But licenses are required only of dealers in imports; the construction of walls required only moderate contributions; and, although having had important implications for the relocation and formation of market places, the periodic street cleaning undertaken by the police and city cleaners neither affects market sellers proper nor the activities of buying and selling in markets. Indeed, such "lightning swoops" barely disrupted the operation of street sellers, whose businesses soon reappeared in much the same--albeit prohibited--locations.

Participation in and supervision of market activities characteristically is undertaken only by specially designated personnel: the Town Chief in the town of a Paramount Chief, an appointee from the sib holding this responsibility since the founding of the town and market several hundred years ago (e.g., Borkeza), a town elder (e.g., Filela), a "Market Agent" (e.g., in administrative headquarters towns, and at concessions), or people whose only official capacity is that of "collector" of market fees, appointed to the status by a Chief or by the owner of the land on which the market is situated. Although most frequently other market personnel do not exist, there is some variation. For instance, the Liberia Market Association provides the framework for the administration of the Waterside and BTC markets in Monrovia, and represents the sellers at the Harbel market to the Firestone Plantations Company (see below). But the framework of administration is variable even within the Association. The President of each branch in Monrovia acts as the market head. But at Waterside, the LMA appeared to effectively administer only the new building, and then only with respect to collecting funds for hiring a night watchman. At the BTC market, the acknowledged head is the woman whose activities, first at the old Chief's Compound, and later at a second market site, led to the

establishment of the Liberia Market Association and the occupation of the grounds on which the BTC market now stands. She effectively administers the market in conjunction with representatives of the major tribal groups within the market, and functions additionally as a fish wholesaler-retailer.

Another important variant is found where markets are situated on privately-owned land. But, again, administrative structure is variable. In one such market, for instance, and as are all such people, the owner of the land is considered the market head. But the land-owner rarely visits the market and assumes no direct responsibility for settling disputes or arranging market activities. Immediate supervisory responsibilities were delegated to a woman renting a house on the land immediately adjacent to the market. In return for collecting market fees, cleaning the market, allocating selling spots to new sellers and occasionally settling minor disputes, this woman received a portion of the fees she collected on behalf of the land owner, and was considered--from another perspective--to be the market head. In turn, however, most of the tasks of fee collection, market upkeep, and so forth were allocated to her houseboys as an aspect of their domestic responsibilities.

In another market situated on private land, however, the land-owner never personally visited the market and assumed no jurisdiction or responsibilities over market activities beyond collecting market rents. His sole contact with the market was through his houseboy, who was assigned the tasks and status of "collector." In this particular market, furthermore, there was no formally designated internal officials when investigations were initiated. However, my enquiries about market leaders and dispute settlement appeared to serve as a catalyst for the selection of two women, one from each of the dominant Bassa and Loma contingents at the market, to handle disputes and related matters in the market. While we discussed dispute management, a policeman was struck by the idea of market head. The next time he mediated a dispute, he instructed the sellers to appoint two leaders--which they did, apparently on the basis of informal lines of authority and influence which pre-existed the suggestion.

The lines of responsibility, jurisdiction, and influence of all officials, informal or formally designated, is circumscribed however, and predicts little of the activity one encounters in markets. Markets largely are organized by commercial activities and ties of friendship and kinship binding together traders, and traders and their customers. Before discussing the commercial structure of markets, however, it is appropriate to underline this point by discussing the single organization binding together large numbers of market sellers.

The Liberian Market Association

Any social unit can be viewed from the potential interests of the individuals of which it is constituted and the quasi-groups into which it is divided.[8] Liberian markets are both integrated with and differentiated from the wider social field on numerous criteria. Latent interests cross-cut each other extensively. Although instances can be cited in which interests become manifest, these examples involve few people and the selection of only one of many potential identities to effect only transitory alliances.[9] The single cleavage along which there has emerged a corporate, oppositional group among market sellers is that involving the subordination of market sellers to the Government of Liberia. The corporate group that emerged was the Liberia Market Association.

The LMA originally was formed in the early 1960s in response to the absence of market grounds and the harrassment to which sellers along streets are subject periodically. As many as 500 traders may have banded together

initially to protest mistreatment. Their appeal for market facilities appears to have led to the construction of the new building at the Waterside market and the conversion of the playground across the street from the Barclay Training Center into a market place. The officials of the LMA were appointed to administer these sites. In 1965, sellers at Firestone's Harbel market organized a branch of this association, originally constituting an estimated 250 sellers. Firestone recognized the LMA as the legitimate reprsentative of the traders working in Harbel market.

Except insofar as the officials of the Association are officials in market places, the LMA serves no other functions presently, and has never controlled the operation of market firms. And, over the past few years, the Association has dwindled. The governing structures (composed mainly of original members) remain, but the membership and general interest is minimal. The Waterside market branch, for instance, reported about 300 members (out of 800-1,000 daily sellers) but an empty treasury because no one would pay dues; the BTC market Branch reported about 100 members (out of 600-800 daily sellers) but also empty coffers; and the Harbel market branch reported about 50 active members (out of 600-800 daily sellers), with $294.00 in the treasury from the days in which the membership was large.

Each branch of the LMA apparently is organized along similar lines and may (although no copy was made available) use the same formal constitution. Each has a President and/or Superintendent as the presiding officer of the local branch. Each also provides for a Secretary to record the proceedings of meetings, and a Treasurer to receive and keep $0.25 monthly dues. Other officers and standing committees vary with each branch. Each, however, provides death benefits for members, contributing to the purchase of a casket, burial plot, and so forth. Each also provides for its money to be used for uniforms for such purposes as meeting the President of Liberia, or marching on Flag Day, Independence Day, and so forth. None of the branches operates as a rotating credit association, but all have mechanisms for granting loans to both members and non-members. However, with empty coffers, neither of the Monrovia branches reported loan policies. The Harbel branch did not grant loans in August, 1970, because both the Treasurer and the Treasury were in Monrovia. However, loans could be granted by the executive officers after hearing an applicant's appeal and "judging the man"--i.e., judging the worthiness of the project to which the loan would be applied, and the ability of the applicant to repay the loan. Non-members were assessed an interest rate of 25¢ on every dollar for each three month period of the money was outstanding. Members were charged interest at the rate of 10¢ on each dollar for each three month period the loan was outstanding. Qualifications for membership were the same at each market: one must be a seller in the particular market on a full-time basis--i.e., the trader must sell daily or almost daily, and throughout the year. Age was the only other criterion of any concern, but it was of peripheral importance because it is only people in their late teens and older who sell in market places on such a professional or semi-professional basis. Membership in the LMA is neither determined by nor does it preclude membership in any other voluntary association.

