

Written texts

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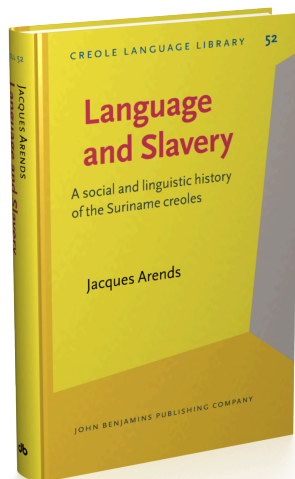
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Written texts

Some of the texts reproduced below belong to the very oldest data known for the Suriname creoles. In some cases, especially the Sranan sources discussed at the beginning of this chapter, they do not really deserve the name ‘text’, as they consist mostly of isolated words and phrases. Nevertheless, I have chosen to reproduce them here because they may shed some additional light on the earlier stages of creole formation. Unfortunately, some of the very earliest sources on Suriname do not contain any linguistically relevant information with regard to Sranan.¹ A case in point is Van Berkel’s (1695) description of Berbice and Suriname, which is especially unfortunate as Van Berkel had first-hand knowledge of the language situation on the plantations: he worked as a plantation overseer in Suriname for almost a decade (1680–1689). However, apart from one correction to Warren (1667) (see no. 1 below), he does not present any relevant language data (cf. Van Donselaar 1993).

One type of text which, unfortunately, is completely absent from this chapter are newspapers. Although weekly newspapers in Dutch, such as the *Weekelijksche Woensdaagsche Surinaamsche Courant* (1774–1805) and the *Surinaamsche Nieuwsvertelder* (1785–1793), started to appear in Suriname in the 1770s and 1780s, I have excluded them from my corpus of Early Sranan texts. The reason for that is that in all likelihood the amount of time that would have to be invested in perusing these newspapers would not be paid off by the amount of Sranan material (if any) to be found (Archie Sumter, p.c.; Michiel van Kempen, p.c). As to early newspapers in Sranan, I have found references to only two. Of the one – the *Krioro koranti: Sranan njoensoe pampira* ‘Creole magazine: Surinamese newspaper’ – only one issue appeared (in 1862; Voorhoeve & Donicie 1963: 100), which, unfortunately, I have not been able to consult. The other – the *Sranam Koranti* ‘Surinamese magazine’ – was announced to appear in 1869 but it is unclear how long it existed (if it ever did) (Van Kempen 2003: 378). In any case, no copies are known to exist.

In order to place these texts in their proper contexts, I will give some biographical information about their authors wherever such information is available. In

1. What little language data Van Berkel does present was copied from Warren (1667) (Van Donselaar 1993: 90).

doing so, I will, of course, focus on those biographical characteristics which have some linguistic relevance, such as: Was the author a native speaker or not? At what age did he² learn the language? Was he black, white, or of mixed descent? Was he born in Suriname, in Africa, or in Europe? Did he belong to a particular group, such as the Moravian or Catholic missionaries, the colonial elite, the planters' class, the military? Answers to these questions may assist use in obtaining a proper appreciation of the nature of the language presented in these texts.

The texts are presented in chronological order; they have been divided into two sections, Section 7.1 (secular texts) and Section 7.2 (religious texts). Except where noted otherwise, the transcriptions are faithful to the original, including typographical errors, inconsistent spellings, etc. Punctuation, however, has been adapted wherever that seemed necessary.

7.1 Secular texts

1. GEORGE WARREN'S IMPARTIAL DESCRIPTION (1667)

George Warren, the author of *An Impartial Description of Surinam* (1667), claims to have spent three years in Suriname (Van Donselaar 1993: 87). Since his work appeared in 1667, this must have taken place during the English period, i.e. before the colony was taken over by the Dutch in 1667. Although his work does not contain any words which are unambiguously Sranan (to the extent that we have any idea of what Sranan looked like at this early stage), there are some which should perhaps be regarded as 'pre-Sranan' in the sense that they were incorporated later – in a restructured form – in the Sranan lexicon. These are listed here:

Warren 1667	Modern Sranan ³	Meaning
yawes	yasi	framboesia (a disease)
muskeeta	maskita	mosquito
quotto	kwata	spider monkey
swanyes ⁴	swampu	swamp (source: Warren 1667)

2. It should be noted that – with the exception of Behn's and Merian's works, which contain only a very limited amount of languaga data – the entire corpus of early Sranan and Saramaccan written sources does not contain a single female-authored text.

3. Modern Sranan equivalents in this as well as in other lists below are taken from the *Woordenlijst* (3rd ed., 1995).

4. This was corrected into *swampen* by Van Berkel (1695) (Van Donselaar 1993: 90).

2. APHRA BEHN'S OROONOKO (1688)

In her novel *Oroonoko, or the royal slave* (1688), set in early plantation Suriname, Aphra Behn (1640–1689) uses a few words that may be construed as representing Early Sranan, even though they were quite widespread at the time (*cf.* their use in other English-lexicon creoles and in African American English of roughly the same period). To the extent that these words are indeed Sranan, they are the very first words in this language ever to appear in print.

Behn (1688)	Modern Sranan	Meaning
<i>backearary</i>	<i>bakra</i>	White (person)
<i>pickaninnie</i>	<i>pikin</i>	child

3. HERMANN (1689)

In the *Herbarium Hermann*, which contains a number of names for Surinamese plants, we find one Early Sranan word (for further information, see Van Donselaar 1996: 89):

Hermann (1689)	Modern Sranan	Meaning
<i>tassi</i>	<i>tasi</i>	palm species

4. MARIA SYBILLA MERIAN'S STUDIENBUCH (1699)

Maria Sibylla Merian (1647–1717) was born in Frankfurt am Main (Germany), where she was trained as an artist and became known for her water-colour painting of plants and insects. In 1685 she came to the Netherlands where she joined a religious sect, called the Labadists. In the years 1699–1700 she visited Suriname, where some Labadists had tried to set up a plantation and where she did the 'fieldwork' for her book *Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium* (1705). Unfortunately, this marvellously illustrated book on Surinamese entomology and botany does not contain any remarks concerning language.

That does not mean, however, that she did not make any linguistic observations at all during her stay in Suriname. While she was there, she made some notes concerning language in her *Studienbuch* 'book of studies', which remained unpublished for almost three hundred years (Beer 1976). On page 353 of Beer's edition, Merian writes about a particular worm which is roasted and eaten by the slaves. She then says that they call a certain beetle 'the mother of this worm'. Since, unfortunately, she does not give the Sranan equivalent of this expression, we have to rely on reconstruction. Supposing that the name of the worm was 'X', the name of the beetle might very well have been '*mama X*'. If this is correct, this would be a very early use of the word *mama* to refer to something very big, as in *mama ston* 'big rock' lit. 'mother (of) stone' and *mama alen* 'heavy shower' lit. 'mother (of) rain'. Apart from this observation, the *Studienbuch* contains a number of words, mainly relating to flora, which are relevant for the historical development of the lexicon of the Suriname creoles. Some of these are listed below (source: Beer 1976).

