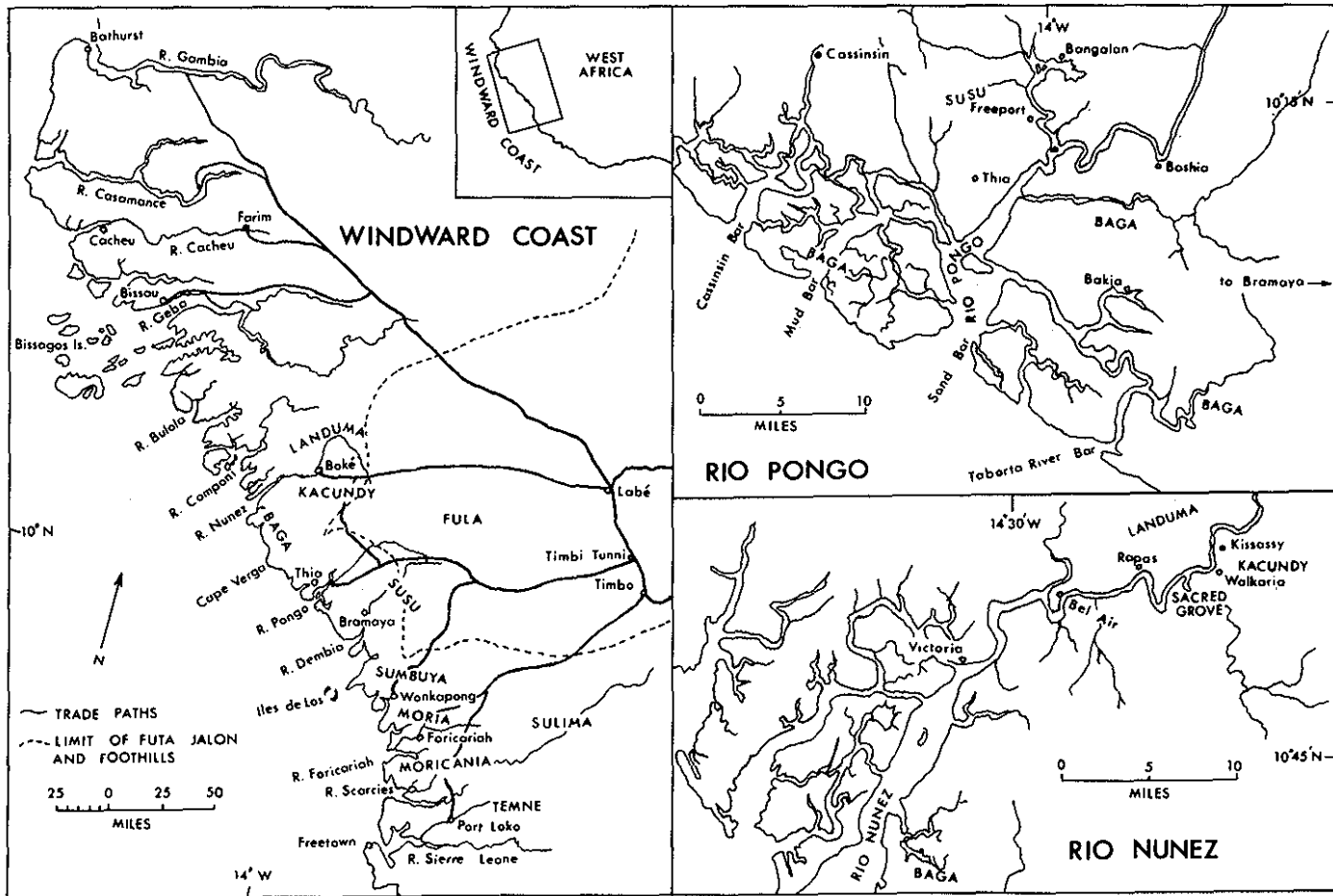


LANDLORDS-STRANGERS: A PROCESS OF ACCOMMODATION AND ASSIMILATION

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In his study of Upper Guinea from 1545 to 1800, Walter Rodney describes the evolution of a formal relationship between Europeans hoping to settle on the African coast and trade for African products, and the African traditional elite who regulated the activities of the foreigners and profited directly from their presence. While Rodney's is undoubtedly the fullest and perhaps the best treatment of this relationship to date, the very scope of his study has led him to think of the arrangement as unique, that once an agreement between parties had been reached, the only means to change or modify it were coups or the conscious subversion of traditional authority.¹ I want here not to undermine Rodney's basic thesis but to demonstrate that along the Nunez and Pongo rivers from the 1790s to 1860 the relationship between African elites, or landlords, and European or African foreign residents, the strangers, was neither static nor developed especially to accommodate European trade. Instead, the landlord-stranger relationship was a process through which African societies permitted foreign institutions to influence their social structures. Its primary function was not one of control but of accommodation and assimilation by stages and over

¹This paper was presented in different form at the annual meeting of the African Studies Association, Philadelphia, 1972. See Walter H. Rodney, *A History of the Upper Guinea Coast, 1545-1800* (London, 1970), 82-94. Rodney notes that such relations were not static, and draws a distinction between the *lançado* experience on the coast and that of later European residents, who opposed the descendants of *lançados*. *Ibid.*, 90, 93-94.



