TRACES OF NOMINAL CLASSIFICATION IN THE MANDE LANGUAGES: THE SONINKE EVIDENCE

Since the times of Maurice Delafosse to the 1970s, it was considered a final truth that the Mandé group, unlike the great majority of what is now considered Niger-Congo languages, has lost its nominal classes without leaving any trace. For J. Greenberg, it was the main feature distinguishing these languages from their Niger-Congo relatives.

It seems that this assumption was subject to doubt, though hesitantly, for the first time by Richard Spears (1972) who suggested that the initial low tone of two kinship terms in Maninka, "ná" "mother" and "mü" "grandmother", could "reflect what may be a remnant of a noun class prefix in Mandé languages", and by Denis Creissels (1979) who regarded pre-nasalization of initial consonants of some substantives in the Mandé languages as a probable trace of a class-mark. Later on, the same phenomenon was treated independently of D. Creissels in [Poudnâkow, Vydrin, 1986-88]. It was remarked that in most of Manding languages the nasal prefix accompanies the words whose semantics have something to do with the meaning of "collective" and "individualized" (collective plural, compound objects, indivisible plural, liquids, etc.; representative of a group, and some others).

In 1988 there appeared an article by Hans Mukarovsky who also treated, independently of the mentioned authors, traces of nominal classification in Mandé (I was acquainted with this publication only in September 1994). Though his analysis was based mainly on the same data, Mukarovsky’s conclusions were quite different from mine (for discussion see 3.1.).

In my last article on this subject (1989), mainly the data from South-Western Mandé was treated, together with some occasional examples from Jula-Odienne and Manya. Reconstruction of two Proto-Mandé prefixed nominal classification marks (*ŋ1- and *ŋ2-) and one suffixed (*NDIN or *NDIG) was proposed. Since that publication, many of its details are evident, especially in the remarkably comprehensible definition of semantics of the classes reconstructed, sometimes confusing explanation of motives of diachronical transformations.
of its data makes it possible to judge the plausibility of the contrasting opinions.2

1.1. There is a nearly equal number of noun stems with final -u adding singular morpheme -o (i.e., "the -u/-o type") and those adding -e ("the -u/-e type"). U-stems adding -e ("the -u/-e type") are slightly less numerous. These statistics seem to corroborate Cl. Grégoire's conclusions rather than those of Ya. Diagana. If, however, we analyze these nouns more attentively, it turns out that a quasi-totality of words of the "-u/-e type" have either -e or -u-in their penultimate syllable: tauru/tauru "elephant," sukuh/suku "rectangular house with a flat roof; flat roof," guppu/guppe "hat," etc. In fact, Cl. Grégoire did not disregard this phenomenon, but she noted that "il y a des formes déterminées en -o qui ont la même voyelle dans la même position (cf. futo "coucou"...). Il faut donc admettre qu'il y a deux morphèmes de détermination" [Grégoire, 1987: 10].

Meanwhile, another diachronic explanation is possible. The stem-final vowel -e in the words of the CVCu/-e type may be secondary. It may have emerged under the influence of the preceding vowel, instead of the vanished stem vowel: *CVCV-e > CVCu/-e, where *V is most probably a non-back vowel (cf. about a similar process in the Mandinka language: Crescelis, 1982). This assumption is sometimes corroborated by the data of other Mandé languages: fuuru/-e "dead body" — Susu fuuru "illness; dead body," fungu/"illness;" Bamanan fisu/"dead body;" fugu/-e "flower" — Susu fusu/"flower," fugu/"flower," Mende pifu/"flower," Loko and Looma puwu, Kellef paus, Kpelle-Kono pikus (cf. Bobo-f mining gift/"flower;" in this language however noun morphology is not yet clear).

Only two words of this type were met in the "Lexique" with a vowel of penultimate syllable other than -e. Of these one is a de-verbative noun kamalu/-e "fear" (from kama "to be scared"). and its abnormality might be a result of its derivational history; as for the other word, two variants are given in the "Lexique": tongul/-e and rongul/-e "spade; hoe."

1.1.2. Among the substantives with a stem-final -o, those adding a zero morpheme in the singular (i.e., those adding -i or -u in the plural) are predominant. As for the types CVCo/-o (i.e., adding -a in the plural) and CVCo/-e, they are roughly equal in number and both are far less frequent than the type CVCo/-e.

Here again, nearly all the words of the CVCo/-e type have either -a or -u in their first syllable, so one may postulate a diachronic change
of the final nose-back vowel of the stem under the influence of the preceding vowel: /soomal-/e> /soma/ “heak, trunk, lip,” /sogol-/ /gogol=/ “reed,” etc.

The data of other Mande languages is controversial. Most often, they corroborate this assumption, e.g.: /monol-/ “bitterness, anger” — Banama akwel “disappointment,” Mandinka /mënën/mëno, móoné/mëno “to take somebody unaware; defame,” Sua /män “disappointment, grief, sorrow;” /karol-/ “large family” — Mandinka /körëë/ /këëor/; Karamo /këëor/. There is also in “Lexique” an example which should be evidence to the contrary: /tagol-/ “thigh” — Banama /tëg/, Maninka /tëg/ Leoma /tëbo/ “posterior;” Kaba Jwara however produces for me another form of this word: /tago-/ which may be regarded as a result of reinterpretation of the final base vowel: /-a> -o; /-o/.

The “Lexique” also gives one exceptional word where the final -o cannot be explained through the influence of the preceding syllable: /tattol-/ “ax” — cf. Banama /tëmë, /tëmë/ “humped ox, zebu;” Maninka /tämët, /tëmë “zebu” (borrowed in Manding from Soninke!), but here again, the “Lexique” may be wrong, as far as my source produced a form with final -e: /tëmë/ “a big ox”.

1.1.3. Neither of the E-stems can add -o, and cases of adding the morpheme -o with stems by the base final -i and -a are few in the “Lexique.” Let us consider both types.

1.1.3.1. -i- /-o/; /bënëkë/ “distribute, excrements” (cf. Maninka këkë “dirt, silt,” Banama bëkëgëk; /dëkikë/ “staff” (cf. Maninka dëko “stick”); /jëkë “WC,” jëgolë “migation” (deverbative noun, from jëgë “to emigrate”); /lémbë “plant” (cf. lamblë “peeld,” cf. also Songai: “Gao label” “carrith”).

It is easy to notice that in all the cases except the last one, the final vowel is preceded by a combination of the vowel -o, and a velar consonant. The two diachronic processes can be suggested: /C Ogul/ > /C Ogul/+i (i.e. a progressive assimilation of the nominal morpheme) or /C Ogul-/+e (C Ogul- is also possible) > /C Ogul-o (i.e. vanishing of the basic final -o, this process can be also regarded as a dissimilation of the final vowel).

The former process seems dubious because of such examples as jëgol- “a wound” (from jëg- “to wound,” cf. Banama jëgan, Maninka göy “or longer” (from gö “to be angry or nervous,” where there is no assimilation. In the meantime, the second variant is corroborated by the data of other Mande languages and by the form of the jëgol verb as well. Only the last example, lembi- “water” can be regarded as a case of meaning opposition of morphemes -o and -e; this word however may be borrowed from Songai.