Merian 1699–1700	Modern Sranan	Meaning
<i>patates/batates</i>	<i>patata</i>	potato
<i>Annenaß</i>	<i>nanasi</i>	pine-apple
<i>bacove</i>	<i>bakba</i>	banana
<i>babbande/bananne</i>	<i>bana</i>	cooking banana (plantain)
<i>Calelu</i>	<i>aguma</i>	callaloo (type of vegetable)
<i>kasafa</i>	<i>kasaba</i>	cassava
<i>bumbelmus/bambelmuß</i>	<i>pompelmusu</i>	grapefruit
<i>Coyabes</i>	<i>kabisi</i>	palm cabbage
<i>Cattun</i>	<i>katun</i>	cotton
<i>Markes Jaas/Marquisjaas/Markessaas</i>	<i>markusa</i>	passion flower
<i>blantagy</i>	<i>pranasi</i>	plantation
<i>Banillie</i>	<i>baniri</i>	vanilla
<i>Suer Sack/Suersack/Zürzack/ZuurZak</i>	<i>sunsaka</i>	soursop

Some of these words, such as *Annenaß* and *Suersack*, should perhaps be seen as late-17th-century Dutch rather than early Sranan (cf. the remark made above with regard to Warren 1667). Others, however, such as *blantagy* and *Banillie*, show signs of the restructuring that later on led to their modern forms: *pranasi* and *baniri*. Although proper names have been excluded from this list, it may be interesting to note that Merian refers to Paramaribo as *barimaribo* and to a plantation called Palmeneribo as *baliminiribo*. The p~b alternation in these names and in words such as *batates* (cf. Eng. ‘potato’), *bumbelmus* (cf. Du. ‘pompelmoes’), and *blantagy* (cf. Eng. ‘plantation’; Du. ‘plantage’) may be a relic of Merian’s original Frankfurt dialect (Norval Smith, pers. comm.).

5. THE VOICE OF THE SLAVES (I) (1702–1711)

An important source for early language data is formed by court records, which occasionally contain small fragments of testimonies in Sranan. These records are especially valuable for two reasons: first, they represent *nengre tongo* ‘Blacks’ Sranan’; second, being judicial testimonies, they were presumably recorded more or less verbatim. The presence of early Sranan in this type of document was first noticed by the historian Ruud Beeldsnijder, who encountered a few Sranan sentences in the records of the *Hof van Politie en Criminele Justitie* ‘Court of Police and Criminal Justice’, dating from the 1740s (see no. 8 below). On the basis of his findings, additional data, going back as far as 1702, were collected by my student, Margot van den Berg. Even though these testimonies were recorded by white clerks, we may assume that they represent the actual spoken language more closely than the ‘European’ sources do. In her study of early Suriname court records ranging over the 1667–1767 period, Van den Berg (2000) presents some two hundred early Sranan words (types), either as part of a sentence or as isolated words, as well as some fifty sentences. Since these findings are discussed

extensively in Van den Berg (2000, to appear), I will only present a small selection here. As far as the 1702–1711 period is concerned, the data have been divided into two subsections: Section 5a (words) and Section 5.b (sentences). Since the order of presentation in this chapter is chronological, court record data from later years appear further below.

5a. WORDS (1702–1711)

Court records ⁵		Modern Sranan	Meaning
1702	<i>rokoe</i>	<i>ruku</i>	roucou (plant sp.)
1704	<i>bananes</i>	<i>bana</i>	cooking banana (plantain)
1707	<i>dat</i>	<i>dati</i>	that (dem. pronoun)
	<i>dram</i>	<i>dran</i>	dram (alcoholic beverage)
	<i>g(h)o</i>	<i>go</i>	go
	<i>jou</i>	<i>yu, i</i>	you (2sg)
	<i>lancie</i>	<i>lansri</i>	lance
	<i>malassie</i>	<i>malássi</i> ⁶	molasses
	<i>man</i>	<i>man</i>	can, be able to
	<i>mi(e)</i>	<i>mi</i>	I, me
	<i>no</i>	<i>no</i>	not
	<i>nu</i>	<i>now, noya</i>	now
	<i>tham</i>	<i>dan</i>	then
	<i>voor</i>	<i>fu</i>	of, for
	<i>wanti</i>	<i>wani</i>	want
1711	<i>mangroe</i>	<i>mangro</i>	mangrove

(source: NA 1.05.01.02, 1137 (1702); NA 1.05.04.01, 231 (1704); NA 1.05.04.01, 234 (1707); NA 1.05.04.01, 239 (1711); see also Van den Berg 2000: 97–8)

5b. SENTENCES (1707)

Apart from isolated words, the early Court Records also contain a number of sentences in Sranan, the very oldest of which date from 1707. These sentences form the very oldest textual Sranan material known until now, predating Herlein's (1718) dialogues by more than ten years. All five 1707 sentences presented here refer to a single incident, a slave uprising that took place on June 19, 1707, on a plantation named Palmeneribo, with its 148 slaves Suriname's biggest plantation at the time (the incident is discussed in detail in Dragtenstein 2004). Incidentally, this is the same plantation which set the scene for Dirk Valkenburg's well-known painting *Slavendans* 'Slave dance'. In fact, Valkenburg, who was employed both as a bookkeeper and a draughtsman at Palmeneribo, was

5. Repeated occurrences of the same word in different records have been omitted from this list.

6. The *Woordenlijst* does not contain this item; the form given here is the one found in Focke's (1855) dictionary (Van den Berg 2000: 97).

present when these events took place and even participated in them to some extent. This means that the people whose words are quoted below may in fact be represented on the painting. Although this may in itself not be a fact of enormous importance, it gains more relevance when it is realized that the voice of the black in the pre-Eman-cipation period, if it is heard at all, normally only reaches us in a complete vacuum, with no information whatsoever on who these people were and what they looked like.