generations which brought structural changes to local societies.²

The areas of the rivers and the peoples who lived there had long been subject to foreign influences from both the African interior and the sea. Sea salt and, according to tradition, elephants migrating toward the setting sun had first drawn Baga peoples from the Futa Jalon highlands to the inhospitable coast.³ Related as Mel speakers to Temne and Loko of the Sierra Leone-Guinea borderland, the newcomers absorbed or displaced earlier coastal inhabitants. Later migrants into the Nunez, among them the Landumans and Nalus, intermarried with the Baga in the littoral grassland—the Baga in the mangroves were left relatively untouched by the later arrivals—and established their own primacy in the existing salt exchange.⁴ Various authors describe a gradual infiltration of Susu trading families into Baga communities on the Pongo, where they intermarried with ruling elites and over a long period of time modified Baga institutions;⁵ accommodation and assimilation were the rule rather than the exception there. The diffusion of new political institutions along both rivers and the expansion of new markets for sea salt led in Rodney's words to an imposition of Mandinga hegemony in the areas, with *farim*, or governors, appointed to maintain proper contacts with the interior Mandinga trading system.⁶

While the extent or duration of the relationship between coastal peoples and the Mandinga is unclear in the sources, apparently both rivers were free of Mandinga control by 1700, when significant structural changes occurred. In the Nunez area a single royal family emerged among the Landumans, with kingship alternating between branches.⁷ Despite inconsistencies on other levels, no Landuman kinglist dates the development of a separate kingship earlier than 1700. Secret societies, vestiges of a pre-Mandinga past, played a significant role in the selec-

²V.R. Dorjahn and Christopher Fyfe, "Landlord and Stranger: Change in Tenancy Relations in Sierra Leone," *Journal of African History*, III (1962), 391-397, describe the evolution of this relationship. Their discussion gives *stranger* various meanings: stranger as tenant, as traveler, and as foreign resident. This paper defines *stranger* as foreign resident.

³Rodney, *Upper Guinea Coast*, 25-26, 111; Jules Hubert Saint-Père, "Petit Historique des Sossos du Rio Pongo," *Bulletin du comité d'études historiques et scientifiques de l'A.O.F.*, XIII (1930), 26-47, *passim*.

⁴David Dalby, "The Mel Languages: A Reclassification of Southern 'West Atlantic,'" *African Language Studies*, VI (1967), 2; W.A.A. Wilson, "Temne, Landuma and Baga Languages," *Sierra Leone Language Review*, I (1962), 27-38. The most complete treatment of these early migrations is André Arcin, *La Guinée Française* (Paris, 1907), 129-134.

⁵Saint-Père, "Petit Historique," 27-33.

⁶Rodney, *Upper Guinea Coast*, 25-26.

⁷André Arcin, *Histoire de la Guinée Française* (Paris, 1911), 168.

tion of candidates and in the final election of rulers here.⁸ On the Pongo, a prominent shift from Baga to Susu political predominance occurred at about the same time,⁹ some have suggested as the result of a military coup. On the other hand, the Susu may have merely filled the vacuum accompanying shrinking Mandinga influence. In either case, this shift of power left many Baga in their former chieftaincies. Interspersed Susu and Baga villages remained bases of political influence, with regional cooperation practiced through palavers or conferences called to resolve intervillage disputes. Although the two groups were markedly different in language and in the organization of their secret societies, the political structures of the Baga and Susu communities were fundamentally indistinguishable.

Against the emergence of new political awareness and institutions on the coast, the demands for sea salt by Fula herdsmen in the Futa Jalon continued as before and perhaps expanded. To guarantee continued outlets for their products and a secure source of salt for their herds, the Fula extended their hegemony coastward in the mid-eighteenth century, subjecting the peoples of the Nunez and Pongo to a tributary alliance with the Fula empire of the Futa Jalon.¹⁰ Each year the chiefs of Labé and Timbi Tunni, the principal *diwals*, or administrative districts, responsible for maintaining proper relationships with chiefs on the Pongo and Nunez, sent representatives accompanied by armed caravans to collect the annual *sagalé*, or tribute, from their charges.¹¹ This generally occurred once the paths dried and the grasses were cut, some time between October and January, the peak of the trading season.¹² At the beginning of the rains the Fula withdrew to the interior, leaving their subjects free from up-country supervision until the rains ended and a new trading season commenced. The Fula intervened in coastal politics only when events interfered with the free flow of European manufactures, or slaves, rice, salt, and other African products. They also reserved the right to overrule the selection of chiefs by local

⁸René Caillie, *Travels through Central Africa to Timbuctoo* (London, 1830), I, 153-160; Charles Monheim, *L'Affaire du Rio Nunez* (Louvain, 1931), 7-8.

⁹Arcin, *Histoire*, 128-143.

¹⁰Alexander Gordon Laing, *Travels in the Timannee, Kooranko, and Soolima Countries in Western Africa* (London, 1825), 403-404; Rodney, *Upper Guinea Coast*, 235-236, notes that coastal peoples were not conquered but allied with the Fula and paid tribute.

¹¹James Franklin Hopewell, "Muslim Penetration into French Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia before 1850" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1958), 69; see also Jean Suret-Canale, "The Fouta-Djalon Chieftaincy," in Michael Crowder and Obaro Ikime, eds., *West African Chiefs* (New York, 1970), 81.