If however we refer to the data provided by Kaba Jwara, the existence of the type /-e/ becomes suspicious. The words in question have the following forms: /boñëkë “fury” (cf. borëkë “silliness”), /dëkikë/ or /dëkikë “staff,” jëgol- “WC,” jërëgë/jëregë “migration” (morphological structure of this word is not quite clear), and a word like /lëmbë “plant” is unknown to the source.

1.1.3.2. Words of the “-i/-o” type in the “Lexique” are even less numerous. These are: /mënlô “pl. -nî, -mô “status; idol,” /gënlô “pl. gënëni “Western dialects, gënona, gëna “Eastern dialects andEastern dialects;” /tësë “gënu,” /tësë “gënu “Western dialects, /wënu “Western dialects “whirlwind, storm,” (gënma/- “pl. -mô, /gënmô “linguistic or functional” provision;”)

In the three former examples, the final vowel is preceded by a combination of the particle /-a “dead” sonant. It may be considered as well for the replacement of the final -o only when a word was positioned before a pause; so the emerging /-o/ has merged with the singular morpheme -o. Dialectal variability of the final vowel in combination with the plural morpheme might be extra evidence of the secondary nature of the final -o in these words.

Here again, checking the data with Kaba Jwara has eliminated irregularities found in the “Lexique”: /mënlô “singularity tantum” “water spirit, Master of Water” (an analogue of Banama /bëqë “and not /së “status; label);” /gënlô “pl. /gënëni “trovers;” /wënu “Western dialects, /wënu “Western dialects “whirlwind, storm.” As for /gënmô “pl. -mô, it is nothing else, from the formal point of view, than a regular derivative of the stem /gënm “accord, agreement” formed through adding the agitative suffix -/sëna.

1.1.4. The present analysis makes it evident that /-e/ and /-o in Soninke are etymologically, most probably, allomorphs of the same singular morpheme, though in the modern language they are no longer in complementary distribution.

1.2. Nouns adding a zero morpheme may have any vowel in their base form. Let us consider each type.

1.2.1. Among the words determined by the zero singular morpheme, those with a stem-final -ô are by far the most numerous. Among those, loan words are numerous, and some derivative suffixes regularly produce words of the /-a/-e type, e.g. mënaunë (East. dial.), mënaunë (West. dial.) “wæcher” — from mëna, mëni “to wæce.” Some deverbative nouns of this type are formed through irregular derivation, such as mëna “bed” (West. dial.) — from mëna “to lie down,” or xoban-yëna “petty trader” —
from zuko "to buy, to sell." All these words are of low interest for our present purposes.

If we examine -el/-e words which are neither borrowings nor derivatives, it turns out that they form roughly the same semantic groups as the nouns with prenasalized initial consonants in the Manding languages and the nouns with invariable "tenia" initial consonants in the South-Western Mande languages (cf. Pordnikov, Vydrin, 1986-88; Vydrin, 1989). There are numerous names of fish (bukkata, saara, fettu "species of fishes"; faura "carp", dawna "ryp. of big sheaf-fish", plants (bamana "Combretum glutinosum", baara "plant with red flowers, Pennisetum", samba "Vitex cienkowi"), etc.), names of substances (baara "women's scent", botoku "clay", bulaa "gunpowder", bulu "a ground nut sauce", etc), and many other uncountable substantives of words denoting objects which normally exist as members of groups or yet words denoting objects which are composed of smaller objects: "domestic slave, a magic", baisa "indigo", beda "horse's coat — light-bay", njuu "sweat", fettu "stone split", gaara (West dial), gaupe (East dial) "bleak land", etc. It is noteworthy that even borrowings from Arabic and Manding within this formal type are very often of similar semantics.

The rate of the words of the -el/-e type, which have cognates in other Mande languages being relatively low, it can be explained through their semantics which puts them aside from the basic lexical stock. But such correspondences are found, the words in question in Bamana usually have a pre-nasalized initial consonant: xanaa (West dial, cf. East dial, xana/ -e /variant — Bamana ndaara; xanda, probably? xanuma "clabalab of a middle size" — Bamana gâàama (< *-xalaam) "sort of calabash; big spoon for pouring" (another word, however, in Soninke can be put in correspondence with the Manding stem: xaràama "handi", see 1.3.1.).

In Manding, very few words for human beings have pre-nasalized initial consonant. These are either personages connected with occult practices and the esoteric sphere of the traditional life (Bamana naama, sima, shima, yeyenee, yema: Maninka sima "person responsible for the new initiated into a secret society" — cf. Soninke soomaal (-e) "elders") or some despised, anti-social people or people who have low social status: Bamana sokki "cruel and dishonest person", maan, xin, "thief", nôsnìi "dishonest person", etc.

In Soninke type -el/-e, words for persons of inferior social status, deprived and despised people predominate among nouns for human beings: gâada "domestic slave woman", garâsi "slave of Wago's smiths", furaxa "widow, widower", maala "widow", xamamala "carried person", toudâlamà "casted bard of smiths", taria "wife who is a slave by origin", xinaa (West dial) "something unripe; an idari", caâka (West dial) "prostitute", caâka "cattle of leather-workers" (< * -sakka — alternation ns/e is regular in Soninke; cf. an alternate form of this word in Soninke, sûkê. It is probably a derivative from the verb saged-sakka "to cut stuff or leather"; cf. Fular sakki "leather worker", Maninka sûka, sûko), Maninka sûko. It is possible to classify with the same sub-group the word lema (West dial) "woman recently confined", who is normally helpless.

There are also terms for persons connected with occult practices or with age-groups and secret societies: saxuka "sorcerer", joota "person from the same age-class, an equal, peer", neeëa "maternal uncle" (one of the maternal uncle in the initiation rites of his nephew is well-known?) probably to the same group should be classified sooma (West dial) "elder", taria "elder", garâsi "younger brother or sister", maaxa "consecuence" — these words might be by origin terms for corresponding social or age groups.

There are, however, some words which cannot be classified with the first or the second group. These exceptions are very indicative; they are: mungo "King of Wagadu", game "champion; adroit person"; gaara "big soignier; famous bard"; tanda "king, monarch", sooë "viceroy". All these nouns denote the most prominent persons who have no equals (the most outstanding members of their groups). There is an interesting semantic opposition between the words mungo (pl. mangog) "King of Wagadu" and maaxgi- e (pl. mangug) "a war chief who is a vassal of his sovereign": there can be only one mungo, but his mungo are numerous. 1.2.2.

In the types -el/-e and -el/-e, as it was noted by previous authors, loan words predominate: like in other Mande languages, -el and -e (depending on the character of the preceding consonant and vowel) are the regular epithetic vowels added to the words which have in the original language consonant ending, so that not very numerous original Soninke words of types -el/-e and -el/-e were diluted by large numbers of loan words. 1.2.3.