Although the branches of the LMA are linked together by a common institutional framework and an interest in unity vis-a-vis oppositional groups, there appeared to be no formal relations maintained between any two of the branches. There is no executive body coordinating the activities of the different branches, and there was no informal cooperation among the branches in 1970. In fact, there was some antipathy between the Monrovia branches: both branches claimed to be the original association, asserted that the other branch was subordinate, and with some annoyance, each denied the other's claim.

Despite the lapse in interest since its founding, the LMA represents a genuine professional association of market sellers. Given the appropriate oppositional circumstances, the Liberia Market Association provides the

institutional framework and the means by which traders may lobby for common goals.

Commercial Structure

Although its activities have been and--to a certain extent--still are important, the Liberia Market Association, together with the variety of other personages that may take part in market activities and the jurisdictional hierarchy connecting market with government, functions only in circumscribed realms. Markets largely are organized by commercial activities and ties of friendship and kinship binding together traders, and traders and their customers. The result of these activities are the two most striking features of markets: their internal spatial differentiation and their cellular social and economic structure.

As are all market places, Liberian markets are spatially differentiated internally according to commodity class. Usually the differentiation is not strict. There are few perfectly homogeneous sections in markets. And the commodity classes themselves are highly generalized. Fuel (coal, wood) sellers tend to group together, livestock sellers tend to group together, meat sellers tend to group together, and fish sellers tend to group together. But beyond these specific classes, constituting relatively small sections of markets, the only generally recognized principle of differentiation is that of "food" and "non-food." One finds, occasionally, small clsuters of palmnut sellers, rice sellers, cassava leaf sellers, tailors, cloth sellers, and so forth. But small clusters of such sellers are found throughout the broader regions. Not all palm nut sellers, tailors, rice sellers, or cloth sellers set up business side-by-side, even in the largest daily markets where such phenomena are most likely to be found. Hence, from a broader perspective, these small clusters become part of larger regions whose only common property is that of being "food" or "non-food".

Initially, one might suppose these clusters to be explained by formal regulation, the tribe or (in rural markets) the village of origin of a seller, or the price-control advantages accruing to such clusters. However, pursuing these possibilities does not lead us far. Except for the construction of slaughtering and sales facilities for meat, and, possibly, the division of periodic markets into central regions in which food is sold and peripheral regions in which non-foodstuffs are sold, there are no regulations on where one sets up business. Except to the extent that people from the same village are friends and choose to sit next to one another on that basis, I encountered no division of sellers by village of origin. At any rate, proportionately few sellers came from the same village and their stocks are so heterogeneous that these broad clusters cannot be explained on that basis. In rural markets there is a correlation between tribe of seller and business function: intermediaries tend to be Mandingo whereas producer-sellers tend to come from other Liberian tribes. But this correlation is spurious. A far better predictor of business function is the occupation of a seller's husband. Where Mandingo womens' husbands are farmers, they act as selling producers; where women from other Liberian tribes have husbands who are not farmers, they act as intermediaries. Finally, there is little effective price control in Liberian markets. Collusion occasionally is attempted but rarely can it be maintained for extensive periods. At best, the advantages accruing to clusters of sellers dealing in the same commodities are that prices and price changes are more readily known.

Of far more importance than these variables in explaining commodity differentiation are the odors, mess, and flies attracted to fish and meat. Even the fish sellers complain about one another. Where possible people avoid sitting next to such sellers. Complaints of such matters probably initially led to the construction of separate slaughtering and sales facilities for cattle, and

did lead to the construction of two market buildings at Voinjama: one having in large letters a sign reading "No Fish."

Possibly the most important variable explaining the clustering of commodities in Liberian markets, however, is the process by which people become sellers: through the help of their friends, or (less frequently) their relatives. Traders are trained in one line of work, selling spots usually are selected by friends or kinsmen, and they end up sitting next to one another, selling much the same type of goods.

Dewey[10] remarked about an Indonesian market that "once areas (of commodities) are established, ties of friendship and kinship among the traders help to perpetuate the clustering." In Liberian markets, this sequence appears to be reversed. Commodity clusters arise largely on the basis of kinship and friendship. They may be perpetuated on the same basis. But when a trader changes the commodities in which she deals, she may move to other locations. As with sellers entering trade in recent years confronted by established commodity clusters, she probably will move to another commodity cluster--simply because "That is where people selling [the items I deal in] sit."

The intermediaries comprising the market place population is Liberia are independent managers carrying the risk and claiming the gains of enterprises conducted with the objective of obtaining money.[11] Firms are run by single, managing entrepreneurs largely independently of one another. Few firms engage employees (see Table 2). Where engaged, kin dominate, working for no renumeration and with few responsibilities. Outside of Monrovia bulking intermediaries may hire boys to search out possible sellers of farm produce in villages adjacent to periodic market towns, and selling producers occasionally hire boys or young men to cut palm nuts, pick oranges, and carry bags of produce onto the roads, or to markets. Within Monrovia, and in other urban areas, the responsibilities of employees are restricted to carrying loads of goods to and from marketing sites, watching over the market in the absence of the manager, fetching water, occasionally purchasing fresh stocks and the daily food for the household, but only occasionally making sales. Helpers are still more rarely assigned the task of carrying on business independently at different marketing sites. Most of the people operating extensions of market firms are hired for the purpose, receiving either a daily wage or, more frequently, permitted to retain for themselves any receipts over an assigned minimum "report" to the managing entrepreneur.

Market sellers are bound into a matrix of obligations with kinsmen, close friends, and "good customers."[12] Both entrepreneurs and their kinsmen and friends call upon one another for money, friendship is generally important in learning the skills of trading, and entrepreneurs utilize kinship, close friendships, and "good customer relations" to obtain free transport, reliable sales and purchases, some concessions on exchange, and a variety of other small aids in their businesses. But market sellers are dependent on their firms for income, and their own ability to adjust prices to changing market conditions for the survival of their firms. The result is that the social organization of marketing sites assumes a cellular structure.

Depite being bound into a matrix of mutual obligations with traders and non-traders, the most common description market sellers give of their businesses is that "We are all on our own." Each seller assumes responsibilities for paying market fees, providing their own equipment, cleaning up the area immediately adjacent to their selling spot, buying stocks, arranging the terms of sale and credit, and absorbing losses and using profits by themselves.