¹²Docteur Méo, "Etudes sur le Rio-Nunez," *Bulletin du comité d'études historiques et scientifiques de l'A.O.F.* (1919), 286.

societies, especially when the choice of candidate endangered commerce.¹³

The first to exert influence from the sea were Portuguese traders, who established trading posts called factories above the mangroves and in the upper reaches of the waterways.¹⁴ Independent traders of Portuguese descent, called *lançados* on this coast, were active throughout the area, and by 1600 several had established residences. Within a century of their arrival the *lançados* had acquired important positions in the river trade network. Purchasing rice, gold, dyes, cloth, ivory, raw hides, hippopotamus teeth, and slaves, the *lançado* transformed commerce from one based on salt to one oriented toward the Atlantic. He provided new markets for African products and brought in firearms, tobacco, knives, and beads and other trinkets.¹⁵ As a Portuguese or an Afro-Portuguese with a knowledge of European languages and techniques, he received trade goods on credit (later called advances) to exchange for legitimate products and slaves, and thereby acquired status as trusted middleman between European ship captains and long-distance traders who carried products from the interior.¹⁶

European foreigners resident on the coast accepted their relationship with the Africans they lived among as one between landlords and strangers. In fact, the process of accommodation was probably little different from that which had characterized earlier associations between coastal elites and interior tradesmen. The European or Afro-European seeking to establish a factory on the rivers first presented himself to a host chief, who called a conference of his district paramount, the heads of surrounding villages, and the newcomer to formalize a contract among the participants. While the technicalities of such arrangements differed from chief to chief and from river to river, the patron generally agreed to protect the life and property of his client and to guarantee his client's debts. The composition of the conference symbolized the boundaries within which the trader might be active. In return for this hospitality, the stranger paid an annual custom, or rent, and a head tax on every slave exported from the territory. He also provided his landlord with guns and supplies in time of war.¹⁷ Although theoretically

¹³Bruce L. Mouser, "Trade and Politics in the Nunez and Pongo Rivers, 1790 to 1865" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1971), ch. 5.

¹⁴Rodney, *Upper Guinea Coast*, 78-81.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 21, 62, 74-77, 82, 155-157, 172; Silvester Meinrad Xavier Goldberry, *Travels in Africa . . . 1785, 1786, and 1787*, William Mudford, trans. (London, 1903), 163-172.

¹⁶Rodney, *Upper Guinea Coast*, 125.

¹⁷Bruce L. Mouser, "Trade, Coasters, and Conflict in the Rio Pongo from 1790 to 1808," *Journal of African History*, XIV (1973), 46.

strangers were restricted from politics, the success of the African inevitably improved the foreigner's position in the river commerce. In addition, the activities of chiefs tended to confuse the relationship. Some were themselves traders, and attempted to tie their prosperity to their clients' by marrying their daughters to them.¹⁸ And whatever the initial motive for such alliances, the relationship became even more complex in succeeding generations, when descendants of *lançados* also claimed political privileges as descendants of chiefs.¹⁹ This was the case on the Pongo River, where in the 1780s the Fernandez and Gomez families acquired power in the Bramaya and Bakia chieftaincies.²⁰

From the mid-eighteenth century, British and American traders joined the *lançados* on the Nunez and Pongo and established bulking centers where they supplied local and distant markets with European and American products.²¹ More than twenty such men are identifiable on the Pongo by the turn of the century, with eight more on the Nunez. Few of the new Europeans dealt solely in slaves. Most purchased slaves and the ivory, gold, rice, and other products which slaves carried to the coast. And most initially sought to avoid the marriage alliances which would eventually entangle them in local politics.²²

The commercial patterns practiced at the close of the century were structured. Europeans and Afro-Europeans served as the principal contacts between interior merchants and European ship captains. Resident traders purchased both slaves and legitimate products and tried to supply a wide range of goods in exchange. Exportable slaves necessarily came from the interior and not from among the people of the area, since a sufficient amount of local labor was required to adequately provision slave vessels for the Middle Passage. Local chiefs therefore supported the traders as the source of markets for salt, foodstuffs, and local manufactures, and for the customs, rents, and taxes which traditionally had brought income.

The calendar of outside events and influences that took place from the 1790s to the 1860s is long, and while it is difficult to pinpoint direct causes to sociocultural changes during this period, listing the principal categories of events is necessary to put changes into proper time

¹⁸Brantz Mayer, *Captain Canot: Or Twenty Years on an African Slaver* (New York, 1854), 110-117.

¹⁹Saint-Père, "Petit historique," 35-36.

²⁰Arcin, *Histoire*, 141.

²¹Colin W. Newbury, "Prices and Profitability in Early Nineteenth-Century West African Trade," in Claude Meillassoux, ed., *The Development of Indigenous Trade and Markets in West Africa* (London, 1971), 94-96.