The only criterion for differentiation types -el-/e and -el/-e, -el/-e and -el/-e is the plural marker: if we assume that the suffix -u [-u, -o] in plural regularly correlates with the singular morpheme -e and its variant -e, while plural-use of -el/-e correlates with the zero singular morpheme (which is most often true, though there are serious exceptions, cf. 1.4.), then we shall arrive at the conclusion that the quasi-totality of bases with final -o add a singular zero morpheme, and nearly all the words with basic -e are of the type -el/-e. 1.2.4. It turns out that the words of -el/-e, -el/-e, -el/-e, and -el/-e
types which do not seem to be loan words are most often of the same semantic field as the words of the -ul/-e type: fonzo "sq. of fish", jamb (or "corn flower", turo "fig, figoe", jambu "provision for jouney", baj "paternal aunt", lepanfu "brave man", dagone, pl.-mi (East. dial.) "edible infants" (esp.), jarulle, pl.-mi, "assistant of the head of initiated youths", nafje, pl.-mi (East. dial.) "leather bag", etc.

In the meanwhile, some words probably indicate that compatibility of bases terminating in -e and -o with corresponding plural markers may be automatic rather than optionally-conditioned. The word of the -ul/-e type: fish corresponds to Proto-Mandinge *figò, and one could anticipate its classification with the -el/-e type, but its plural is formed with the suffix -ul/-o, which is thought to be correlated with singular suffix -e.

1.3. Noun stems ending on nasal (further on: nasal stems) are much less numerous than vocalic stems. When these words are neither in the syntagma-final position nor in their citation form, the final nasal consonant is homorganic to the next consonant (i.e. initial consonant of the following element. In the other case, they regularly add a singular morpheme: -e or a plural morpheme: -ul/-o. In this position the final nasals are manifested differently: they can be single (-ev, -en, -ep, -epo) or geminated (-ev, -en, -ep, -epo) and the choice of the consonant depends on the particular stem.

According to G. Herault whose analysis is basically synchronous, all such words originally had a final vowel: doron/doromme "finger, toe"; dorommen/W/doromme. He draws a rule: if a word with a nasal consonant in the final syllable counts three or more syllables (within the frame of G. Herault’s assembrellagential approach, words of the CVNVN type are also triangular, their final basic vowel vanishes when this word is not in the end of a syntagma; as a result, the nasal consonant becomes homorganic to the following consonant:激光/kare:/ /sreada kare/"the evil chicken", maybe "a heavy rain". If it is the case, there are two-syllable words, then its final vowel is either kept or replaced by -e: dispe/e/"beese", finale/e/"moose".

Herault’s idea seems to be corroborated by such examples as tio/nigga "fruit" and kib/kigga or kinnu (pl. kiggunu, kiggunu) "kitchen" which could be interpreted as *touga/-le and *kigga/-le or *kinnia/-le.

There are, however, numerous exceptions to Herault’s rule: final vowels of some bi-syllable words vanish (kan/nige "gold", tio/nige "posterior"; the latter example is mentioned by G. Herault himself, and, much more often, the final vowel of three or more syllable words of this type does not vanish: degemi/e (West. dial.), degami/e (other dialects) "civet" (instead of *degami/ndegume), jigu/-e ("jig, pitcher, granary", jopul/-e "ath", past covered with blood", etc.

If data of other Mandaka languages is considered, there is some evidence in favor of Herault’s hypothesis of the vanishing of the stem-final vowel: kalan/W/kalangan/ "trap for animals" — Bono garaat, Manaka nikiinga, niddinga, niiidinga, Oba Maninka kłim, Maninkaka kãily "trap for birds"; probably nii/nmunme "unhabitied place" — Banama, Maninka wiiwa (the same meaning); Maninka wii, Mani wii, iisawa "far remote place"; Mende ngijjé, Bandi ngiidi, Looma giiwi "large forest".

Contrary examples are, however, much more numerous: mangoi/n/mangoi (East. dial.) "quarrel, dispute" — Banama, Maninka mánkàni "noise"; faraN/farima/ "bridge" — ulla-puladada fafarim "hater", etc.

Thus dropping of the original stem-final vowel after nasal consonants, being quite plausible for some words, can by no means be said to be a general rule.

Cl. Grijegue’s approach seems to be more solid. She concludes that the stems discussed should be considered as terminating in nasal consonants and not in vowels; this stem-final consonant is the same as in the position before the singular or plural morpheme. So, for pagoni/pagomme "camel" stem is pagomme, and for mounsi/musimme "cat" it is musimme. Though in the modern Soninke consonants (nasal as well as oral) are never to be met in position before the pause, it might be quite different in previous stages of development of this language.

Presence of different nasal phonemes at the end of a syllable in a Mande language may appear unusual, but this phenomenon is proper not only to Soninke (or rather to Proto-Soninke). In Bobo-Tamzali, for instance, final -e and -e are different phonemes (kun "alcoholic drink", gwok "head" — nii "née", Parka biglobosa", nii "man"), and final -e is sometimes realized in sandhi as -e (1bn + -ref/n > ssim "fathers"; all examples are from [Prest, 1983]) and it is unlikely that this could be as innovation.

1.3. Stems ending in a single nasal consonant preceded by a short vowel are not numerous in Soninke. Only two have final -e; these are: mangoi/mangome/ "sorhump" (there is also the variant mangoi/-le which may be the original form: oral xingii/n/singgii/ "small ants" (cf. Banama dialects nitiki, xing, Banama-Kauru nitiki, Maninka-Kauru xing/le/ "black ants"; there is some evidence of neutralization of initial velar and dental consonants opposition after the nasal prefix in Proto-Northern Mande). Both (these words seem to have originally had final vowels. If this is so, then there is no ground for reconstruction of stem-final -e in Proto-Soninke.)
As for stems with final -m, -n, and -g, their number does not exceed ten for each ending. There are some deverbal bases (s Gil/dig/dig, “speech, discourse” from digamu “to speak”, cf. Mandinka digamu “to speak”, Bamana jëmu, dëmbë “speech, night conversation”) and loan words (sawat, “soap” from Arabic sa-wat, ala高新区 “ambergis” — cf. Arabic al-anbar, mna/N/ mu/zine “cat” — from Arabic languages, cf. Fula Sow musul, muement, etc.; cf. Hausa Musul, musul, saubari; saaba/S/soap “soap” — from Arabic sabun). Other such stems, however, have evident Mandic background: sirin/sirin silsil (“tassel, rosette” — cf. Tumbu Sirin,N/Sirin), Loma si-indi (“tassel”), Loma Koluma soddii (“tassel”), Kpelle-Norh hiltih, helmin “mosquito”; dolok/dolok “fishing rod, fishing line” — Bamana nfilen, dolen, Mandink: mdein, Mandinka dolol “fishing rod”, Wolof nful “fishing rod”. The word nful “fishing rod” — Mandinka Dolan “fishing rod”, Wolof nful “fishing rod”, Mandinka Dolah “fishing rod”, Bandi nful “fishing rod”, Bandi nful “fishing rod”, Bandi nful “fishing rod”, Tumbu Mande nful “fishing rod” — Proto-Mande n-dolom? — this word seems to have a solid proto-Niger-Congo background: yoloko/yeloko “bird” — Proto-Central Mandic “sëkk” or “pëkk”. In the 19th century, the Mandic word n-dolom merged with the Wolof word nful “fishing rod”, and the result was the Mandic word nful “fishing rod”. However, there is no other word from the Wolof language in which the sequence of consonants -fe could be resolved: why are there no other long vowels except -aa and -ao in position before the distinctive suffix?