Table 2.--Structure of firms working in market places (A) nature and number of employees, (B) employee's activities, 783 Liberian market sellers, 1970

(A) Employment (B) Organization	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
(A) No employees	549	70.11	
Family employees	172	21.97	
Hired employees	54	6.90	
Hired & family	8	1.02	
	783	100.00	
1 employee	126	53.85	53.85
2 employees	71	30.34	84.19
3 employees	24	10.26	94.44
4 employees	6	2.56	97.01
5 employees	6	2.56	99.57
6 employees	0	--	99.57
7 employees	0	--	99.57
8 employees	1	1.02	100.00
(B) Works only under ego's direction	208	89.27	
Operates an extension of ego's business	25	10.73	
	233	100.00	

Conclusion

One of the most striking incongruities in the contemporary world is the movement of food from small farms to increasingly congested urban-industrial centers through market places. Markets not only have survived in the industrial world, they have proliferated rapidly and extensively. They have done so because in the marketing environment in which they function, only certain kinds of firms can efficiently and responsively carry out the tasks of food distribution. Those firms are the tiny ones whose lack of physical and capital requirements create and maintain market places.

The emergence and operation of Liberia's contemporary market system consititutes one of the most important economic developments of the previous quarter century. That system has efficiently moved an increasing volume of food

to Liberia's increasingly congested urban centers. And in the years since these data were collected Liberia's market system appears to have received governmental recognition of its importance. In 1977-78 the GOL was actively engaged in promoting the construction of rural markets, the building of feeder roads, and the improvement of urban market facilities. Compared with the former jumble and congestion of the BTC market, the present-day Rally Time Market is a delight to shop at.

Nonetheless, certain projects appear to reflect persistent misunderstandings of the market system. For instance, promoting the construction of rural market buildings contributes little if anything to the quality of foodmarketing, and constitutes a waste of badly-needed resources when such construction is undertaken, as it was in Cape Mount County, without the consent of the participants, at sites inconvenient for farmers, and in regions in which aggregate food sales have not yet justified the meeting of even a periodic market. In rural areas such funds can much more profitably be used for improvement in transportation facilities. Hopefully, this paper and the others which analyze various aspects of Liberia's food production and distribution system, will enable economic planners to better identify those aspects of marketing which need improvement, and suggest which among alternative courses of action will best serve the needs of the Liberian people.

FOOTNOTES

1. This paper is based on 15 months research in the Republic of Liberia between September 1968 and September 1970, funded by grants from the Ford Foundation, the Department of Anthropology at the University of Oregon, and a Pre-Doctoral Fellowship (#1-FO1-MH44672-01) and Research Grant (#MH12095-01) from the National Institute of Mental Health. Further work was undertaken between July 1977 and June 1978, financed by a grant (HD10591-01) from NIH. These institutions bear no responsibility for the opinions or interpretations expressed in this paper.

A preliminary discussion of these materials appeared in my doctoral dissertation. That analysis has been considerably expanded here, and this paper supercedes any earlier comments. The bulk of the data presented here were collected on standardized interview guides. My enquiries were lengthy, varied and entailed speaking with consumers, sellers of various kinds, market officials, and frequently town chiefs and elders. Due to restrictions of time and other resources, the number of markets on which detailed data could be collected was limited. I traveled nearly every road in the country and located about 80 functioning market places. Detailed information was collected on only 26 markets while I was in the field. Additional data on two markets covered in 1970, and detailed data on five additional markets in the northeastern interior, were collected by a friend during 1973-74. Other Liberian research assistants participated in various ways in the collection of these data, gathering all of the data on 6 of the markets covered in 1970. Despite the difficulties of obtaining detailed data on more than a few markets, discernable patterns of activity and functionally distinct markets soon were apparent. The uniformities among markets performing equivalent service functions greatly facilitated further data collection. Notes vary considerably in scope, concerned principally with the variations within classes of markets, subsequently were collected for about 20 additional markets throughout the country.

2. W. Penn Handwerker, "Entrepreneurship in Liberia," Liberian Studies Journal, V (1972-74), 113-147.

3. K. O. Stephens and H. B. Ellis, A Rice Price Support and Marketing Incentive Program for Liberia (Washington, D.C.: U.S.D.A./U.S.A.I.D., 1969).

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5. P. Bohannan and G. Dalton, editors, Markets in Africa (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1962), 18.

6. W. Penn Handwerker, "Food Consumption Patterns in Monrovia, 1970," in Essays on the Economic Anthropology of Liberia and Sierra Leone, edited by Vernon R. Dorjahn and Barry L. Isaac. Liberian Studies Monograph No. 6. Philadelphia: Institute for Liberian Studies, in press for 1979.

7. Polly Hill, "Notes on Traditional Market Authority and Market Periodicity in West Africa," Journal of African History, XXII (1966), 296.

8. Ralf Dahrendorf, Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959).

9. Cf. Pierre L. van den Berghe, Power and Privilege at an African University (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Publishing Co., 1973), 253-262.

10. Alice G. Dewey, Peasant Marketing in Java (New York: Free Press, 1962), 55.

11. Margaret Katsin, "The Role of the Small Entrepreneur," in Economic Transition in Africa, edited by M. J. Herskovits and M. Horowitz (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 179-198; cf. Handwerker, "Entrepreneurship in Liberia."

12. Cf. W. Penn Handwerker, "Kinship, Friendship and Business Failure among Market Sellers in Monrovia, Liberia, 1970," Africa, LXIII (1973), 288-301.

CLAN AND CHIEFDOM MAPS OF GRAND BASSA COUNTY

AND MARSHALL & RIVER CESS TERRITORIES

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The maps which are presented here attempt to locate and plot the boundaries of the principal administrative units - paramount chiefdoms, clans and townships - of Grand Bassa County and Marshall and River Cess Territories. A number of cautionary notes are in order about these maps, however. Firstly, clan and chiefdom boundaries are for the most part rather loosely defined by the clans and chiefdoms themselves. Major rivers and streams frequently form boundaries, but just as often two clans may be divided by the vagaries of watersheds or even by particular stands of trees, known to local residents but nearly impossible to plot systematically on a map. It should be noted therefore that clans and chiefdoms occasionally overlap the "recognized" boundaries of the counties and territories of which they are a part since the latter have been established by using fixed geographic co-ordinates while the former use natural features.