²²Mouser, "Trade, Coasters," 51.

perspective. First came the Sierra Leone Company settlement at the mouth of the Sierra Leone River (1791-1808), which increasingly sought to tap into those interior trade patterns which supplied goods for the Nunez and Pongo traders.²³ Company officials attacked the rivers' trade from two directions. They relied initially on direct negotiations with Fula in the Futa Jalon to establish a new path that would divert commerce from the Nunez and Pongo (as well as from the rivers of Moria, Sumbuya, and Moricania) to the British settlement at Freetown.²⁴ James Watt's trip to the Fula capital of Timbo in 1794 and his unsuccessful attempts to establish a company factory there were the result of this policy.²⁵ A second plan called for setting up trading settlements at the known terminals of caravans to seize control of legitimate commerce through monopolistic price manipulation and to end slave trading by providing improved markets for legitimate African products.²⁶ To this end they built two factories on the Pongo and arranged with merchants on the Nunez for others. However, a combination of trader animosity, an Anglo-French war, rebellion in Freetown, and violations of accepted trading practices by company agents on the spot doomed the enterprise, and the company abandoned the rivers in 1802.²⁷ Traders and officials in Sierra Leone refused to foresake the dream of diverting trade from the rivers to Freetown directly through Port Loko, however, and periodically made new attempts into the 1820s.²⁸ Unsuccessful, their efforts were thwarted by frequent wars between the Fula and the Susu of Sulima, and by the jealousy with which the chief of Foricariah guarded and guaranteed the trade terminals in

²³Sir Reginald Coupland, *The British Anti-Slavery Movement* (second ed., London, 1964), 64-65.

²⁴"On the Means of Establishing a Commercial Intercourse," enclosed in Macaulay to Sullivan, 4 Sept. 1802, CO 2/1, Public Record Office, London [hereafter PRO]; Robert Robinson, "British Colonial Policy and Trade on the Windward Coast of Africa, 1812-1832" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1966), vii-viii. Allen M. Howard, "Big Men, Traders, and Chiefs: Power, Commerce, and Spatial Change in the Sierra Leone-Guinea Plain, 1865-1895" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1972), 54-60, places the Moria terminals within the Futa-Scarces corridor of long-distance trade between the Niger and the coast. In chapter 3, Howard distinguishes between types of African strangers who used and often settled along this corridor.

²⁵Council, 29 Oct. 1793 and 1 Jan. 1794, CO 267/2, PRO; Watt's record is found in James Watt, "Journal of Mr. James Watt, in his Expedition to and from Teembo in the Year 1794," Rhodes House Library, Oxford University, Mss. African s.22.

²⁶Viscountess Knutsford, *Life and Letters of Zachary Macaulay* (London, 1900), 49.

²⁷George E. Brooks, Jr., *Yankee Traders, Old Coasters and African Middlemen* (Boston, 1970), 55; John Peterson, *Province of Freedom* (Evanston, 1969), 31; Adam Afzelius, *Sierra Leone Journal, 1795-1796*, Alexander P. Kup, ed. (Uppsala, 1967), 13, 15, 20, 31.

²⁸These included Alexander Gordon Laing, Brian O'Beirne, and William Tuft.

Moria country.²⁹

While plans to divert the commerce to Sierra Leone had little influence on the peoples on the rivers, the company's presence on the Pongo opened the way for other agents of change. The first missionaries, from the Edinburgh Missionary Society, landed on the Pongo in 1798, but within a year that effort collapsed.³⁰ In 1807 missionaries from the Church Missionary Society moved into the area, where they remained for a decade, establishing two schools which they supported through tuition, gifts, and government subsidies.³¹ Enrollment jumped from thirty-five in 1808 to nearly a hundred in 1814; approximately half the students were the sons and daughters of chiefs. The remainder were offspring of traders in the Nunez, Pongo, and Dembia rivers, and after 1814 liberated Africans were sent to the Pongo schools from Sierra Leone.³² Instruction was conducted in English, and at the insistence of the trading community the curriculum included commercial skills such as mathematics and bookkeeping.³³ The influence of the Church Missionary Society mission peaked in early 1816 when the council of chiefs granted them permission to proselytize freely throughout the area.³⁴ Yet in May 1817, after a year of war and turmoil in the region, the missionaries abandoned their schools and retreated to Freetown.³⁵

The collapse of the CMS mission was less the result of missionary action (although some of them were not blameless) than of policy decisions, innovations, and changes occurring in Europe and in the Futa Jalon.³⁶ At the turn of the century, one European country after another outlawed slaving by its nationals, but Great Britain was the first to interfere with commerce on the Windward Coast, specifically along the

²⁹Laing, *Travels*, 413. See Bruce L. Mouser, "Moria Politics in 1814; Amara to Maxwell, March 2," *Bulletin de l'Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire*, XXXV, ser. B (1973), 805-812, for more detailed treatment of Freetown-Moria relations to 1814; and Howard, "Big Men," ch. 4, for the evolution of Mandinka authority in Moria.

³⁰*Missionary Records: West Africa* (London, 1836), 68-72.

³¹Leopold Butscher, "Extracts from the Journal," *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society*, II (1806-1809), 493-496; Wilhelm Journal, entry dated 6 Dec. 1814, CAI/E4/60, Church Missionary Society Archives, London [hereafter CMS].

³²*Missionary Records*, 93-94; Renner to Secretary, 26 June 1814, CAI/E4/19, CMS.

³³Butscher, "Extracts," 493-496.

³⁴*Missionary Register*, V (1817), 391-393; Bickersteth to Secretary, 20 April 1816, CAI/E5/116, CMS.

³⁵According to Samuel Abraham Walker, *Missions in Western Africa among the Soosooos, Bulloms, &c.* (Dublin, 1845), 515, letters referring to the period from March to May 1817 were lost at sea.