Since these sentences are of special importance for the history of Sranan, it may be worthwhile to provide some context.⁷ The speakers in question are the slaves Waly and Mingo, two brothers who are referred to in the records as ‘criole-negers’, i.e. blacks born in Suriname, and belonging to the Congo ethnic group. When a new manager, Christiaan Westphaal, arrives at Palmeneribo in 1706, he is under orders to restore disiplin there and forbids both men to continue their relationships with their women on a neighboring plantation, without success. On June 18th, Westphaal and Valkenburg are in the front gallery of the planter’s house when they see Mingo mooring his canoe and passing them by without greeting. Westphaal destroys Mingo’s canoe with an axe. This brings Mingo into a frenzy in which he cries out *nu wanti dat, you no meester voor mi*.⁸ He retreats to the slave huts and threatens to commit suicide. The next day, when a group of angry slaves has gathered in front of the planter’s house, Valkenburg hits Waly, who says to his brother Mingo *jou no man*. After Mingo’s reply *mi man*, Waly says *jou go dan* and Mingo and the other slaves retreat to their huts, ‘roaring and raging’ and threatening to run away from the plantation. Apparently, they did not execute this plan and Mingo, Waly, and three others were sentenced to be burnt alive, ‘slowly’ and ‘while being pinched with red-hot tongs’, as the verdict read. Although this extremely sadistic form of punishment was meant to set an example for other would-be rebels, it clearly did not reach its goal as is amply shown by the history of rebellion and marronage in Suriname.

While the court records often present several – slightly different – versions of the Sranan sentences they contain, I only give one transcription here. A fuller discussion of these and similar data may be found in Van den Berg (2000, 2001, to appear), and in Van den Berg & Arends (2004). Since in a number of cases my transcriptions, based on photocopies of the original documents, differ from those presented by Van den Berg (2000), I only mention the original manuscripts under ‘source’; this does not mean, of course, that Van den Berg’s work was not of great help in arriving at these transcriptions. (This remark also applies to material from the court records included further below.)

7. This paragraph is based on Dragtenstein (2004) and Van den Berg (2000, 2001), which in their turn are based on consultation of the relevant archival documents. The latter represent the views of both the whites (letters by Westphaal and Valkenburg to the colonial government) and blacks (depositions by Waly, Mingo and others) involved in the dispute.

8. For translation, see below.

18/6/1707

Mingo: *nu wanti dat.*

I want it now.

you no meester voor mi.

You're not my master.

19/06/1707

Waly: *jou⁹ no man.*

You don't have the nerve.

Mingo: *mi man.*

I do.

Waly: *jou go dan.*

Go, then.

(source: NA 1.05.04.01, 234)

6. HERLEIN'S (1718) DIALOGUES

The first Sranan specimen of any substance was published by one J. D. Herlein, who included two pages of dialogue plus some isolated words and phrases in his *Beschrijvinge van de volksplantinge Zuriname* 'Description of the colony of Suriname', published in 1718 (pp. 121–122). While almost nothing is known about the identity of the author, it has been established that he stayed in Suriname for several years in the early 18th century, most likely between 1707 and 1715 (but not necessarily that whole period). This suggests that Herlein's Sranan specimen is based on his personal observation, a point in favor of its reliability. This does not necessarily mean, however, that it represents *nengre tongo* 'Blacks' Sranan, even though it is presented as such by the author, who refers to '[...] *de Spraak der Swarten, zo ze van haar op de Zurinaamsche Kust gesproken werd* [...]' 'the speech of the Blacks, as it is spoken by them along the coast of Suriname'. But even if the 'Herlein fragment' represents *bakra tongo* 'Whites' Sranan rather than *nengre tongo*, the fact remains that Herlein provides us with an extremely valuable glimpse into an otherwise obscure period in the development of Sranan. (For more information, see Arends 1995).

First dialogue

Oudy.

Hello.

Oe fasje jou tem?

How are you?

9. In my transcription I have omitted the ~-like sign which is often placed above the letter <u> in this as well as in a number of other early manuscripts. I assume this sign has no special phonetic value, as it is used not only in the Sranan but also in the Dutch portions of the text. (Perhaps it is used to distinguish <u> from <v> in writing?)

My bon.

I'm allright.

Jou bon toe?

Are you allright too?

Ay.

Yes.

My belle wel.

I'm very well.

Jou wantje sie don pinkinine?

Would you like to sit down for a little while?

Jie no draei?

Aren't you thirsty?

Ay mie wanto drinkje.

Yes, I would like to have a drink.

Grande dankje no ver mie.

No thanks, not for me.

Jo wantje smoke Pipe Tobakke?

Would you like to smoke a tobacco pipe?

Jo wantje loeke mie jary?

Would you like to see my garden?

Loeke mie Druije se hansum?

See my grapes, how beautiful they are.

Mie jary no grandebon?

Isn't my garden very nice?

Ay hantsum fo trou.

Yes, it's very pretty.

Jo wantje gaeu wakke lange mie?

Would you like to take a walk with me?

Oe plasje joe wil gaeu?

Where would you like to go?

Mie wil gaeu na Watre-zy.

I would like to go to the waterside.

Oe tem wie wil gaeu na Riba?

When will we go up the river?

Oe plesje tem.

Whenever you wish.

Second dialogue

Mie Misisi take jou oudy.

My mistress sends you her greetings.

Akesi of joe tan an house?

She asks if you will stay at home.

à Wilkom loeke joe na agter dina tem.

She would like to visit you this afternoon.

No mie ben benakese ta entre ples à reddi wen.

No, I have already asked somebody else if I could visit her.

As hem ples hem kom te maare.

If she wants, she can come tomorrow.

Oe som bady Mastre vor joe?

Who's your master?

Oe fasse nam vor joe Mastre?

What's your master's name?

Oe fasse kase joe Misisi?

What's your wife's name?

Oe plesse jo liewy?

Where do you live?

Klosse byna Forte.

Close to the fort.

Jie no love mie moore.

You don't love me anymore.

Je wantje sliepe lange mie?

Would you like to sleep with me?

No mie no wantje.

No, I wouldn't.

Jie no bon.

You're not nice.

Jie monbie toe moussie.

You're very unwilling.

Kom bosse mie wantem.

Come, kiss me then.

Some isolated words and phrases

Na tappe.

Upward.

Na bie laeu.

Downward.

Zon komotte.

The sun rises.

Zon gaeud on.

The sun sets.

Hause.

A house.

Tappe.

The roof.

Tappe windels.

Close the windows.

Ope windels.

Open the windows.

Ver wate jie no ope windels?

Why don't you open the windows?

Santje.

A thing, and everything which is rare or for which there is no name.

Kaba.

Finished.