Secondly, the maps are not intended to show exact ethnic boundaries. All three of these territories are inhabited principally by Bassa speakers but in addition to the Bassa and to recent migrants from other areas of Liberia, there are two ethnic groups, the Kpelle and Kru, which have inhabited parts of the region for centuries. In some cases the non-Bassa ethnic groups are under the jurisdiction of a "governor" of their own ethnic group rather than that of the Bassa clan or paramount chief in whose territorial unit they reside; in other cases ethnic groups are interspersed and share common political organizations.

Names of clans and chiefdoms on these maps have been given in their most common "official" government spelling. Despite previous efforts to standardize spelling and orthography[1] there are in many cases several variant forms of each name. The principal variants are given in column two of the accompanying tables. Column three is an attempt to render these names phonetically using the International Phonetic Alphabet and the Bassa orthography developed by June Hobley.

The boundaries are based in large part on maps prepared by the Bureau of the Census, Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs for the 1974 census. The author wishes to thank Mr. Abel Massalee of the Census Unit and Mr. Isaac Traub of the Geographic Unit for their help and assistance in obtaining access to these maps as well as to the many census enumerators who assisted in making corrections in the first drafts of the maps. Additional corrections of these maps were made by the author based on field observations made in 1967-68 as part of the Ethnographic Survey of Southeastern Liberia conducted on behalf of the Tubman Center for African Culture and during field research in 1973-74 under a Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Grant. Thanks also go to the clan and paramount chiefs who were instrumental in demarcating boundaries and providing information on the history of their respective jurisdictions.

Recent Amalgamations

The units shown on these maps are those officially recognized by the Bureau of the Census in 1974. Since that time the number of clans has been reduced, and hence the boundaries are in some cases not actually current. The reduction in the number of clans has been accomplished, for the most part, through the amalgamation of two or more of the former clan units, however. For that reason it seems justifiable to show the units which correspond to those listed in the census reports (as well as other contemporary government documents such as hut tax collection lists from the Ministry of Finance) and then to comment on the recent amalgamations individually.

A further note of explanation is needed before discussing the amalgamation process, however. References are made below to amalgamations of certain clans as having taken place in 1971 or 1972 and yet the maps show the clans as still existing as separate units in 1974. In some cases these inconsistencies are the result of the fact that the amalgamations took place after the Bureau of the Census had defined its enumeration areas while in other cases the amalgamations, planned by county and ministry of Local Government authorities, had not actually been implemented at the time of the census. Hence, units which theoretically should have ceased to exist were, for some purposes at least, still being officially recognized in 1974.

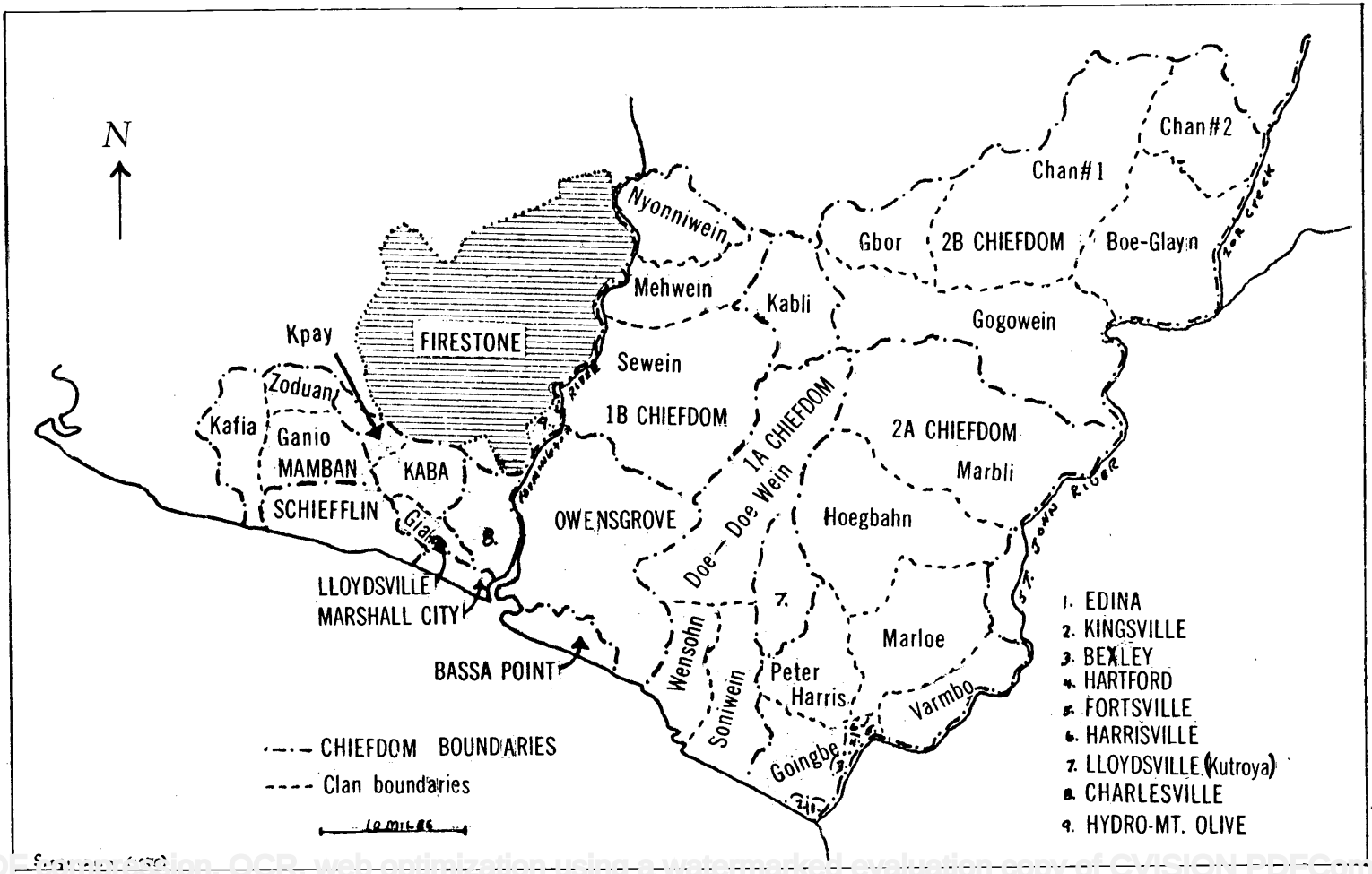
The latest series of amalgamations are the result of a directive issued in 1971 by the Ministry of Local Government ordering a number of administrative changes affecting the organization of lcans, chiefdoms and towns. Prior to that date chiefs were not salaried officials, but were remunerated for their services to government through the retention of a portion of the taxes collected in their respective jurisdictions. The new administrative regulations made the respective chiefs salaried officials. As a corollary it was ordered that where necessary smaller clans and chiefdoms should be amalgamated in order that each paramount chiefdom would have a minimum of 800 dwellings, each clan 400 dwellings, and each "town" would contain 200 dwellings.