³⁶Renner to Secretary, 8 June 1812, CAI/E3/8, CMS; Renner to Secretary, 24 June 1814, CAI/E4/19, CMS.

³⁷Christopher Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone* (London, 1962), 120; Renner to Secretary, 30 Oct. 1811, CAI/E2/105, CMS; Robinson, "British Colonial Policy," 32-33.

Nunez and Pongo rivers. The first recorded military action against slave merchants there took place in 1811, when Governor Charles Maxwell sent an expedition into the Pongo to seize British subjects equipping slavers for the Middle Passage.³⁷ The introduction of violence as a means of transforming commercial patterns severely weakened the basis of support for the mission schools, and chiefs increasingly were forced to reconsider the benefits of continued patronage.³⁸ When the missionaries were asked for gunpowder to fight British warships they refused, and as a result their presence in the country became one of the casualties in the conflict.³⁹

The missionaries left in 1817, but their exit gave but small respite to those who sought a return to more profitable days. After 1818, the newly-organized British antislavery squadron made the Iles de Los, located only fifty miles south of the Pongo, a principal station for their surveillance activity on the coast.⁴⁰ With squadron vessels plying the shoreline at will, the physical characteristics of the rivers themselves became increasingly important. The Nunez was especially disadvantageous for continued slave trading. Only one of its exits was capable of handling large vessels, and a single warship could easily block the estuary and send longboats upstream to search for slavers.⁴¹ To avoid entrapment, slavers increasingly by-passed the Nunez factories in favor of the Pongo, where multiple entrances, meandering inlets and lagoons, and friendly traders improved their chances of escaping an unannounced warship.⁴² The result was a depressed Nunez economy and an at least temporarily improved one on the Pongo.

Moreover, these apparent transformations of market practices were affected by policy decisions in the Futa Jalon. Occasional contact between the Freetown merchants and the Fula had led the Fula regime to consider designating specific products for specific routes. In 1794 and 1795 they had suggested that a company factory be established on the Pongo to serve as the official contact point between Freetown and Timbo for legitimate products.⁴³ Post-1815 antislavery activities and the

³⁷Renner to Secretary, 5 Nov. 1813, CAI/E3/99, CMS; Renner to Secretary, 24 June 1814, CAI/E4/19, CMS.

³⁹Wilhelm to Secretary, 21 April 1817, CAI/E5A/91, CMS; Renner Journal, n. d., CAI/E6/63, CMS.

⁴⁰Christopher Lloyd, *The Navy and the Slave Trade* (London, 1968), 45.

⁴¹*Royal Gazette & Sierra Leone Advertiser*, 29 Dec. 1821; Great Britain, *Parliamentary Papers* (Commons), 355, XXIII, "Further Papers Relating to the Suppression of the Slave Trade," 1821, 45-46.

⁴²Vessels could enter and leave the Pongo River over the Cassinsin Bar, Mud Bar, Sand Bar, or Taborta River Bar entrances.

⁴³Council, 5 May 1794, CO 270/2, PRO.

disruption of riverine commerce forced the Fula to take a direct role in resolving local disputes and in guaranteeing continued outlets for their products. They intervened in the Nunez in 1823 to insure a free flow of trade, for the first time stationing a governor and garrison there during each trading season from December to April.⁴⁴ Under the altered system, the Pongo became the principal outlet for Fula slaves, and the Nunez was designated a terminal for legitimate trade.⁴⁵

From the late 1820s coffee, and from the late 1830s peanuts, became new and important cash crops in the rivers' economies. These changes first occurred on the Pongo, where coffee and later peanut plantations provided old coasters with an opportune cover for continued slaving. British warships were forced to view slaves in factory barracoons as part of a plantation work force, and therefore not liable to seizure. On the plantation slaves worked during the rainy season; once it turned dry both laborers and produce became marketable.⁴⁶ The symbiotic relationship between slave and legitimate trade which characterized the Pongo's commerce from the turn of the century would continue into the early 1850s.

The transformation to predominantly legitimate goods accelerated faster in the Nunez than in the Pongo once new markets for African products began to appear in Europe and in the Americas. Without long-entrenched slave trading families to oppose their entry, a group of new Europeans—British subjects with commercial ties to Freetown markets—easily established a foothold on the upper river. While small in number, this group was encouraged by an apparent Fula design to transform the river's commerce and by a series of new treaties which permitted British warships to seize vessels equipped to carry slaves. At the same time a number of shallow-draught steam-paddle vessels which could more easily surprise the slavers that occasionally visited the river were introduced into the antislavery squadron.⁴⁷ A second group of newcomers entering the Nunez trade were French subjects with commercial ties on Goreé and in Saint Louis, Senegal.⁴⁸ Coffee first at-

⁴⁴Commissions General Report No. 4, 29 April 1823, FO 84/21, PRO.

⁴⁵This was especially true after a successful raid upon property belonging to William Skelton, Jr. and John Serjeant in 1832. See Findlay to Hay, 20 March 1832, CO 267/114, PRO, and enclosure, David Wilson to Serjeant, 25 Oct. 1832.

⁴⁶Great Britain, *Parliamentary Papers* (Commons), XIX, Correspondence with British Commissioners, 1823, 12.