(source: Herlein 1718: 121–122)

As noted by Van Donselaar (1996), a few other Sranan words occur in the remainder of Herlein's book. These are:

Herlein 1718	Modern Sranan	Meaning
<i>Bakkerare</i>	<i>bakra</i>	White (person)
<i>bobbe</i> ¹⁰	<i>bobi</i>	breast (female)
<i>Tom, Tom</i>	<i>tonton</i>	certain porridge

7. THE VOICE OF THE MAROONS (I) (1728/1733)

The first two sentences reproduced here are from archival documents concerning the history of marronage which are discussed in Dragtenstein (2002). Although the language used in these sentences looks like ordinary 18th-century Sranan, the information about the people who uttered them suggests that they are perhaps better seen as reflections of early Ndyuka, the Maroon creole which began to split off from Sranan in the first half of the 18th century.

*Kierie da bakara, die my mosse habie*¹¹ (1728)

Kill the white man; I have to get him

*Bakra de*¹² (1733)

There are white people over there

(source: Dragtenstein 2002: 81, 111)

8. THE VOICE OF THE SLAVES (II) (1745–1762)

All the sentences below were found by Margot van den Berg, although a few of them had been communicated to me by Ruud Beeldsnijder before. For further information, see the remarks made under 5.

hoe sambre dee (1745)

Who is there?

mi no sal tron tongo (1745)

I will keep my word (lit. I will not turn my tongue).

10. The word *bobbe* only occurs in Herlein's book as part of a compound: *bobbelap* 'lit. 'breast cloth'; a piece of cloth worn by women around the upper part of the body.

11. Said by a Maroon in the Para region when searching for a white man who had been chasing him.

12. Said by a Maroon woman in the Cottica region when discovering white soldiers.

mi da hietie joe (1745)

I'm going to hit you.

mi doe langa hem caba (1745)

I finished him off already (lit. I'm done with him already).

mi no sabi hoe ple alle santi kom oppo (1745)

I don't know where everything came from.

mi potti hem na wan sij caba (1745)

I put him aside already.

(source: NA 1.05.10.02, 798)

mekka (= meki a) tan booy (1747)

Make him stay, boy.

(source: NA 1.05.10.02, 929)

dankie dankie booy (1755)

Thanks vey much, boy.

(source: NA 1.05.04.06, 296)

*mie wisie mie daa na Tampatie, dan mie sa lerre Backaraman (xxx) fom negre*¹³
(1757)

I wish I was in Tempati,¹⁴ then I would teach the *bakras* to beat Negroes.

evie mi massa ben sendie mie go na Tampatie dan mie sa ben sorie dem Backara
(1757)

If my master would send me to Tempatie, then I would show the *bakras*.

(source: NA 1.05.10.02, 942)

na nekkie na hedi tappe en na bakkie lange na rassie (1759)

[wounds] in his neck, on his head, and on the back-side on his buttocks.

Argus mie dede (1759)

Argus, I'm dying.

hu santie tide, Picorna soetoe mi, da him, mie sie him, da no boesi neger (1759)

What's happening now? Picorna shot me, it's him, I saw him, it isn't a bush-negro.

aaij booi tide mie kiesie joe (1759)

Yes, boy, now I got you.

massara Apolo takie (xxx) van Picorna soetoe him (1759)

Master, Apollo said (???) of/from Picorna shot him.

mie habi jou tide booi (1759)

I got you now, boy.

(source: NA 1.05.10.02, 947)

dem no sa doe joe wan santie (1760)

They won't do anything to you.

(source: NA 1.05.04.06, 309)

13. This sentence, in different transcriptions, is also found in two other publications. It is transcribed as *mi winsi mi de na Tempatie dan mi sa leri bakra voe fom negrein* Dragtenstein (2002: 184), and as *mie wisie dee no Tempati dan mie so seenie Bakra voeroe fom negre* in Van den Bouwhuijsen et al. (1988: 21).

14. Tempati is the region where at that time a rebellion was taking place which contributed significantly to the expansion of the Ndyuka Maroon group.

kontrie masseranegre mi da bossiman mi no zal doe jou okri (1761)

Fellow black countrymen, I'm a bush-negro, I won't do you any harm.

tan boy of mi schoete jou (1761)

Stand still, boy, or I'll shoot you.

(source: NA 1.05.04.06, 313)

danki massara wie da ningre voor joe (1762)

Please, master, we are your slaves.

(source: NA 1.05.10.02, 806)

tanki tanki massera kom helpi mi, dem kili ningre (1762)

Please, master, come help me, they're killing slaves.

Massera mi no kan kom, somma voeloe rommotto mi, detappe (= de tappe) pasi (1762)

Master, I can't come, there are people all around me, blocking my way.

(source: NA 1.05.04.06, 315)

9. THE VOICE OF THE MAROONS (II) (1757–1759)

The next three sentences were uttered by Ndyuka Maroons in the course of their encounters with the white soldiers who were sent out to fight them. The first sentence is by a man named Boston (a.k.a. Adjaka), who had lived in Jamaica before he was brought to Suriname. Although Boston had learned the essentials of reading and writing, his writing was very difficult to decipher. The sentence is from one of the notes he wrote to communicate with his white adversaries.¹⁵ It is addressed as *To masra Dandulan ans po lambo*, only the first three words of which seem to make any sense: 'to Mr Dandiran'. Boston's Sranan bears clear traces of Jamaican Creole: *cf. to, sant, ne, litte, tabak*, instead of Sranan *fu, sendi, wan, pikien, tabaka*. As regards the other two sentences, it is not entirely clear who uttered them, either Boston or his fellow Ndyuka Jacki.

Massa peelvi¹⁶ sant ne litte tabak (1757)

Sir, please send us a little tobacco

Gimmi han vossi (1759)

Give me your hand first

Audi maati, meki jou hatti koulou nofrede (= no frede) (1759)

Hello, friend, be calm,¹⁷ don't be afraid

(source: Van den Bouwhuijsen et al. 1988: 49, 109)

15. Incidentally, Boston's note was left at the gallery of the planter's house at plantation Palmeneribo, the location of the 1707 events which led to the recording of the very first Sranan sentences, discussed under no. 5 above (Dragtenstein 2004: 233).

16. *peelvi* should probably read as *plisi fu* 'lit. please to', the usual way to express a request.

17. Lit. 'make your heart cool'. This is one of the earliest uses of the word *kouroe* 'cold, cool' to refer to the mental state of 'being calm, controlled'; *cf.* the use of the concept of 'cool' – which shows clear parallels with its use in a number of African languages – in several Caribbean English-lexicon creoles as well as in African American English.