1.3.3. Highly interesting are the words with stem-final gminated nasals. In (Gaillet, Danilo, 1978) there are more than seventy: ten or twelve have final -ne, more than twenty have -m, and about forty end on -pp. When before a consonant, the final nasal becomes single and homorganic to the following consonant: saugam “corrupter”, in -saugam “corrupter”. On the contrary, stems terminating in -pe are quite numerous. In almost all these words the long vowel is -ae; there are only four exceptions: bojol/N/bojolu “thatch, baulun”, konko/N/kokono “helmed duck”, kokossi/N/ kokosseni “sp. of snake”, cilen/N/cilone “waistline”. All these words have -e in the preceding syllable, and it is tempting to assume a progressive assimilation of a long -ae. However, however, words in which there is no assimilation of the vowel in similar conditions: bolagn/N/bolagn “river bank”, jeron/N/jeroune “the first instituted, head of new-initiated boys”. The great majority of words ending in -aan/-ane are fauna names. Some of them are evidently agent names formed by the suffix -aan: xul/N/xulane “repellent” from xul, xul “cane, crowd”; spek/N/xopaan “green monkey” from xopan “to treat smb. as an enemy”; patafol/N/patafane “basket of fried dishes” from paata “to fry”. One may conjecture that some other words of this group are also names of agents by origin, even if corresponding verbs in the contemporary Soninke are nonexistent or of little currency. A ready example is pirimpararim/parimparim “fast; dial.”; there is also a variant fullin/N/fullinin “bat”, which may be traced back to a Proto-Mande verb ernote “call” reflected in the Manding verb fiririri (Mandinka, Bamana, piriiri (Bamana) “to flutter” — cf. Mandinka fiririri, Bamana fiririri, fiririri, fiririri “butterfly” — in Bamana, meaning “bat” is also attested).

Other words of this group (including those with -oo) have evidently incorporated the diminutive suffix -ce (cf. yogu/-ce “man” — yepone “small man”, and sometimes dialectal variations corroborate this assumption: kunjani/kunjane (Gaillet, Danilo, 1979) kunjane (Kendall et alii, 1980: 350) — kunjane (Nara dial.). From my sources “hare, rabbit”; busam/busane — busam “haard gook”; iarlocking of diminutive suffix with names of animals and plants is a current phenomenon in the Manding languages (cf. Dumesne, 1987: 210-211B, and such examples are predominant in the Soninke nouns of this type. There is, however, a problem to be resolved: why are there no other long vowels except -aa and -ao in position before the distinctive suffix?
plural markers replace singular morphemes (for discussion on this subject cf. 1.4.2.).

An analysis of semantics of word termination on diminutivized nouns (i.e. marked with the suffix *-tv) reveals a highly interesting phonemonom: in this group, vocabulary for round and hollow objects is over-represented (about a half of all words): *utame "drum", *yuumme "thorn", *ghane "cheek", *gile "necklace", *setumme "heart (as receptacle of feelings)", *tumame "a pair of stomach of ruminants", *sanmme "head, upper part" (Proto-Mande *s-kum-ny); *sasamme "calabash with a handle" (cf. Proto-Mandingo *k-klim-ny); *yoomme "stomach", *gongonne, "round wooden barrier", *setumme "cave", *hollow of a stee", *atatome "Celia, from magaric, creeper tree" (the tree is named so because of its numerous hollows; cf. Proto-Manding *natan); *beygge "pot with holes", *scamme, *hogenge (East dial.), *konggone, *bulongge (West dial.) "entrance-hole, sitting-room" (cf. Proto-Manding *bason); *dogege "a drum", *jongoge "a stringed instrument with a resonator", *fogoge "embarrass, loop-hole" (cf. Bamana *fend "window, embrosse-ge"), *gwogege "small bill, handbell", *gelingoge "pot with a handle", *nunumme "nose" (Proto-SWM *s-nu-ge), Proto-Manding *sngu, Proto-Manding *sugn, Proto-Mandoce *s-ge-nu-ge; *kongame "neck-voice, language" (language) (Proto-SWM *s-m, Proto-Manding *s, Soso yean, etc, Proto-Mandoce *ko-s-e-nu-ge).

Words fogoge "flood-lands", *kahlogge "trap for animals", *saraoge "gutter, sewer", *fagee "river", *bongoge "lane, by-street", and apparently gongomege "ruins of a village" (e.g. *s-ge-n, cf. Proto-Manding *s-din, tongomege "corner" are probably to be classified also with this semantic group for *fogoge "flood-lands" because, as well as words for round fruits: meanemge "tomato".

Another salient semantic group is represented by words for oblong objects, usually tube-shaped; it is not rare that these objects are pointed: *hene "hoo", *jagbogge "okra", *dormemge "finger, toe", *danogoge "pythian, boa", *kongoge "a large worm, caterpillar", *bngoge "trunk, stem", *tumme "spare, dart", *bonne "arrow-head, spear-head", probably *sambumme "furont, atches", and *gongoge "kind of hoe" (from gogge "to chase").

There is a semantic affinity between the nouns and names of biting insects and spyer or sharp-clawed animals: *tumone (West dial.), *sungge (East dial.): *huye, *wajoguege "cereal, wild cat, Libyan cat" (cf. wajongine, Wamank "a semi-mythical carnivorous animal, stronger than lion", Bamana "giraffe": Mandinka *wayineeja "adult male lion"); *sungogoge "Civetta", *damme "flea", *tagomme "porcupine", *georgeme "Guinea worm" (however, in this word the element remme "child" seems to be included, cf. Bamana *naye-le, probably

sasumume "steak". One may conjecture whether such long objects as sasumune "chain", *yumme "bridle" (from Patoulle *faram), and *dumuogoge "slung" (Proto-Mande *f-dal-fox) are also to be classified with this semantic group.

It is noteworthy fact to Kisi, a Mel language, there is a gender of substantives with markers *ga, *se, *le — pl. *se, which contains several dozen nouns whose semantics are very close to the semantics of the words in question in Soninke: these are hollow, often cylindrical, long and prickly objects (Pondzianak, 1993: 169-170). Semantic coincidence concern also almost all lexemes which are considered by Konstanin Ponnanz as "unmarked by the semantic feature of the gender" in Kisi, such as: *sere "rain"; Kisi sg. *se; pl. *se, *nela "okra", soninke: *jagbogge "okra" (in fact, the okra fruit is long and pointed and can be therefore included into the "main stock" of the gender in question: Kisi sg. *de-ma-la, pl. *de-ma-la "language" — Soninke *na-nne "neck, voice, language.”