⁴⁷C.W. Newbury, *British Policy toward West Africa* (London, 1965), 133; W.E.F. Ward, *The Royal Navy and the Slavers* (New York, 1969), 128, 132-141; A.W.H. Pearsall, "Sierra Leone and the Suppression of the Slave Trade," *Sierra Leone Studies* (Dec., 1959), 213.

⁴⁸These included René and Durand Valentine, Antoine and Pierre d'Erneville,

tracted the French to the Nunez, but with rising demands for peanut oil by French soap manufacturers in the mid-1840s they rapidly shifted to peanuts.⁴⁹ Land was cleared along the middle river for peanut cultivation, ending dependence upon the uncertain and often interrupted trade with the interior. Cooperative naval officers further advanced French interests by interceding on their behalf. Moreover, the tariff reform bill of 1845 reversed earlier French policy on Nunez coffee. After 1845 Nunez coffee received a preferential tariff if its origin was attested by a French agent resident on the river. In addition, by increasing the duty on sesame, the regulation stimulated the use of peanut oil as a substitute cooking oil, and cultivation on the Nunez increased as French demands for peanuts rose sharply. In January 1846 the first French agent was appointed to certify produce from the Nunez area.⁵⁰

These Europeans symbolized more than the infusion of legitimacy, for most represented, or soon would represent, the interests of large trading firms along the Windward Coast. Until 1835 factories had received the majority of their trade goods from American or other ships visiting the coast, exchanging them for whatever products were available in return. Some would continue this practice into the 1840s, but the introduction of companies who sought particular commodities transformed commerce.⁵¹ Trading firms provided goods from their larger entrepôts on the coast, and the importance of the occasional visitor diminished. Companies advertised their interest in specific items and stimulated trade and the cultivation of produce along definite lines. At first coffee, hides, and wax dominated trade, but after 1840 they were dwarfed by insatiable French demands for peanuts.⁵² In addition, firms were able to pressure colonial officials for increased protection of their investments, thereby prompting colonial intervention in the commercial system and the treaty-making process.⁵³

Given the radical transition from slaves to legitimate products occur-

Charles Voucaline, M. LaPorte, Auguste Santon, A.E. Carvallis, and subfactors who accompanied them to the river.

⁴⁹A. Vene, "Rapport sur les établissements anglais de la Gambie et les comptoirs française d'Albreda et de Casamance," *Annales Maritimes et Coloniales*, LXVII (1838), par. II, 948.

⁵⁰Antoine Marie Jean Demougeot, "Histoire du Nunez," *Bulletin du comité d'études historiques et scientifiques de l'A.O.F.*, XXI (1938), 206-207.

⁵¹This was particularly true among traders who had established commercial relationships with Americans before 1840. See George E. Brooks, Jr., "Enoch Richmond Ware, African Trader: 1839-1850. Years of Apprenticeship," *American Neptune* (July and Oct., 1970), *passim*.

⁵²Bernard Schnapper, *La Politique et le commerce française dans le Golfe de Guinée de 1838 à 1871* (Paris, 1961), 221-230.

⁵³*Ibid.*, 231-232.

ring during this half-century on the Windward Coast, that the landlord-stranger relationship survived at all is remarkable. The traditional contract between the two parties had been an individual one, with obligations, restrictions, and lines of redress clearly defined. But once a trader had established a position in the commercial network, new options became available to him.

Between 1790 and 1808 only four trader families can be identified outside the system of obligations required by the traditional arrangement. All had established residences on the rivers by the mid-1700s. These included the Fernandez family of Bramaya, the Gomezes of Bakia, the Ormonds of the Bangalan branch of the Pongo, and Dr. Walker of Kacundy on the Nunez. Although free of the customary responsibilities, each had acquired positions as chiefs and had been absorbed into the rivers' political systems, which carried with them new sets of obligations. William Fernandez and Immanuel Gomez were paramount chiefs under the nominal control of the Susu rulers.⁵⁴ John Ormond, Jr., who returned to the river around 1805 to inherit property belonging to his father, was chief of Bangalan town and subservient to the paramount of Bangalan district, also a tributary to the Susu.⁵⁵ Dr. Walker was chief of Kacundy, where he played an additional important role as principal supporter and adviser to the Landuman king, Calinguie.⁵⁶

Traders who had arrived in the area at the turn of the century and who for the most part sought to avoid entangling alliances with the local elites found that the obligations of the landlord-stranger relationship did not preclude regional cooperation among themselves when established commercial patterns were challenged by outside influences. In 1794, Dr. Walker and David Lawrence of the Nunez drastically reduced prices for Fula products to warn Fula authorities against allowing James Watt to establish a factory at Timbo and a new path to Free-town.⁵⁷ A year later in Pongo country, George Irving, Benjamin Curtis, William Skelton, Sr., and Mr. Ferrie, all bound by the traditional contract, agreed to share the cost of discouraging the Sierra Leone Com-

⁵⁴Saint-Père, "Petit historique," 35-36; Arcin, *Histoire*, 141; Claude Riviere, "Le long des côtes de Guinée avant le phase coloniale," *Bulletin de l'Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire*, XXX, ser. B (1968), 742.

⁵⁵Mayer, *Canot*, 77; Joseph Corry, *Observations upon the Windward Coast of Africa* (London, 1807), 92, locates Ormond on the Fatala River.

⁵⁶According to James Watt, Calinguie ruled at Walkaria, Walker's town. Later sources identify Kacundy as the residence of the Mandiale ruling branch. Consequently I use Kacundy to designate the town that Walker founded.