10. THE SARAMAKA PEACE TREATY IN SRANAN (1762)¹⁸

The text presented below is the Sranan version of the Saramaka Peace Treaty, which was signed on September 19, 1762, at the junction of Sara Creek and the Suriname River, between the Saramaka Maroons on the one hand and the Dutch colonial government on the other. The text appears as an appendix to the minutes of the Court of Police, dated 27/12/1762. Together with the Sranan versions of the documents concerning the abolition of slavery (see no. 29 below), the Sranan version of the Saramaka Peace Treaty belongs to the core documents in the history of Suriname. It is for that reason that it is reproduced here in its entirety. While the Dutch text of the treaty has been accessible ever since it was published in Hartsinck (1770: 802–9), the Sranan text as it was actually read to the Saramaka¹⁹ – most of whom did not know Dutch – remained unknown until it was published by Hoogbergen and Polimé (2000).²⁰ Unfortunately, their edition is marred by a number of errors, concerning both transcription and interpretation. In collaboration with Margot van den Berg, I have prepared a new transcription, based, of course, on the same original manuscript text (see Arends & Van den Berg 2004).²¹ As pointed out by Hoogbergen and Polimé (2000: 226), the Dutch text of the treaty exists in two versions, one that does and one that does not contain the Saramaka's responses to the clauses of the treaty. The Sranan version corresponds to the former.²² My transcription of the Sranan text is accompanied by a translation into English, which – keeping in mind that the text is presented here primarily for creolists – has been kept as literal as possible, so as to enable readers who do not know Sranan to reconstruct the structure of the Sranan text from the translation.

The Sranan version of the text was written by Louis Nepveu, the leader of the colonial government's delegation to the negotiations that were held with the Saramaka in

18. The transcription that appears here is identical to that presented in Arends & Van den Berg (2004). The introductory remarks are largely based on the introduction to that article.

19. It should be noted that the text as it appears in the manuscript does not necessarily represent a verbatim representation of what was actually said at the conclusion of the treaty. This becomes most clear in clause 15, where there is no direct connection between the words of the Whites and the Saramaka's response to them (see below).

20. Note that in the heading of Hoogbergen and Polimé's article, although not in the journal's table of contents, the name of Wim Hoogbergen erroneously appears as 'Okko ten Hove'.

21. *Oud-Archief Suriname / Hof van Politie en Criminele Justitie*, code 1.05.10.02, inventory number 66, ff. 177 v° – 183 v° (appendix to the minutes of the Court of Police, 27/12/1762), National Archives, The Hague.

22. Apart from Hartsinck (1770), the Dutch version of the treaty can also be found in De Smidt (1973: 757–762), De Beet & Price (1980: 143–148), and Hoogbergen & Polimé (2000: 227–239). The latter also provide a translation into modern Dutch. An English translation of the Dutch text can be found in Price (1983b). See Hoogbergen & Polimé (2000: 226–7) for further details on the manuscripts of both the Dutch and the Sranan versions of the text.

March and April 1762. In the preamble of the treaty, Nepveu is more or less identified as such: A [Louis Nepveu, JA] *poti alle dissie santie deja na inni gi dem foe hakisi effi dem wandi holli dati alle* 'He put all this in here for them, asking if they are willing to abide by it'. While this may not be completely unambiguous as to authorship, Nepveu's own statement is. In his report of the negotiations, he notes that, in explaining the terms of the treaty to the Saramaka, he 'translated the articles of the treaty word for word into Negro-English for them' (De Beet & Price 1982: 121–2).

Louis Nepveu was a brother of Jan (or Jean) Nepveu, the author of the 'Annotations' to Herlein's 1718 book discussed below (see no. 14). Although we do not know whether Louis was born in Suriname, and if not, at what age he came to Suriname, we do know that by the time he wrote the Sranan text of the treaty in 1762 he had been living there long enough to have acquired a good knowledge of the language. He had been in Suriname at least since 1749, when he was involved in the first round of peace negotiations, and probably for quite some time before that. This is based on the fact that his brother Jan, after finishing school in Amsterdam, had come to live with his parents in Suriname in 1734 (*Encyclopedie*, p. 424). It would not be farfetched to assume that Louis followed more or less the same route.

As mentioned above, Nepveu had also been the government's spokesman in an earlier – failed – attempt to make peace with the Saramaka, in 1749. According to lieutenant Creutz's journal of that earlier expedition, among this delegation Nepveu was the one 'who was understood best by [the Saramaka]' (De Beet & Price 1982: 66). De Beet & Price (1982: 197n2) also refer to Nepveu's 'extraordinary knowledge of Sranan and his ease in communicating with the Saramaka'. It should be noted, however, that Nepveu probably spoke *bakra tongo*, the variety of Sranan spoken by the Europeans, rather than *nengre tongo*. That there may have been some problems in the communication between Maroons and whites is suggested by a document concerning the visit of Quassie van Nieuw Timotibo to the Ndyuka in 1762. According to Quassie, the Ndyuka were very pleased to have him as a representative of the colonial government because 'the whites cannot speak with us so clearly' (Dragtenstein 2004: 67). Whatever may be the case, apparently the Europeans were not sufficiently acquainted with Saramaccan to be able to negotiate in that language. As regards the Saramaka's part of the text – their responses to the clauses of the treaty – it seems clear that these are also presented in Nepveu's words (*cf.* the use of the third rather than the first pronoun) rather than being verbatim recordings of what they actually said.

In the original manuscript the text is divided into two parts: the second part (ff. 180 v°–183 v°) is formed by the actual clauses of the treaty while the first part (ff. 177 v°–179 v°) consists of the Saramaka's responses to these. In the edition presented here I have merged the two parts into one (i.e. every clause is followed by the Saramaka's response) so as to achieve a more natural, integral text. Strictly speaking, there is a third part, namely that following the last clause (no. 15). In this part of the text the actual signing of the treaty is described, including the names of the captains (village

headmen) who signed it. The only other emendations I have made in my transcription concern punctuation, including the use of ligatures, diacritics, and capitalization. The highly erratic punctuation of the original manuscript has been replaced by a more regular one, designed to enhance the overall readability of the text. Also, the occasional placement of the ~-like sign above the letter <u>, as in, e.g. *frigúittie* ‘forget’, has been omitted in the transcription. Apart from that, however, the transcription presented here is faithful to the original text. Those few cases where I am uncertain about the reading and/or the interpretation of the manuscript have been indicated by ‘(xxx)’ and ‘(???)’, respectively. Since this is not the place to go into the fascinating but highly complex historical context in which the conclusion of the treaty took place, I will only give some references to the most important literature on this topic. De Beet and Price (1982) is a collection of historical documents, preceded by an excellent summary of the events leading up to and surrounding the 1762 treaty. It also contains two maps indicating the location of several relevant spots, including the place where the treaty was signed. (An English translation of De Beet & Price 1982 has appeared as Price 1983b.) The Saramaka’s point of view, preserved in their oral history, is represented in Price (1983a, especially pp. 167–181). Dragtenstein (2002), the most extensive general history of marronage in Suriname to date, devotes an entire chapter (pp. 221–34) to the treaty. Finally, Hoogbergen & Polimé (2000) provide some useful historical information.