The Bassa, however, live in what is essentially a semi-dispersed settlement pattern and as a result there are only a handful of towns throughout the region which have as many as 200 dwellings. Consequently, in order to comply with these new regulations, most local settments have lost their right to name a "town" chief of their own. Instead, they have been incorporated for administrative purposes with neighboring towns or villages to form new units known as "amalgamated towns."

Similarly, many of the former "clan" units had sparse settlement and low populations. Thus the amalgamation of many clans has also been necessary. In Grand Bassa County only about half of the old clans had 400 dwellings and in Riber Cess Territory not a single clan met the new criteria.[2]

The clan and chiefdom units as they existed in 1974 were themselves the product of a number of administrative amalgamations which have taken place at various times during the past seventy years. Clans and chiefdoms were originally created by the central government in accordance with legislative acts of 1905 and 1914 in an effort to establish effective control over the "interior" areas of the country.

In the cases of the Bassa and Kru, a variety of means were used to establish the boundaries of these areas.[3] "Clans" were sometimes, but not always, created out of named territorial units comprised of a group of villages that had derived historically from the first town founded in the area. Another of the principal means was to group together those towns which traditionally joined in making a common initiation or "bush school" for the men's society or "Nor". A group of such towns are today usually referred to as a "section."



The term is used in Bassa and there appears to be no indigenous term for such groupings although they were traditionally recognized. In certain cases several towns of more disparate origin, but acknowledging the political, military or ritual leadership of a particular individual, were recognized as a clan under the chieftaincy of that individual. The first method seems to have been popular in River Cess Territory, the second in the Northern and Western parts of Grand Bassa and the third to have been used most frequently in Number Four district.

Townships

One other administrative change of particular significance during the past few years has been the creation of several new "townships." Prior to 1970 townships were confined to the old Americo-Liberian settler communities near the coast. Recently, however, several former clans have been re-organized into townships. The reasons for these changes were principally related to the ownership of land. In the traditional clan areas land is still collectively owned and the alienation of land to form freehold estates has been comparatively difficult. As certain areas have moved away from subsistance agriculture, however, and have become more dependent on cash-cropping, there has been more and more pressure to obtain free-hold farms. Under the township system this has been expedited. At the same time, much of the traditional jurisdiction of the chiefs in matters of customary law has been retained by designating the former chiefs as "governors" of their respective ethnic groups. Thus individuals in the townships still have recourse to both customary and statutory law.

Though the amalgamation process is not yet completed, it seem appropriate at this point to comment on those changes which have thus far taken place and those which are proposed.

Marshall Territory

Marshall Territory is composed of two administrative districts, Marshall City District and Mamban-Kaba District. The former is composed of two townships, Marshall City and Schiefflin. Marshall City was one of the early Americo-Liberian ports tapping the basins of the Junk and Farmington Rivers, but has long since lost most of its commercial importance. The only remaining traffic on the Farmington River is that of the ships and barges of the Firestone Plantations farther upstream which largely by-pass Marshall. As a result, the city exists today primarily as an administrative center for the territory.

Schiefflin Township includes both the old settlement of Schiefflin and the military barracks located there which today accounts for the bulk of the population.

LLoydsville township in the Mamban-Kaba district has shown a steady population decline in the past fifteen years while the other township in the district, Charlesville, has increased dramatically during that period. This increase has occurred largely as the result of increased employment opportunities at Roberts International Airfield, which lies within Charlesville Township. Charlesville also has jurisdiction over certain private rubber plantations and a number of small towns which have grown up adjacent to the Firestone Plantations but which are not included within the concession area and its administrative district.

Mamban Chiefdom currently consists of three clans. A fourth clan, Longay (also spelled Dohngay), formerly occupied the northern-most part of what is now Kafia clan and was incorporated into Kafia in 1971.

MARSHALL TERRITORY

Official Designation	Variant Forms	Phonetic Spelling	1962 Pop.	1974 Pop.
MAMBAN-KABA DISTRICT			11847	16553
MAMBAN CHIEFDOM		Mabã	3989	6161
Ganio	Garneo	Ganio	977	1518
Kafia			986	2583
Longay	Dongay	Lãgɛ	511	
Zoe Duah	Zoduan	Zo-Duã	1515	2060
KABA CHIEFDOM		Kaba	4033	2283
Giah	Giah, Jioh	Gia	1184	492
Kpay		Kpe	2849	1791
CHARLESVILLE TOWNSHIP			2224	7968
Hydro-Mt. Olive			1267	
LLOYDSVILLE TOWNSHIP			334	141
MARSHALL CITY DISTRICT			2595	4179
MARSHALL CITY			745	878
SCHIEFFLIN			1850	3301

Kaba chiefdom contains two clans but may shortly be amalgamated since Giah clan was reduced to 113 dwellings by virtue of the transfer of 20 settlements to the townships of Schiefflin and Marshall City between 1965 and 1970. If Kaba is reduced to the status of a clan it will become the fourth clan in a new amalgamated Mamban-Kaba chiefdom.

Grand Bassa County, District Number One

At the time of the 1962 census there were two paramount chiefdoms and three townships in District Number One. Three years later the Township of Barclaysville was absorbed by the Township of Owensgrove which also absorbed portions of Doe Wein clan, Joya Chiefdom, and Sewein clan, Tenor chiefdom. At about the same time Lloydsville Township was enlarged by incorporating what had formerly been Kutroya clan.

Those portions of Doe Wein not joined to Owensgrove were amalgamated with Doe clan in 1965. A recent proposal would further amalgamate Doe/Doe Wein with Soniwein and Wensohn to form a single clan. Similarly, Mehwein Nyonniwein and Sewein clans, which now form 1B chiefdom; would be combined. Thus, each of these chiefdoms would become a clan in a new amalgamated paramount chiefdom.

Though designated as a clan, Bassa Point is not part of either 1A or 1B paramount chiefdoms. Instead, while oeprating for most purposes like other clans, the clan chief is held responsible to the mayor of Owensgrove. The reason for this peculiar administrative situation is most probably due to the fact that Bassa Point has a very small yet ethnically diverse population, containing Bassa, Kru and Fanti speakers and hence it was though advisable not to include it in an otherwise Bassa Chiefdom.