Some words in Soninke stem—final diminutivized nouns cannot be classified with the described semantic field. However, it is quite natural for languages with noun-class systems that classes contain some words with "aberrant" semantics: it is not easy for a linguist to detect features of object which were important in the culture of the people to the extent of including the word in this nominal class or another.

A question arises can the marker *-tv be added to nasal stems only? One alternative example is given by Ci, Gregoire: it is *sage-ge (as *na-ge, *na?-ge) "mouth; aperture", which is also a term for a "hollow object." It may also be assumed that some original vocative stems after adding the suffix *-tv have been reinterpreted as nasal stems. This assumption could explain why, if loan words and derivational nouns are taken away, stems with final single nasals are most often of the same semantic field as those with gminated final nasals: *gamonde "pestle", *nunamme "cat" (cf. Proto-Manding *f-jukama, or *f-jinaka), *mumme "cat", *sone "mosquito", *dagenne "thorny grass forming small balls", *sennie (West dial.) *saw, *finge, *too-nee", *dogege "fishing rod", *gangoge "hunter's bag", *sogge "ese-plant" (about some of these words see 1.3.1.

1.4. There are two plural suffixes in Soninke. All nasal stems form their plural form by adding suffix *-u. All mone/mo/mo/noun add plural marker *-ntu. Pluralisabic vocative stems add either *-u (East dial.), or *-ntu (West dial.) or *-nu (East dial.), *-nu (West dial.) In the Eastern dialects formation of the plural is relatively regular: nearly all the substantives adding vocative singular morpheme (+e, +a) are compatible with pl. *-u, and those with zero sg. morpheme add pl.
morpheme -nu. In the West, situation is more complicated. Unfortunately, in [Gatlin, Dastin, 1979] plural forms are very often not given, which seriously hampers the analysis and reduces reliability of conclusions.

Differences between both dialectal systems are serious enough and will be analyzed separately.

1.4.1. Regular sg. — pl. correspondences in the Eastern dialects are as follows:

- a - a - a - a
- a - a - a - a
- a - a - a - a
- a - a - a - a

(types -a/-a and -i/-o are rare and dubious, see 1.1.3, 1.1.4.1).

Some irregularities should be considered.

1.4.1.1. I am aware of about fifteen words of -a/-a, and more often, -a/-a types adding in plural -a and not -a/-a. Most of these words are borrowed from Arabic or presumably from Manding, others seem to be original. All these words of the -a/-a type are attested in the Western dialects as well, where they also form their plural forms with -a/-a. This group of irregular words seem to have no semantic feature which would distinguish them from regular-patterned lexemes; I think, that recognizing these words with speakers of Soninke is necessary.

1.4.1.2. According to [Gatlin, Dastin, 1979] at least two words of the -i/-o type add in plural -nu (and not -o/-o), these are tekëk/-i, pl. tekëkuna "sacrifice; oath" and toolë/-i, pl. tooloxuna "poison; venom." Kaba Jwara, however, produced regular plural forms: tuoxu "poisons" and tekëku "oaths, vows, taken before God; sacra oaths"; the latter noun, tekëk/-e, is derived from the verb tekëk "to make in oath before God" (there exists another derivative, tekëkë, pl. tekëkë "obligation taken upon oneself"); so the very existence of this irregularity is contestable.

1.4.1.3. For two words of the -a/-a type, plural forms with -a are attested in both Eastern and Western dialects: aëgul-ja, pl. aëgul "sheep and tambu/-o, pl. tambu (in Soninke-Nara also pl. tambuna) "debt" (from tambu "to demand payment of debt").

It should be noted in this connection that [Gatlin, Dastin, 1979] provides plural forms for less than 25 percent of words of this type; it is probable that the compilers of "Lexique" did not mention plural forms of the other 75 percent because they are "regular," i.e. had -a.

2.4.1.4. In the "Lexique" only one word of the -a/-a type adds the plural suffix -nu: molôl/-e "harmant". Here again, Kaba Jwara produced

for me regular forms: moli/-o, pl. -o (West. dial.) of which Kaba himself is a speaker and molôl/-o, pl. -u (East. dial.).

1.4.2. The data considered makes it clear that in the East, correlation of singular and plural forms is purely morphophonological: irregularities are fortuitous and semantically uninformative, and one may suppose their appearance by error of authors of "Lexique." In the meantime, forms listed in 1.4.1.2, if they really exist, call in question Cl. Gregoire's assumption concerning superimposition of plural markers upon singular morphemes: adding a plural marker immediately to the basic form (tekëkë + nu) seems to be more plausible than to a word with singular determinative morpheme, where postulating an intermediary stage is necessary, something like: tekëkë + nai > tekëkë + e + nai > tekëk + -nu > tekëkuna.

1.4.3. Regular singular — plural correspondences in the Western dialects are as follows:

- a - a - a - a
- a - a - a - a
- a - a - a - a
- a - a - a - a

(types -a/-a and -i/-o are rare and dubious, see 1.1.3, 1.1.4.1.3).

1.4.3.1. I have found in the "Lexique" only four words of the -a/-a type which add plural suffix -nai (and not -o/-o), fa:abul/-e, pl. fa:abani "father," "paternal uncle," kiina/-e, pl. kiinanu "husband," sau:/-e, pl. sau:sani "mother," sau:/-e, pl. su:saniu "profite, use" (the latter form is contested by Kaba Jwara who produced a regular one, pl. tu:nu, see East. dial. sg. tino, pl. tino:nu).

It is evident that all these words except for the last (whose plural form for the Western dialects provided by the "Lexique" is most probably erroneous) are kinship terms in the line of ascent. It is interesting to adduce other words which are determined in the singular by -a and add -nai in the plural; they are only two: mokki/-e or makkali/-e, pl. mokkani (East. dial. makka) "guest" and saramo:ulu/-e, pl. saramonaliu "teacher" (from Manding kàrun [n]imfiso). These again are words for persons who should be held in respect and whose status is not absolute but rather relative (one is a guest only for his host, and he is a teacher only for his pupils), just as in the kinship terms listed above.

1.4.3.4. There are about two dozen terms of the -a/-a type in the Western dialects adding plural suffix -nai. The great majority of them are borrowed from Arabic and Manding. It may be a symptom of "regularization" of correlation "plural — singular" in the Western dialects after the pattern of the Eastern dialects singular -e.
2. The analyzed data and evidence from other Mande languages allow to assume existence of the following nominal classifiers in Proto-Mande: 2.1. -d or -p — a semantically neutral singular marker which determined all nouns not marked by other denominative. The anaphoric pronoun corresponding to this marker was most probably *ni or *nu, nasal reflexion of both marker and anaphoric pronoun in the contemporary Mande languages are given in accordance with Denis Creutzens [ém]. Besides, "nominal morphemes" -d, -p in SWM, Kurnio, Vai, Lole, Misloko, Susu, and some other Mande languages also seem to be reflections of this marker.