10a. THE TEXT OF THE TREATY

Fassie fou mekie frie nanga boussie nengre fou oppo Serameca nanga Saranam Riba. Granman langa coertoe sendie masara Louis Nepveu fou meki da fri. A poti alle dissisanti deja na inni gi dem foe hakisi dem effi dem wandi holli dati alle.

Peace Treaty (lit. ‘way of making peace’) with the Bush Negroes of the Upper Saramaka and Suriname Rivers. The Governor and the Court of Police have sent Mr Louis Nepveu to make peace.²³ He wrote all these things down for them in order to ask them if they are willing to stick to all these agreements.

1. *Alla dem boussie nengre foe oppo Sarameca nanga oppo Saranam sa habie frie nanga alla bacara foe Saranam Condre, en bacara sa friguittie alla ogrie diesie dem ben doe. Mara nembre dem moessoe doe ogrie moro na bacara, mon gessie Jou, en nanga frie Ingien, effie na dem plantasie nanga goedoe.*

All the Bush Negroes of the Upper Saramaka and the Upper Suriname (Rivers) will have peace with all the Whites of Suriname, and the Whites will forget all the bad things they²⁴ have done. However, they should never again do any bad

23. Since the word *frie* covers both the meanings of ‘peace’ and ‘treaty’, it is translated by either one, depending on the context.

24. I.e. the Saramaka (!).

things to the Whites, (???) Jews, nor to the Free Indians, nor to their plantations or their goods.

Dem peki: Dissi fri granboen; nembre no wan ogrie sa dé more fou dem langa bacra, monkisie judew langa vry Ingien diesi de boen langa bacra.

They replied: This peace is very good; never again will there be any problem between them and the Whites, (???) Jews, nor with the free Indians who live in peace with the Whites.

2. *Dem sa moesoe sorie alle dem condre na bacara, en alla dem condre fou Ingien offoe nengre diessie conpé nanga dem, effie innie wan diessie dem sabie, dem sa moesoe sorie dem toe. En dem sa moesoe mekie bakara frie nanga dem en offoe dem no wandie mekie da frie nanga bakara, dem sa moesoe helpie bakara foe goo fettie nanga dem.*

They should show all their villages to the Whites, and all the villages of the Indians or Blacks who are their allies, or any village they know, they should show them too. And they should force them to make peace with the Whites, and if they do not want to make peace with the Whites, they should help the Whites in fighting them.

Da reiti; so dem sa doe. No wan habi fou tan na baca.

They agree; they will do so. They will fully comply with this condition.

3. *Dem sa moesoe tan libie de na da plessie dem habie dem condre dissu tem, ma datem dem wandie goo liebie na wan tara plesie, dem sa moesoe sendie takie na granman en dem sa moesoe tan tee dem kiessie moffo baca of dem sa can mequi condre na tara plessie.*

They should continue to live right there where they have their villages now, but when they wish to go live at some other place, they should inform the Governor and they should not move until they have received a message back (informing them) whether they can make their village somewhere else.

Dem sa doe dati.

They will do so.

4. *Dem sa moesoe callie neem foe alla den hedieman foe dem condre en datem wan com foe dede effie foe commoto, dem sa moesoe sendie takie na granman foe à can sabie offoe à boen.*

They should mention the names of all the captains of their villages, and when one should die or step back, they should inform the Governor so he knows it is alright.

Dissi toe.

(They will do) this too.

5. *Dem sa moessoe gie bakka alla nengre diesie ben komoto of ronnewe na bacara, sensie dem nengre foe Ouwka ben com na dem nanga Willie.*²⁵ *No wan fassie dem sa kan teekie foe hollie wan nengre foe bakara diessie dem sa kissie effie diesie sa ronnowe com na dem. Sensie da tem en so té dorro té goo nembre wantem dem sa holie wan. Fiscalla sa paj dem f 50: Sur: mon – da f 42 pissie vo serem – ma effie dem kisi dem na krosi bay, na wan plandasie, dem sa kisie tien piesie per Scr*²⁶ *tee f 42, na fasie dem sa ben kisie dem farra weij, ofoe korosie bay foe fotto. En alla dem ronne wee nengre disie dem tarri backa, garan man effie couroetoe sa can doe innie sandie dem wandie nanga dem. En foe da hedde, al wassie dem nengre foe wie sa wandie foe takie datie dem ronnowe bikasie dem masara offoe bacara doe dem ogrie, dem boesie Saramaca sa moessoe gie dem bakka da tem dem com na dem han, bicassie granman nanga couroetoe nomo moessie loekoe na datie.*

They should return all the Blacks who have escaped or run away from the Whites since the Auka Maroons came to them with Willie. In no way shall they be permitted to keep a Black belonging to the Whites, whom they shall capture or who shall run away to them. From that moment until forever they shall never keep one. The treasurer shall pay them fifty guilders in Surinamese money – that is forty-two pieces of four shilling²⁷ – but if they capture them close-by, on a plantation, they shall get between ten and forty-two pieces of four shilling per slave (???), depending on whether they will have captured them far away or close to Paramaribo. And all the runaway Blacks they return, the Governor or the Court shall be permitted to do anything they like with them. And for that reason, even if our slaves may wish to say they ran away because their master or the Whites did them harm, the Bush Saramaka should return them when they come in their hands, because only the Governor and the Court should take care of that.

Dem swerie no wan negre fou bacra kom na dem sensie Willi kom taki fou dissie frie. Effi inniwan nengre kom na dem, dem no sa holli no wan nimbree; dem sa tiari dem na gran man. So aleki bakra poti da santi gi dem, a boen na dem; dem sa holi reiti.

25. *dem nengre foe Ouwka* refers to the Ndyuka (or Okanisi). While originally *Ouwka* was the name of the 'home' plantation of some of the Ndyuka, it was later used to refer to the area where they lived. Willie (or Wii) was a Saramaka, who lived among the Ndyuka at the time when peace was made with the latter (in 1760) and who suggested the Saramaka make a similar peace with the colonial government.

26. This word is only partially present on the photocopy I consulted. My provisional interpretation is that *scr* stands for *scrafu/skrafu* 'slave'.