District Number Two

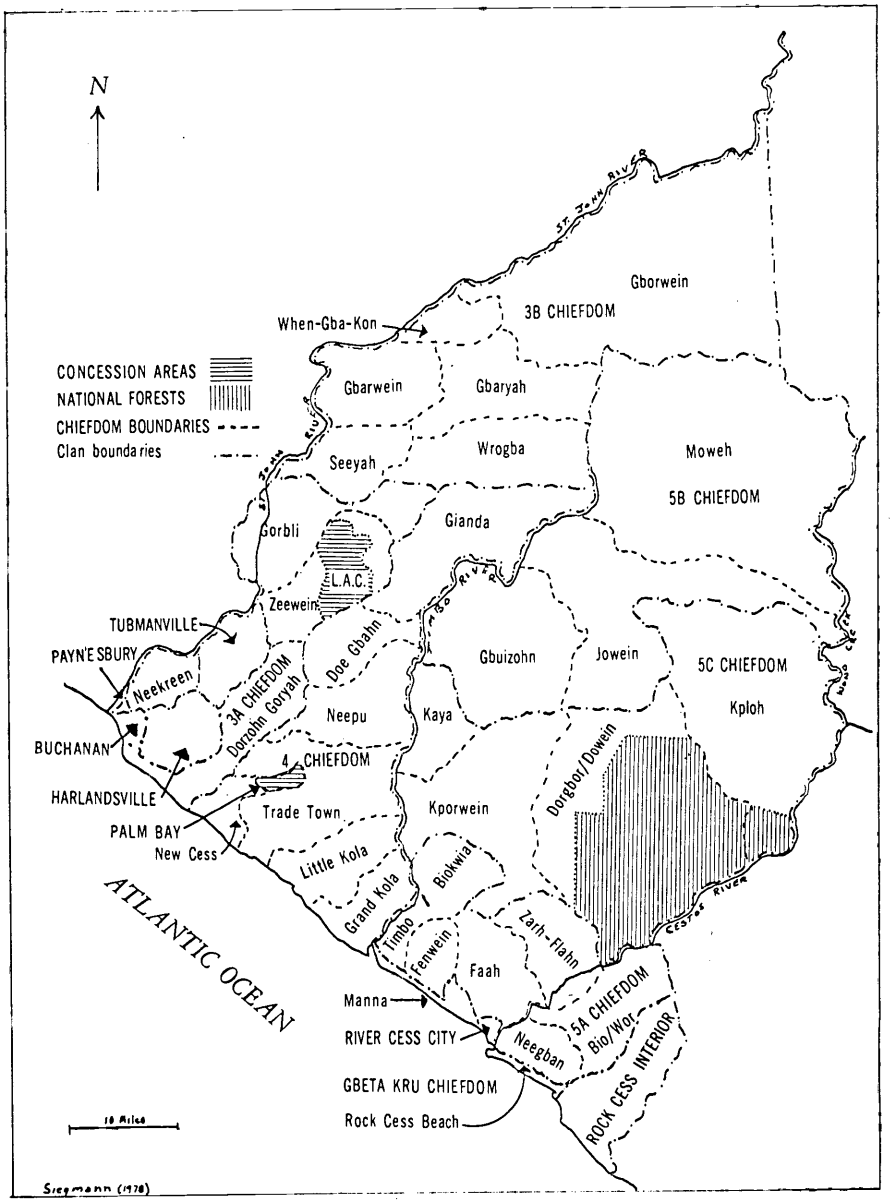
In no other district have so many amalgamations taken place since 1971. In Glarkon (2A) chiefdom the number of clans was reduced from seven to four. Marbli and Kabli clans were joined as were Goingbe and Peter Harris. Marloe and Varmbo were also merged while Hoegbahn clan had already absorbed Geeblee shortly before the 1962 census.

In Camwood (2B) Chiefdom, Gbor, Chan Number One and Chan Number Two clans were all merged to form a single unit. Boe-Glayn and Gogowein were also amalgamated in 1972.

The District also contains five of the oldest settler townships. Three others, all very small, have been absorbed by nearby townships. Bexley is now part of Fortsville. Paynesbury, located at the confluence of the Benson and St. John Rivers, and Burlur are now included within Buchanan Municipality.

District Number Three

Chiefdom Number Three A has undergone a number of very important demographic and economic changes during the past twenty years which are reflected in a number of changes of clan and chiefdom boundaries. During the early 1960's LAMCO Joint Venture constructed a new rail line from the mines at Mt. Nimba to the port facilities at Buchanan. In the process a new access road was also built and has since that time been maintained as a general purpose public road. Not only did the road serve to attract many people to existing towns along its route and to the development of new commercial/transportation centers, but it also served to refocus agricultural development in the area. Subsistence agriculturalists were to some extent drawn closer to the road, but more



Official Designation	Variant Forms	Phonetic Spelling	1962 Pop.	1974 Pop.
DISTRICT NUMBER I			11554	20835
1A CHIEFDOM	Joya Chiefdom	Joya	4733	8104
Doe Wein/	Dowein	Dowɛ̃	1733	
Doe		Do	1400	3846
Soniwein	Sonewein	Soniwɛ̃	1057	3704
Wensohn	Whenzon	Wɛ̃zɔ̃	543	564
1B CHIEFDOM	Tenor Chiefdom	Tɛnɔ	5647	4417
Mehwein		Mewɛ̃	1017	1988
Nyonniwein	Nyannewein	Nyɔniwɛ̃	926	1370
Sewein	Saywein, Sayewein	Sewɛ̃	3704	959
BASSA POINT			279	739
LLOYDSVILLE TOWNSHIP			896	2805
Kutroya clan			1174	
OWENSGROVE TOWNSHIP			4795	6252
Barclaysville			742	
DISTRICT NUMBER II			19433	21254
2A CHIEFDOM	Glarkon Chiefdom	Galakõ	11310	11196
Goingbe		Goŋɓe	1244	968
Hoegbahn		Hwɛgbã	2057	2374
Kablí	Kablee	Kaɓiɖi	1309	1520
Marblí	Marblee	Maɓiɖi	3422	3099
Marloe	Marloie	Malowi	1126	1335
Peter Harris			990	1123
Varmbo		Vãbo	1162	777

GRAND BASSA COUNTY
DISTRICT NUMBER II
(Continuation)

2B CHIEFDOM	Camwood Chiefdom		8123	8171
Boe-Glayn	Boe-Glahn	Bo-Gɛlã̃	2073	1735
Chan #1		Cã̃ #1	1404	1297
Chan #2		Cã̃ #2	1094	1601
Gbor		Gbɔ	2316	1920
Gogowein		Gogowɛ̃	1236	1618
EDINA TOWNSHIP			117	224
FORTSVILLE TOWNSHIP			388	506
HARRISVILLE TOWNSHIP			307	232
HARTFORD TOWNSHIP			352	572
KINGSVILLE TOWNSHIP			1334	353
BURLUR TOWNSHIP			34	
BESLEY TOWNSHIP			66	
PAYNESBURY TOWNSHIP			189	

significantly, cash-crops were developed in those clans on the route of the new road.