In Soninke a reflection of this marker -e/-o tends to become a "universal" singular nominal marker, as its cognates have done in other Western Mande languages, the anaphoric pronoun has most probably resulted in the article N which can determine in the modern Soninke any noun.

The tinal article in Banama, Maninka, and some other Manding idioms might have originated from the same marker, though its relation to *-a (see 2.3.1) is also plausible.

2.2. *-a — the marker of a semantically neutral plural or plural for non-humans. It is reflected in plural markers in Banama (-j; -w in the current orthography), Karanajankan and Sagakakan (-u) [Derive, 1990, II: 41], Njighakan (-o) [Derive, 1990, II: 41], Jula-Kong (-u), interpreted by Apy Sangaré as a high-tone morpheme, always realized with a low tone (Sandare, 1984, I: 249), and Soninke (-æ,-a). One can advance a very preliminary suggestion that in SWM *-d > *-a, the "indefinite plural" marker, though the process of delabialization of the vowel needs to be explained (probably, form in the Northern Xpelle, *yã, *yã, represents an intermediary stage of this delabialization). In fact, in the Proto-SWM semantic opposition between two plural markers, -d: *-d, had shifted from the classifierificational ground ("human: non-human") to anaphoric ("definite: indefinite"). In Looma and Bandi, *-d is realized as *-a or *-a (Looma), *-ã (Bandi), depending on the presence or absence of a final nasal velar element in the preceding syllable in Proto-SWM; in Mende, where distinction between both types of suffixes (*C and*V) has vanished, *-d and *-a function as free variants of one plural suffix. In Xpelle distinction between "definite" and "indefinite" plural has not developed, and reflexes of *-a (*yu, *yã, *ã) in the North, and *-a (*yu, *yã) in the South are the only plural markers besides *-d (*see 2.6.).

2.3. It is very tempting to reconstruct for the Proto-Mande a singular marker *-o which could be put in relation to the singular human class in other Niger-Congo languages (cf. reconstruction of the Proto-Atlantic

corresponds to the plural morpheme *-ni. There are also such words of unclear origin such as kanusa "padlock, keyhole" (cf. maninka kón "door, níra "to fasten"); kollangal "soil left by a high-flood", kurusa "Hansens, sundivals", and kurusa "activities during a day" which is a noun derived from the verb kína "to spend a day".

Meanwhile, some words of this type are also kinship terms and nouns for humans of a "relative status": maman, pl. mamun "grandmother"; sanya, pl. sanun "friend, lover" (from sanu "to love, love"); tonone, pl. tononun "namesake" (derivative of toonu "name, first name"); in SWM words for age-mates also add marker -ni(t), cl. Looma bolu, bolu "friend" — bolun(g), bolun(g); kó, bo, bou "age-mate" — bou(n), bou(n), bou(n). Word dooma, pl. doonun which is translated in (Galtier, Dantoko, 1979) as "magician, animist" is also hardly fortuitous in this list: Manding data allows us to assume for this word an archaic meaning "older member of a secret society," i.e. a "social relative" of all younger members.

It is interesting to list some other words with similar semantics: kaawu, pl. kaawun "maternal uncle" (from Fulfulde kawu, bayi, pl. bayini "paternal aunty", bawu, pl. bawun "a grown-up, supervisor of newly-initiated youths", jorol, pl. jorollent "assistant of the head of newly initiated youths", and also a loan word from Manding jatigi, pl. jatigun "host"). There are no morphological irregularities in these words (they all add a zero morpheme in the singular), but their concentration in the type *-e/-o is significant.

Some other words, however, of similar semantics form their plural differently, e.g.: neegu, pl. neegun "maternal uncle"; gido, pl. gidari "older brother or sister", Taking into account the transitional status of Soninke morphology, such an indirection appears to be quite natural.

1.5. I realize that the proposed semantic analysis of morphological groups in Soninke may appear dubious or even biased. However imperfect it might be, correlation between some particular semantic features and the subsetting types of words is evident, as well as total absence in these types of words characterized by some other semantic features. For example, among the words whose stems are termininated in geminated nasals, are not to be found, say, words for humans and especially kinship terms; jaye "brave man" may be the only exception, though its nasal may be single; jaye. As for remme "child", this form with a geminated nasal is another proof in favor of my analysis: it is most often applied to non-humans — fruits, grains, animals, etc., while another derivative of the same stem, lemine, is reserved exclusively for humans (G. Herauti, personal communication).
class I in (Podruskiak, 1993: 177): *-ov.* - *-v*.

One can assume that its reflexes were generalized into a "noun article" *-ô*, *-ò*, *-ô* in Maninka, Xosa, and some other North-West-Manding languages, as well as in Marka-Dafing and some idioms of the Southern Manding periphery (Worodugunkal, etc.). The anaphoric pronoun of this class may have been reflected in anaphoric pronouns *ô* in Baman, *ô* in Maninka, Mandinka, etc.

I still have no other evidence, however, for the reconstruction of an *-ô* except the not very convincing data of the Manding languages which do not provide enough evidence for the reconstruction of semantics. The analysis in the first part of this paper gives no ground for interpretation of the Soninke singular morpheme *ô* as originally distinct from *-*.

2.4. *-ô* or *-ô*, marker for plural nouns, has been reflected in Maninka and Mandinka *ô*, Manya ñô, Jula-Wejene and other idioms of the N.-W. Cote d'Ivoire - *ô*, *-ô* (the latter — in combination with the singular marker -ô) to *ô*; in these languages it has been generalized for all nouns. In Jula-Kong *ô-ô* (both forms seem to be in free variation) compete with -ô, and it is not clear from the description available (Sangare, 1984, I: 249-250) whether there is any particular semantics specific to each of them. Most probably, it has been reflected also in the Bono-Fingu-Soola -*ô*-ô—with allomorphy *ô*-ô, *ô*-ô, *ô*-ô, *ô*-ô, *ô*-ô, *ô*-ô; a plural marker for kinship terms, names for human beings, and also for some terms for animals and a number of loan words (Le Brit, Prowse, 1981).* The Bono-Fingu case can be considered as an initial stage of generalization of meaning of the marker *ô*-ô—A. Prowse compares the meaning of this marker with "africaner" nouns" in neighboring Gur languages, where presence of loan words and some words for "important things" are also current features.

In Baman this marker was preserved only in the anaphoric pronoun *ô* - *ô*, and in vocative form Mâendi: Good people", an ordinary plural form for "people" being mâendi or mâendi (maâh, mawh, mawâh).

In SWM this Proto-Mand marker is reflected as a "definite plural marker": Louna *ôô*, Bandi *ô*, Mende *ôô*; in Loko *ôô*; in Kpelle it has vanished (probably, because of competition with an homonymic singular demonstrative pronoun, *ô*). Besides, this morpheme is preserved in the form of 3 pers. pl. pronoun which has in these languages followed basic forms: Mende *ô*, Bandi *ô*, Louna *ô*, Kpelle *ô*.