27. One piece of four shilling was equal to one 'Carolus guilder' (Van Dyk c1765:9), which in its turn equalled two and a half Dutch guilders. For further information on the – very complex – history of Surinamese money and its relationship to Dutch currency, see Van Elmpt (2004) and *Encyclopaedie* (1914–1917:484–9).

They swear not a single Black has come to them since Willi came to talk about this peace. If any Black comes to them, they will never keep any of them; they will bring them to the Governor. The way the Whites propose it to them, it is alright with them; they will stick to it.

6. *Hoe fa dem sa wandie foe takie effie foe doe, dem no sa moesoe hollie nowan bacara nengre alwasie grandie of pikien na dem mindrie. En datem wan foe dem sa wandie datie effie wan so sandie diesie sa de foe boroko diesie frié, dan alla dem tarra wan sa moesoe gie hem na bakara han foe bakara kan doe nanga hem so allequi dem sa membre à sa boen. En effie wan heddeman na oenoe mindrie²⁸ doe wan so sandie disie dem fredie foe kiesie hem, bicasie à habie bigie teij teij, dem sa moesoe sendie takie na ga granman,²⁹ fou à kan sendie wan comando nanga soldatie foe goo fettie foe kiesie hem. En dan diesie tan hollie nanga bakara sa moesoe helpie foe kiesie dem ogrie wan foe bacara sa kan dewengie dem foe tan boen nanga bakara en fou holi diesie frie boen boen.*

Whatever they³⁰ may say or do, they should not keep any Black belonging to the Whites, whether big or small, in their midst. And when one of them should want (to do) that or anything that is bound to break this peace, then all the others should hand him over to the Whites so the Whites can do with him whatever they will think will be right. And if a captain in your midst does something like that and they are afraid to capture him because he has a powerful charm, they should inform the Governor so he can send a military command to go fight and capture him.

And then those who are friends with the Whites should help capture the evil ones so the Whites can force them to be friends with the Whites and to stick strictly to this peace.

Da reiti; so dem sa doe. Nembre wan sa habbi hatti kibri wan nengre foe bakra.

They agree; they will do so. Never shall anyone dare to hide a Black from the Whites.

7. *Effie granman of koeroetoe sendie moffo gi na dem, takie ningre ron weij effie mekie troblie na plandasia en kalie dem foe kom helpie fou kisi dem, onoe sa moesoe goo foe kiesie dem, en tiarrie dem kom nà fotto; dan dem sa kissie dem pajman.*

If the Governor or the Court sends them a message saying that Blacks ran away or caused trouble on the plantations and orders them to come help capture them,

28. Here, as in several other places in the text, the second plural pronoun is used where the third plural would be expected; this inconsistency has been preserved in the translation.

29. Probably a writing error for *na granman*.

30. I.e. runaway slaves coming to the Saramaka.

you should go capture them and bring them to Paramaribo; then they will get their payment.

Da boen; dem sa kom innitem effi dem kisi jounsou fou granman.

They agree; they will come anytime they will receive a message from the Governor.

8. *Effie fettie kom na condre foe tarra condre, bacara effoe tarra boesie nengre, innie wan effie innie plessie dem sa dé, dan onnoe Saramaca vrie man sa moesoe kom foe helpie bacara, foe Saranam Condre. En dem no sa moesoe mankerie foe sendie soo menni man nanga gon allekie grandiman nanga couroetoe sa haksie foe goo na da plessie grandman sa takie of sendie takie na dem, en fou harkie na dissie sama dissie granman sa pottie foe tirrie dem, foe helpie bacara inni fassie dem sa kan doe. Selfie effie dem bossie nengre na baka ouwka of mapana nengre disie frie arrede nanga bacara sa wandie foe mekie trobie offoe doe bacara ogrie, dan dem sa mossoe hilpie bacara foe goo fettie nanga dem en foe kissie dem effie foe mekie dem tan boen nanga bakara en holi da frie reijtie nomo.*

If the colony should get in a war with another nation, whether they are Whites or other Maroons, whoever or wherever they may be, then you Saramaka Free Blacks should come help the Whites, for the sake of Suriname. And they should not fail to send as many armed men as the Governor and the Court will ask to the place the Governor will (have somebody) tell them, and to obey the person the Governor will appoint to lead them, to help the Whites any way they can. Even if the Bush Negroes behind Auka or the Mapana Blacks,³¹ who already made peace with the Whites, should wish to make trouble or do bad things to the Whites, then they should help the Whites to go fight them and capture them, or to make them become friends with the Whites and stick strictly to the peace.

Dissi toe, a boen; dem sa doe.

(They agree with) this too; they will do so.

9. *Datem wan sandie sa fadom na dem mindrie datie dem sa moesoe sendie foe granman sabie, dan dem sa kan sendie vyffie of sieksie voe dem en da tem dem com na fotto dem sa moessoe go rettie na granman en dem no sa kan goo wan plessie effoe granman sa moessoe sabie. En datem sama foe onnoe sa tiarie ronnewe nengre of sama dissie dem sa kissie kom na fotto, dan dem sa kissi dem monie josno, en dem sa mossoe loekoe dem jamjam serefie sondro bacara sa hoe foe foe gie dem.*

When anything should occur among them that they should report so the Governor will know, then they will be permitted to send five or six of them, and when they arrive in Paramaribo they should go to the Governor immediately and they will

31. *Mapana nengre* is how the Saramaka referred to the Ndyuka, who lived along the Mapana Creek for some time (De Beet & Price 1982:202n7).

not be permitted to go anywhere unless the Governor knows. And when your people will bring runaway Blacks or (other) people they captured to Paramaribo, then they should collect their money right-away, and they will have to take care of their food themselves without the Whites having to give them any.

Disie toe.

(They agree to) this too.

10. *Dem sa kan kom alla jarrie 50 foe onnoe na Saramaka riba, thee na wannica criqui, effie na arwaticabo, effie na Saranam riba, thee na victoria, foe tiarrie alla sandie dissie dem sa habie foe serrie, allekie hamaka, katoen, hoedoe, fouwloe, coeriara, effoe innie sandie. Marra effoe dem sa wandie tiarrie dem sandie goo na fotto foe serrie, dan dem no sa kan sendie moro na tien sama. En soo allekie dem sa kom na fotto nanga dem sannie dissie dem sa wandie serie, dan dem sa mossoe mekie granman sabie bifossie, en datem dem sa dé na fotto, dan dem no sa moessoe wakka na sabatem passa aytie jourroe na passie foe somtem dem no sa kissie trobie nanga bacara, dissie sa membre dem na slaaf. Dem no sa waka na passie nanga gon, houwroe offoe langa neffie.*

Every year fifty of you will be permitted to come to the Saramaka River, as far as Wanica Creek, or to Arwaticabo Creek, or to the Suriname River, as far as Victoria, to bring everything they will have to sell, such as hammocks, cotton, wood, fowl, dug-out canoes, or anything (else). But if they should wish to bring their things to Paramaribo in order to sell them, then they will not be permitted to send more than ten people. And when they will come to Paramaribo with the things they wish to sell, then they should inform the Governor in advance, and once they are in Paramaribo they will not be permitted to be out after eight o'clock at night, so that they will not perhaps get in trouble with Whites who may think they are slaves. They will not be permitted to go out with guns, machetes or knives.