Title to much of the land in these clans has passed into private free-hold, especially in the areas of Gorbli, Zeewein, Gbaewein, Gbuglay and Harlandsville Township. As this has occurred, administrative re-alignments have been frequent. Gbaewein and Gbuglay clans, for example, were re-organized and merged to form a new township in 1973 which is now known as Tubmanville.. In the same year portions of Goryah clan in the southeastern part of the district were added to Harlandsville Township, while the bulk of the clan was amalgamated with Dorzohn. Two years later the status of Neekreen clan was also changed to that of a township.

Finally, another very significant change in this district was affected when the Liberian Agricultural Company (LAC Uniroyal) began to develop a concession area in Zeewein clan in 1958. The concession now covers 8,500 acres and occupies the bulk of the former clan area. The concession area has its own administrative apparatus and separates geographically the remaining portions of the clan from each other.

It is planned to transfer Zeewein to the jurisdiction of Number Three B Chiefdom and amalgamate it with Gbaryah and Wrogba clans despite the fact that it would then be separated from the latter two clans by a portion of Gorbli clan. When-Gba-Kon and Gborwein are also slated to be amalgamated in Three B Chiefdom.

District Number Four

This District has a single Bassa Paramount Chiefdom designated simply as Number Four Chiefdom. Under the amalgamation proposal designed for this district in 1971, the number of clans would be reduced from seven to four. Doe Gbahn and Neepu are to be merged with Gianda, and Little Kola will be united with Grand Kola. Trade Town and New Cess clans would be unaffected.[4]

There is also a Gbeta Kru Paramount Chiefdom in Number Four District. The Chiefdom is not divided into clans and is quite small in terms of population. It is essentially an ethnic unit rather than a territorial entity.

This anomoly is the result of unique historical circumstances which have significantly affected the political organization and definition of clan and chiefdom boundaries in both Gband Bassa and River Cess. Both clans and chiefdoms were originally intended to be territorial units and it was assumed that their borders would correspond with ethnic boundaries. Thus, in general, all persons living in a given clan or chiefdom would belong to the same ethnic groups. In certain cases, however, this posed problems early on. The Kru in particular were unhappy about living within Bassa Jurisdictions.

For centuries the Kru have lived in separate communities all along the coastal littoral from Rock Cess to Monrovia. As fishing people, however, their land use has been limited largely to those areas immediately anterior to their villages. Frequently Bassa villages have used arable agricultural lands lying between Kru settlements so that the Kru villages do not necessarily form a strip of continuous settlement. Consequently, when Kru chiefdoms were established in Grand Bassa and River Cess they were thought of largely as ethnic rather than territorial units.

Two Gbeta Kru paramount chiefdoms were created in the region; one in Grand Bassa and one in River Cess. The chiefdom in Grant Bassa was composed of a single "clan" containing all Kru settlements on the coast between the New Cess and Timbo rivers. Kru settlements between New Cess River and Bassa Point were

GRAND BASSA COUNTY

Official Designation	Variant Forms	Phonetic Spelling	1962 Pop.	1974 Pop.
DISTRICT NUMBER III			31160	39875
3A CHIEFDOM			14679	11209
Dorzohn/ Goryah	Geoyah	Dɔzɔ̃ Goya	1322 918	2051 5256
Gorblí	Gorblee	Gɔbɛ̃dí	4143	1778
Neekreen		Nixwinon	1052	1778
Zeewein		Ziwɛ̃	1740	2124
3B CHIEFDOM			13378	14196
Gbarwein		Gbawɛ̃	2446	3785
Gbaryah	Gbaryar	Gbaya	904	728
Gborwein		Gbɔ̃wɛ̃	2801	2647
Seeyah		Siya	3321	3052
When-Gba-Kon	Whengbakon	Hwɛ̃gbakɔ̃	2400	2150
Wrogba	Whrogbah	Xwogba	1506	1634
LIBERIAN AGRICULTURAL CORP. CONCESSION AREA (formerly Zeewein clan)			1740	8631
TUBMANVILLE TOWNSHIP (formerly Gbaewein clan)		Gbewĩ	2528	3989
Gbuglay		Gbɛ̃gele	2976	
HERLANDSVILLE TOWNSHIP			3103	1850
DISTRICT NUMBER IV			16651	17040
4 CHIEFDOM			16051	17040
Doe Gbahn	Dogbarn, Gogba	Do Gbã	838	409
Gianda	Geanda	Gĩãda	1853	2761
Neepu		Nipu	1613	1190
New Cess	Nitohn	Nitɔ	2661	2866
Grand Kola	Grand Colla, Grand Cullah		2747	1772
Little Kola	Little Colla, Little Cullah		2294	2193
Trade Town			4045	5849
GBETA KRU CHIEFDOM			600	
New Cess II clan	Gba vlah kon	Gba Vala Kɔ	600	
BUCHANAN MUNICIPALITY			11909	24375

fewer in number and generally smaller except at Buchanan. As a result, all of these settlements were organized under the Kru governor of Buchanan.[5]

Buchanan Municipality

The boundaries of the Municipal District of Buchanan have been enlarged to include both Upper and Lower Buchanan as well as Paynesbury, Burlur and a number of other previously unincorporated settlements, such as Loganstown, which have been enveloped by new construction in the metropolitan area.

As in the townships mentioned above, the district continues to maintain a dual legal system for civil cases. Four "tribal governors" and four "tribal chiefs" administer tribal law in Buchanan and represent their respective communities in dealing with authorities of the municipal and central governments. The "tribal governors" have powers generally comparable to those of a paramount chief while the "tribal chiefs" have powers similar to those of clan chiefs. The four largest ethnic groups, the Bassa, Kru, Manding and Vai, each have a governor while the next largest communities, the Grebo, Ma/Dan (Gio), Kpelle and Wee (Krahn), all have "tribal chiefs". All eight of the above are salaried officers of the municipal administration. Two other "tribal heads" for the Fanti and Loma communities are not officially recognized or paid but are accorded unofficial recognition.