⁵⁷Watt, "Journal," 70, 90.

pany.⁵⁸ By lowering prices for interior products and by boycotting caravans which traded with the company store at Freeport, they dealt the company factory a severe financial setback.⁵⁹ While such activities were extralegal and outside the customary agreement, other attempts to expel the company from the rivers' commerce clearly were directed through the landlord-stranger communication lines. Irving, Curtis, Skelton, Ferrie, and others warned their patrons that the company would "ruin the river."⁶⁰ In reply, their chiefs met in a closed conference which ignored the traders' protests—perhaps to reemphasize the foreigners' subservience—and renewed their earlier pledge to protect company property.⁶¹ By stimulating cooperation among traders, the challenge of company monopoly from 1794 to 1802 brought changes to the indigenous-foreigner relationship. Extralegal activity came to be tolerated, but the chiefs firmly resisted direct political interference in their privilege to grant protection, no matter how much it might upset the trader community.

The appearance of missionaries between 1807 and 1817 and the introduction of military force as part of the transformation from slave to legitimate trade after 1811 brought significant changes in their wake. While the decision to admit missionaries and their schools fundamentally belonged to chiefs, some traders discreetly but successfully lobbied for the schools because of the commercial training they would provide. Most successful in this attempt was Benjamin Curtis, whose brother Thomas had married the daughter of King Uli Kati of Thia, the capital of the Pongo region.⁶² Curtis donated the site and the buildings for the first school at Bashia.⁶³

Unfortunately for the missionaries, their appearance there coincided with the emergence of a new slaver coalition which not only opposed their presence but was convinced that the missionaries reported their every move to authorities in Freetown. This extralegal consortium of commercial interests included William Cunningham Wilson, Paul and Mary Faber, Stiles and Bailey Lightburn, and John Ormond, Jr. of the upper Pongo, who joined in 1809 with Samuel Samo of the lower river and Charles Hickson and William H. Leigh of the Iles de Los. The

⁵⁸Cooper to Council, 24 Aug. 1795, enclosed in Council, 1 Sept. 1795, CO 270/3, PRO.

⁵⁹Cooper to Council, enclosed in Council, 3 Feb. 1796, CO 270/3, PRO; Council, 26 April 1796, CO 270/4, PRO.

⁶⁰Buckle to Governor, 29 May 1795, CO 270/3, PRO.

⁶¹*Ibid.*

⁶²Renner to Secretary, 30 Oct. 1811, CAI/E2/105, CMS.

⁶³Butscher, "Extracts," 498-499.

group hoped to minimize trader conflict by establishing a quota arrangement for provisioning slave ships, thus gaining monopolistic control of the Pongo trade through collective effort.⁶⁴ The immediate effect upon the landlord-stranger relationship was to elevate Ormond to a new level in the political system and to link the traders, his partners, more closely to the political process. This became abundantly clear in September 1811, when King Kati created a crisis by seizing the colonial sloop *George* at the advice of his son-in-law, Thomas Curtis. Kati called a conference of all chiefs, traders, and missionaries to resolve his difficulties with the Sierra Leone colony.⁶⁵ For the first time traders took part in the decision-making process, but a pattern was established which would be repeated in coming years. Chiefs invited them to participate in disputes with Sierra Leone officials or with the captains of British men-of-war, although they continued to be excluded from palavers on the missionary problem. Invariably the English sought to deal with one chief rather than many, and as a result increasingly recognized Uli Kati as the representative of the Pongo chiefs.⁶⁶ Kati was forced to defend not only his own strangers but also those under contract with other paramounts as a result. In return, he demanded and obtained military supplies and assistance against his English adversaries.⁶⁷

Many fewer traders had established factories in the Nunez area during the early 1800s, and most had allied with Mr. Fortune at Boké or with Chief John Pearce at Kacundy, who in 1796 had inherited Walker's position.⁶⁸ Sources for the nineteenth century reveal little about the technicalities of the landlord-stranger relationship among these people, but we can assume that they differed little from those in the Pongo. Pearce and Fortune also provided substantial support for opposing branches of the Landuman ruling family and for two competing entrepôts on the river.⁶⁹ John Pearce kept the political capital at Kacundy until his death in 1818. Although his son inherited his commercial estate, he was unable to maintain its former influence against the challenge of John Bateman of Boké, a protégé of Fortune who championed the opposing ruling family and commercial center.⁷⁰ In the

⁶⁴ *Trials of the Slave Traders* (London, 1913), 19-20; review of *ibid.* by "A Gentleman . . . at Sierra Leone," *Edinburgh Review*, XXI (1813), 78.

⁶⁵ Renner to Secretary, 30 Oct. 1811, CAI/E2/105, CMS.

⁶⁶ Renner to Secretary, 24 June 1814, CAI/E4/19, CMS.

⁶⁷ Renner to Secretary, 29 July 1912, CAI/E3/13, CMS.

⁶⁸ Macaulay to Cooper, 18 July 1797, CO 268/5, PRO; Council, 13 Sept. 1797, CO 270/4, PRO; Campbell memo no. 7, n. d., CO 2/5, PRO; Watt, "Journal," 6-8, 11, 40, 70.