In some Manding idioms of Cote d'Ivoire and SWM generalization of meaning of this plural marker has created the possibility of its cooccurrence with morphemes ascending to markers of other noun classes: so, in Maukakan, Tenegunka, Worodugunka, etc., there exists opposition of "indefinite plural" (ôô) and "definite plural" (ôô = singular morpheme *ô* + ôô, in Jula-Kong -ôô can be also preceded or not by the definite nominal marker. In Mandinka the plural marker -ôô is obligatorily combined with the singular morpheme *ô* (makerul, but not *maka*), and in SWM, all ranges of combination of markers are to be found:

- in Mende, *ô* + *ô* + *ô* = *ô* - *ô* ("definite plural marker")

mâendi "the child" — mâendi "the children":

b) (for some words for human beings and cattle) *ô* + *ô* + *ô* + *ô* + *ô* + *ô* + *ô* + *ô* "ngelwa: mânô "woman" — ngelwâ ("women";

- in Bandi, *ô* + *ô* + *ô* + *ô* ("definite plural"): ôñô "the elephant":

- in Loko, *ô* + *ô* + *ô* = *ô* (""); in Louna, the plural for non-human:

- *ô* + *ô* + *ô* = *ô* ("horses"");

All three forms, (a), (b), and (c), seem to be in more or less free variation. Authors of [Bandi grammar, ms.] believe that both combinations (b) and (c) are contracted forms of *ôô* (c *ô* + *ô* + *ô* + *ô*), but they do not provide enough evidence for this assumption;

- in Louna, *ô* + *ô* + *ô* + *ô* = *ô*, *ô* ("the ones")

- in Loko, *ô* + *ô* + *ô* = *ô* (""); in Louna, the plural for non-human:

- *ô* + *ô* + *ô* = *ô* ("horses")

As for the Soninke plural markers -na and -ni, the situation is not clear. Semantics of -ni in the Western dialects (cf. 1.4.3.3, 1.4.3.4) can be interpreted in favor of its connection with Proto-Mande *-nû* (see 2.6.3.), while -na in the Eastern dialects, semantically less clear-cut, can be more easily interpreted as ascending to *ôô*-ô. As for the Soninke plural markers -na and -ni, the situation is not clear. Semantics of -ni in the Western dialects (cf. 1.4.3.3, 1.4.3.4) can be interpreted in favor of its connection with Proto-Mande *-nû* (see 2.6.3.), while -na in the Eastern dialects, semantically less clear-cut, can be more easily interpreted as ascending to *ôô*-ô.

2.5. *ôô*, singular marker for kinship terms in the line of ascent? Low tone of nasal prefix can be determined on the basis of Maninka data (Spears, 1972). This marker hempered adding the other singular suffixes in Soninke (which is also a nominal class marker by origin), just as in Maninka, where the post-positional tonal article is incompatible with such nouns as *ôô* "elder sibling", *ôô* "younger sibling", *ôô* "husband" (cf. this word in another meaning *ô* "man"), etc.

It also seems that it produced a similar effect in Susu, where a great majority of nouns always have a front final vowel resulting from a noun marker -ô. Except for some stems with a final -ô: Bandi "ancestor", Bandi "father (brother, sister), Bandi "younger brother, sister", Bandi "husband", Bandi "friend, husband, same age, " Bandi "friend, comrade, age-mate", Bandi "friend", Bandi "friend", "my dear".

Nominal Classification in Mende

81
time *paternal aun<, *bra< *paternal uncle,* bë< *grandfather, ancestor,* fà< *father,* mà< *mother,* nà< *husband's younger brother,* òna< *namesake,* do not add *specifying* singular *morpheme which has in this language underlying form of a front vowel (Kastenholz, 1987a: 206).

In the meantime, a tendency toward the generalization of singular marker -e in Soninke, being an element of total reshaping of the nominal system, has led to elimination of the ban on compatibility of this marker with some words of this group, such as faahal -e *father,* kinnal -e *husband,* susaal -e *mother.*

In the Pro-SWM the singular marker of kinship terms has evidently the same form as the marker of the great majority of other nouns (*the article*), i.e. *Nv.* Formal opposition between both groups of nouns in Bandi, Mende, and Loko is preserved in non-initial position within synagma, where the kinship terms in question keep their *strong* initial consonant unchanged, while other nouns change it to the *weak* alternate. Another peculiarity of the kinship terms in these languages is that they all have a low tone in their first syllable.

One can assume that both *Nv* are in fact the same morpheme by origin, probably 3 pers. sg. pronoun, which is in Proto-SWM also *N*.

As for the SWM *article* *Nv* its provenance from the 3 pers. sg. possessive pronoun seems to me hardly disputable. More problematic is the fact that the kinship terms marker. In any case, their derivation from the possessive pronoun in question might date back to different periods.8 If this proposition proves to be valid, then the singular marker of the semantic groups of kinship terms on yet another stage could be reconstructed as *Nv*-e. It is noteworthy that in other Niger-Congo languages where there exists a special nominal class for relatives (in Bambara class 1a) it usually has a zero marker.

2.6. *Nv*-e,...play or just *Nv*-e...a group plural...marker for kinship terms (probably only terms for elder kin) and humans of *relational status*; its other meaning is *plural of accompaniment.* Its reflexes have been preserved in many Mandé languages: Mende -a- *i-ra, -a-ge, Bandi -a-ge, Kpelle-South -a-ge, Kpelle-North -a- (is a safer a naslah), Jula-Wojone -a-ge, Jula-Kong -a-ge (can be optionally added by another nasal *vocalization*...ge-ge *Sandagre, 1984, 1: 251 D, Mandinka -a-gi-ge *combination of two markers like in Jula-Kong, Manya...*병 [Heydorff, 1944] or -a- [Welmers, 1974], Mano, [Gregoire, 1987: 371].

In other Northern Mandé languages reflexes of *Nv*-e...may have vanished, so that reflexes of other plural markers, *-ai* and *-A* assumed its functions, including that of *plural of accompaniment.*
The lack of good lexical correspondences weakens your argument drastically.

It is correct that in my list of 56 reconstructed Proto-SWM words with *-a* [W. Wydein, 1989: 98-100] a great majority have no correspondences in the North-Mande languages, which can be explained by the fact that in this group non-basic vocabulary predominates. Even in this list, however, at least three roots had indisputable North-Mande cognates: Proto-SWM (*-go-ko-tu/*-go-ko-tu/*-go-ko-tu*) "butter-needle", *-go-ko-tu/*-go-ko-tu/*-go-ko-tu* "ground squirrel" - Bandi gh-kulo, Mende kii-kii, ki-kii (PHSW *-gha-* "gul", "small") - Ground squirrel - Banana *-ki-kii* (minus in a diminutive suffix), Maninka *-bar*; Bandi *-go-ko* (*a red pater monkey*), Kpelle- North gh-kii "baboon" (PHSW *-กา-กา*), Maninka *-kii*, *-kii*, Maninka *-ki-kii* (PHSW *-ka-*).