River Cess Territory

River Cess Territory is divided into two districts, Moweh and Timbo. Timbo, or Five A District, includes the Municipality of River Cess, two Bassa Chiefdoms designated Five A and Five C, the Gbeta Kru Chiefdom, and Rock Cess Interior Chiefdom. Like the townships in Grand Bassa County, River Cess Municipality has both Kru and Bassa tribal governors.

Chiefdom Five A formerly had six clans which had remained fairly stable as political units since they were created early in this century. More closely than most of the Bassa clans, they had been based on historic entities each tracing its origins to a common tradition of migration. These units tended to be quite small in terms of population, however. As a result, Timbo/Biokwia clan was amalgamated with Fenwein in 1972 while at the same time Bio/Wor clan, Faah, Neegban and Zarh-Flahn clans were all merged to form a single clan. In Five B Chiefdom (Moweh District) Jowein and Gbuizohn have been unified, and in Five C Chiefdom Dorgbor/Dowein and Kploh were amalgamated, as were Kporwein and Kaya.

A significant population of Mandingo/Koranko agriculturalists[6] live in seven towns in the interior of Timbo and Biokwia clan. They are descended from a handful of Sierra Leoneans who served with the West African Frontier Force and who were "loaned" to the Liberian government by Great Britain during the 1915 Kru revolt. After the suppression of the revolt, these soldiers were offered land in compensation for their services. They settled in several towns and at one time had their own paramount chief despite their small number. With the new regulations, however, the leader of the community no longer enjoys that distinction and the settlements have been joined to form a single "amalgamated town" within the new Timbo/Biokwia and Fenwein clan.

As in Grand Bassa County, the coastal littoral has long been inhabited by Kru fishermen affiliated with the Gbeta panton. Prior to the recent reorganization, the Gbeta/Klepo Kru had a paramount chief and two clans, Manna and Rock Cess Beach. In 1974 the two Kru clans were amalgamated to form a single "town". There has, however, been considerable agitation to grant this entity the status of a clan.

RIVER CESS TERRITORY

Official Designation	Variant Forms	Phonetic Spelling	1962 Pop.	1974 Pop.
TIMBO DISTRICT	5A District		22108	20730
5A CHIEFDOM			9300	10974
Bio/Wor	Bioh and Worh	Bio/Wɔ	1197	1486
Faah	Faar, Farr	Faa	2184	2384
Fenwein	Fehnwein	Fɛ̀wɛ̃	1759	1877
Neegban		Nigbã	738	801
Timbo Biokwia	Bieoquiah	Timbo/Biokuia	2758	3684
Zarh-Flahn		Zaa Flã	664	742
5C CHIEFDOM			8504	6479
Dorgbor/Dowein	Dorbor/Dowehn	Lɔɓɔɔ	1009	802
Kaya	Kayah	Kaya	1524	950
Kploh		Kpɔlɔɔ	2076	1806
Kporwein		Kpɔwɛ̃	3895	2921
GBETA KRU CHIEFDOM	Gbeatar	Gbeta	984	390
Manna	Mannah	Mana	607	
Rock Cess Beach			377	390
ROCK CESS INTERIOR CHIEFDOM			912	797
RIVER CESS MUNICIPALITY			1986	2090
MANDINGO ELEMENT			422	
MOWEH DISTRICT	5B District		6648	7017
5B CHIEFDOM			6648	7017
Gbuizohn	Gbuezohn, Gbausah, Gbarsorh	Gbuizɔ̃	2196	2013
Jowein	Joewein	Jowɛ̃	1382	1765
Moweh	Morweh	Mɔwɛ	3070	3239

Similarly, Rock Cess Interior Chiefdom has been reduced to clan status. Like Rock Cess Beach Clan, Rock Cess Interior is populated by Kru speakers. Unlike the inhabitants of the beach clan, however, the inhabitants of Rock Cess Interior are primarily agriculturalists. Moreover, they are affiliated with the Toto and Kabor pantons rather than the Gbeta/Klepo pantons. Because of economic differences as well as historical tensions between the Kabor and Gbeta, the two groups have jealously guarded their separate political identities.

Conclusion

The maps and materials presented here are only a brief survey of recent political changes affecting governmental administration in Grand Bassa, River Cess and Marshall.

As noted at the outset of this article, the borders of the clans, chiefdoms, counties and territories are not meant to show exact ethnic boundaries. Nevertheless, the areas covered in these maps include most of the areas with a predominantly Bassa-speaking population,[7] and undoubtedly these changes will particularly affect local political life among the Bassa. It is hoped that this brief commentary may suggest areas for research in contemporary political organization as well as an interest in the historical aspects of Bassa political and social institutions.

FOOTNOTES

1. See in particular: Johnny G. N. Russell, Geographic Names, Republic of Liberia (Monrovia: Liberian Cartographic Service, 1955).

2. In several cases whole clans were reduced to the status of an "amalgamated town" and in River Cess Territory it was necessary to combine all of Bio and Wor, Neegban, and the eastern part of Zarh-Flahn clans to form a single amalgamated town.

3. It is unclear how many such "clans" were initially organized by the government but the number must have been considerable since by 1949 there were still 112 clans in Grand Bassa County after several previous amalgamations.

4. For puroses of the 1974 census individual Kru towns were included within the Bassa clans nearest to them even though the existence of an independent Kru chiefdom continued to be recognized by all governmental bodies.

5. The Kru Governor is autonomous yet generally works quite closely with the Kru Paramount Chief in New Cess on all matters of common concern.

6. It should be pointed out that these people are ethnically Koranko, not Mandingo, but because they are Muslim they are referred to by the term Mandingo which is applied commonly to all Muslims in Liberia, regardless of ethnic derivation. The 1962 census numbers them at 422 persons. No breakdown is available from the 1974 census reports.

7. Other areas such as Kokoya and Gibi chiefdoms in Bong County and the Gbi-Doru chiefdom of Mimba county which also contain large portions of Bassa speakers have been covered in other maps and articles in this journal. See: James C. Riddell, et.al, "Clan and Chiefdom Maps for the Ma (Mano) and Da (Gio)," Liberian Studies Journal, IV, 2 (1971-1972), 157-161, and William C. Siegmann and Richard H. Fulton, "Clan and Chiefdom Maps for the Kpelle of Montserrado and Bong Counties," Liberian Studies Journal, VII, 1 (1978-1979).