⁶⁹ Watt, "Journal," 5, 7; Journal Book of Campbell, 28 Dec. 1816, CO/5, PRO.

⁷⁰ Journal Book of Campbell, entries dated 23-28 Dec. 1816, CO/5, PRO.

resulting war, which lasted from 1818 to 1822, Nunez chiefs used the resources and rivalry of traders to change the political system,⁷¹ while traders exploited family rivalries to assist commercial change.

Under the new Landuman ruler, Macande of Boké, the landlord-stranger relationship remained the same into the 1830s. Macande established stable duties for anchorage charges and customs, and partially as a result of this stability new traders moved into the river during the 1830s, among them a dozen from French possessions to the north.⁷² Macande's death in 1838 was followed by a chieftaincy dispute which continued intermittently from 1838 until 1852, bringing significant modification to traditional commercial relations. Contenders in the struggle demanded double and triple duties from new traders. Stores were destroyed in the fighting and trade was disrupted, and in self-defense French and British nationals applied to Gorée or Freetown for assistance.⁷³ By March 1839 traders were beginning to negotiate with opposing factions for collective rights and property protection.⁷⁴ In January 1842 and April 1843, the captains of French and British men-of-war signed the first treaties identifying special communities of foreigners and establishing specific obligations and restrictions between them and their African hosts.⁷⁵ These treaties, renewed and modified as the outcome of war shifted from one side to the other after 1843, increasingly released traders from obligations to specific chiefs and instead guaranteed privileges for all Europeans trading on the coast. By the late 1850s, the landlord-stranger relationship on the Nunez River

⁷¹ *Royal Gazette & Sierra Leone Advertiser*, 26 June, 3 July 1819; Commissions General Report No. 4, 29 April 1823, FO 84/21, PRO.

⁷² See note 48 above. John Hill to Admiral, 5 April 1839, enclosed in Foreign Office to Colonial Office, 18 Nov. 1839, CO 267/155/Offices, PRO.

⁷³ Demougeot, "Histoire du Nunez," 201; John Hill to Admiral, 4 April 1839, enclosed in Foreign Office to Colonial Office, 18 Nov. 1839, CO 267/155/Offices, PRO. The evolution of contractual arrangements between foreigners and the local rulers which accompanied the arrival of French traders and the development of a specialized cash crop economy in the Nunez region is treated in more detail in my "The Nunez Affair," *Bulletin des séances de l'Académie royale des sciences d'outre-mer Bruxelles* (1973-1974), 697-742.

⁷⁴ John Hill to Admiral, 5 April 1839, enclosed in Foreign Office to Colonial Office, 18 Nov. 1839, CO 267/155/Offices, PRO.

⁷⁵ Folio 13-G-4, Archives Afrique Occidentale Française [hereafter AAOF]; Admiralty to Colonial Office, 5 Aug. 1843, CO 267/182/Offices, PRO. I am indebted to George E. Brooks, Jr., who supplied me with a microfilm of selected manuscripts from the AAOF. Gustav Kashope Deveneaux, "The Political and Social impact of the Colony in Northern Sierra Leone, 1821-1896" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 1973), 96, notes that this process of "gradual erosion of the traditional authority of chiefs over settlers and Europeans" began more than a decade earlier in the Port Loko area.

had given way to a treaty system.

Such changes were slower to come to Pongo country. In 1838 a war along the upper river forced Benjamin Campbell and William Emerson, the sole merchants tied to the traditional contract, out of the area.⁷⁶ Not until the 1860s did new Europeans enter the Pongo trade. A British attempt to impose a series of treaties in mid-1851 was opposed by trader chiefs in the upper Pongo, and the paramount, Bala Bangu, rejected the overture.⁷⁷ A year later, however, he signed a treaty with Britain without consulting his subordinates.⁷⁸ The result was a protracted war which lasted from 1852 until 1855, during which private armies destroyed peanut and coffee plantations and temporarily crippled the river's economy.⁷⁹ Rather than risk involvement in the conflict, new legitimate traders avoided the region; France did not bother to sign a treaty with the Africans until 1866.⁸⁰

Before these changes ushered in a new era, however, the agreement between landlords and strangers was the accepted method of dealing with foreigners resident within a local political unit. The relationship stipulated the obligations between individuals, listing the rents and duties that made the arrangement operative. These responsibilities were never meant to be static, however. Outside influences and innovations and the inevitable passage of time brought a fusion of interests. Gradually strangers became advisers to the political elite, and sometimes chiefs themselves. And after 1838, the process of accommodation and assimilation was modified by a treaty system. Yet such changes were not without precedent on either river. Rather, they were accepted with relative ease into a system designed to facilitate the influx of new ideas and institutions into a flexible society.

⁷⁶Ward, *Royal Navy*, 216.

⁷⁷Macdonald to Grey, 17 Feb. 1852, CO 267/227/32, PRO.

⁷⁸Treaty, 17 Jan. 1852, enclosed in Macdonald to Grey, 17 Feb. 1852, CO 267/227/32, PRO.

⁷⁹Arcin, *Histoire*, 142-143.

⁸⁰Treaty, 15 Feb. 1866, folio 13-G-4, AAOF. The relationship between the chiefs and a new missionary group which entered the Pongo in 1855 is described in Bela Vassady, Jr., "The Role of the Black Missionary in West Africa, 1840-1890" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Temple University, 1972), ch. 5.