Being the marker of terms for objects "members of groups" which are most often small, nasal prefix in Manding has acquired an additional meaning of diminutivity. As G. Dumestre has noted [1987: 210-211], in Banana a considerable number of words for small animals, birds, and insects necessarily have a diminutive suffix *-nii* and "minor tonal schemes"; in fact, these words also most often have a pre-nasalized initial consonant: *ne-ne-tu/ "Dena's cap"*, *ak-bii-tii* "Euplectes oryx", etc. I think that the "minor tonal schemes" are most often a result of influence of the nasal prefix's tone, though the mechanism of this influence has yet to be clarified.

The form of the diminutive suffix *-nii* in Banana and Maninka is also notable. It is evident that it ascends to *di-nii-*child", which is used as an adjective, cf. Maninka *di-nii-* "small road", *nii*-i "chocolate" - Bandi *pi-ka-* "peanut", *pi-ka-* "chocolate".

The nasal initial consonant of *-nii* should, however, be explained. In this regard, the following considerations can be noted.

The dictionaries of Ch. Bailleul and G. Dumestre attest only six adjectives in Banana with pre-nasalized initial consonants: two of them are *ne-ne-tu* "small" and *ne-ne-tu* "very small". I guess, whether their initial nasal element is a vestige of a grammatical agreement of adjectives with substantives: if the nominal classifier *W*-... in Proto-Mande a regular diminutive meaning, then these adjectives regularly added it through the agreement (something like *W*-six *-ko-ko-ko-* "a small animal"). After the noun class system had degraded, the nasal prefix became a part of the stem of these adjectives. The historical evolution of *-nii* may be analogous. This hypothesis accepted, a proto-form of a Banana word like *ne-ne-tu* might be *-ko-ko-ko-ko-ko-ko-ko-ko-ko-*...
1. do you feel your doctor is trying to help you?

2. how much did your doctor charge for the consultation?

3. what did your doctor say about your health?

4. do you feel you have been given enough information about your health?

5. do you feel your doctor listens to you?

6. how satisfied are you with the care you received?

7. do you feel your doctor spends enough time with you?

8. do you feel you have enough access to your doctor?

9. do you feel your doctor respects your preferences?

10. do you feel your doctor is approachable?
| Proto-Mande | Soninke (Mandinka) | Malinke (Dakar) | Mende | Jula-Dagomba | Lobi-Saani | Kpelle (Zedesu or Lofa) | Odi | See below | \[\text{data missing}\] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | -yg | -yg | -yg | -yg | -yg | -yg | -yg | \[\text{data missing}\] |
| 2 | -yg | -yg | -yg | -yg | -yg | -yg | -yg | \[\text{data missing}\] |
| 3 | -yg | -yg | -yg | -yg | -yg | -yg | -yg | \[\text{data missing}\] |
| 4 | -yg | -yg | -yg | -yg | -yg | -yg | -yg | \[\text{data missing}\] |
| 5 | -yg | -yg | -yg | -yg | -yg | -yg | -yg | \[\text{data missing}\] |

### NOTES

1. I am aware of a Soninke-French and French-Soninke vocabulary prepared by researchers of the Bamun Linguistic Institute in Bamako, but I have not yet had the chance to analyze its data.
2. It should be noted that the main source of data for Cl. Grégoire was also [Galtier, Danisko, 1979]
3. There are today four or five Munge clans in Gidimaxa; a member of such a family can never be "master of soil".
4. In [Kendall et al., 1980: 274], the former word has no long vowels: *sirame*, and the latter one has: *sirame*.
5. o- and u- being dually allophones of the one morpheme, their distribution is not clear and, besides, varies from one dialect to another. It seems to be depending not only on final vowel of the stem, but also on preceding vowels: so, plural marker *o*- occurs often after *o-* in the preceding syllable; all nouns with stem-final *u*- add *u-* in plural.
6. My reconstruction, with only one exception (*-o* for singular humans), is principally intra-Mande: class markers are reconstructed as distinct if this distinction is preserved or can be traced in one or more contemporary Nande languages. For this reason, I do not even pretend to arrange the reconstructed class markers in any sort of correspondence with the "classical" Proto-Bantu (which is at the same time Proto-Niger-Congo) succession.
7. According to [Baconnin, 1983] and [Derive, 1990: 183], in Jula-Wojene there are four plural markers: -yi (the most current one), -ru (mainly in the speech of old people — in free variation with -yi), -ru (with personal nouns and with some pronouns), and -ru (for kinship terms). Coexistence of -yi and -ru can probably be explained by inter-dialectal influence (elders prefer to use as more prestige forms closer to Mandinka, -ru, instead of the etymologically identical -yi); otherwise we should regard -yi and -ru in Proto-Mande as two distinct class markers and not variants of the same one.
8. In my article of 1989 I assumed that this marker was added also to personal names, which resulted in pre-nasalized initial consonants of many traditional names in Bamana. It seems, however, that this pre-nasalization is rather a result of the marker *-y* dealt with in 2.7.
9. Bandi provides some evidence in favor of my assumption [Vygdrin, 1999] on etymological relation of the marker in question with the l perse, sg. pronoun: there are five kinship terms (grandfather, grandmother, maternal uncle, paternal aunt, nephew-son of sister) which...
are frequently used in this language without the possessive pronoun of the 1 pers, see: kwalá "my grandfather", bídá "my aunt", etc. (though regular forms with the pronoun ni are also possible — ni kwalá, ni bídá [Bandi Grammar, ms. 21].

9. In Kpellean pronouns of a non-nasal allomorph -l/-l- may attach to a more or less "neutral" pronoun of the plural marker which could ascend to *-l/-l- and, by a broader semantics of -l/-l- in Kpellean than that of -ni in other SWM. There is an interesting observation concerning the Kpellean plural marker -ni: a noun keeps it even within a syntax with an adjective, and the adjective adds a "common" plural marker: pale lo ni kws-l-yu (Kpellean-North) "white kittens", while normally in Mande languages in this syntactic context, only an adjective adds the plural suffix.

10. At the same time, I cannot agree with Mukarovsky’s attempt to interpret in the same way an absence of the article -o by the nouns with a final -o in Mandinka and of the morpheme -a by the nouns ending in -q in Kpellean: in both cases, the presence of the articles is not explicit on the segmental level, but their traces are preserved in pronouns.

As for Mukarovsky’s analysis of the final nasal velar element of stem in SWM as a proto-noun class marker, it also seems to me groundless: his attempt at a semantic analysis of this "noun class" is based on a non-representative list; this last widened conclusions about the meaning of "class" could be quite different. Dwyer’s (1986) opinion about a more recent morphologization of distinction between nouns with final *-iy and *-iy in Bandi and Looma seems to me more plausible, though his illustrative data also need checking. So, according to Dwyer, in Looma there are such oppositions as gýlìí "mountain" — gýlìí "hill" (an analogous semantic difference is attested by A. Prost for Looma-Kolumba: gáíí — gáíí; 4268 "paper" — A456agí "skin". However, for my sources, both gýlìí and gýlìí have meaning "mountain, hill"; and in [Gressmann, ms.: 45] we find: gáíí "a book, paper, letter, skin, leather", A456agí "skin".

English text edited by David Smart.

REFERENCES