A boen toe, mara dem no sa waka toemoessi na Saramaka sei. Dem hakisi fou wakka na sabatem, granman langa Courtoe plesi fou gidem wan marki fou weri.

This is alright too; they will not come to the Saramaka River area very often, though. They request the Governor and the Court to give them a sign they can wear when they are out (in Paramaribo) at night.

11. *Dem sa moessoe loekoe boen dem no gie astrantie moffo of doe wan ogrie na bacara. Dem sa moessoe hollie dem serefie allekie dem frieman diesie wie mekie na wie mien-drie. Somtem effoe dem kom foe kissie kwarrie nanga wan bacara effoe bacara kom foe doe dem ogrie dem sa moessoe goo takie gie granman en datem a sa fendie datie dissie sama sa habie rettie, a sa mekie a sa kiesie hem rettie. En onnoe sa moessoe doe so sreffie na onnoe ondro: dissie sa kom foe doe ogrie, onnoe sa moessoe fom hem, en serrefie killie hem, effoe da ogrie bigie, effoe gie hem abra na bacara. Moro nosso effoe wan foe dem doe of wandi doe wan sandie fou broko dissie frie effie wan*

foe dem doe ogrie na bacara, bakara sa kan kissie dem en straffe dem so allekie dem doe tarra friman.

They should take good care not to be impudent or to do any bad things to the Whites. They should behave like the Blacks among ourselves to whom we gave their freedom.³² Should they perhaps get into a quarrel with a White or should a White do them any harm, they should inform the Governor, and when he feels this person is right, he shall make sure justice will be done. And you should do likewise among yourselves: who shall do bad things, you should beat him, and even kill him, if it is a big evil, or hand him over to the Whites. Especially if one of them does or wishes to do something to break this peace or if one of them does bad things to the Whites, the Whites will be permitted to capture them and punish them just like they do with other Free Blacks.

Dissi boen; dem sa doe dati toe.

This is alright; they will do that too.

12. *Nembre dem sa moessoe mekie wan conpé nanga no wan samma, no langa mapana of ouwca frieman toe, foe doe innie bacara ogrie effoe foe helpie dem na innie wan fasie, foe mekkie wan ogrie na bacara.*

Never should they become allies with anybody, not with the Mapana Maroons or Auka Maroons, to do bad things to any White or to help them in any way to do bad things to the Whites.

Nembre dem sa doe so sandi.

Never will they do such a thing.

13. *Foe mekie dissie frie tranga, onnoe sa kissie dem sandie dissie pottie na briffie disie mi habie hija na mie. Marra na onnoe sey onnoe sa moessoe gie – foe bacara sa kan bliebie onnoe toe – fo pikien foe onnoe. En dem fo pikien sa moessoe de pikien foe dem heddeman, en datem onnoe de foe takie sweerie, onnoe sa moessoe swerrie toe takie dem pikin dissie onnoe pottie na wie han, dem na reijtie piekien foe heddeman. Soo allekie oenoe sa gie dem nem dissie wie sa moessoe sabie, so foe tata langa mama. En alla heddeman dissie no sa ben kan kom foe swerie disie frie, moessoe sendie samma foe dem. Dem pottie da swerrie na dem han foe dem sama dissie dem sendie sa moessoe swerrie da frie foe dem. Onnoe sa moessoe swerrie toe dattie onnoe no habie no wan condre morro allekie disie onnoe kallie nem foe dem arrede gie na wie bacara. En alla dem disie no wandie foe mekie frie nanga bacara, onnoe no sa kibirie dem. Onnoe sa moesoe fettie foe mekie dem frie en offoe onnoe kissie dem na fettie, onnoe sa kan serie dem na bacara.*

32. I.e. the manumitted slaves or 'Free Blacks'.

In order to make this peace strong, you will receive the things that were put in the letter I have here with me.³³ But from your side you will have to give four of your children, so the Whites shall be able to trust you too. And these four children should be captains' children, and when you will take your oath, you should also swear that the children you will hand over to us are really the children of captains. Similarly, you should give their names, which we must know, both of their father and their mother. And all the captains who will not be able to come to take their oath on this peace, should send somebody in their place. They (should) hand over their oath to them so the people they will send will take their oath on the peace for them. You should swear also that you do not have any other villages than those whose names you have already mentioned to us Whites. And all those who do not wish to make peace with the Whites, you should not harbour them. You should force them to accept the peace and if you capture them in battle, you will be permitted to sell them to the Whites.

Dem gi 4 sama foe dem solanga dem hediman pikin no kom langa dem. Datem dem kom teki dem tara presenti goedoe, dem sa gie pikien foe heddeman, foe teki dem 4 diesi demgi baka.

They will give four of their people (as hostages) until the captains' children will have arrived there. When they will come to collect the other gifts, they will hand over the captains' children and they will take these four back.

14. *Dem presentie disie sa libie foe gie onoe jette; onnoe sa moessoe kom foe teekie dem na Victoria disie den kalie Monima.*

The presents that are still waiting to be given to you,³⁴ you should come collect them at Victoria, called Monima by them.

Dem sa kom teki dem santi na Monima, mara effi granman langa coertoe plessi fou mekki a go pikien moro na oppo, da granboen.

They will collect the goods at Monima, but it would be very good if the Governor and the Court would have it brought a little more upstream.

15. *Dem nengre dissi ben helpie foe killie dem bacara disie ben com foe mekie da fossie frie – Picolet nanga dem toe tarawan – dem sa moessoe gie dem na granman nanga couroutoe abara. En effoe onnoe no kan doe dattie, dan onnoe sa moessoe hollie dem allekie katibo na onnoe mindrie. En dem no sa moessoe kom nembre na wan plandassie offoe na fotto.*

33. This refers to the 'gifts' (from the colonial perspective) or 'retributions' (from the Saramaka perspective) to be delivered to the Saramaka as part of the agreement.

34. These had to be shipped from the Netherlands.

Those Blacks who helped killing the Whites who came to make the first peace – Picolet and the other two³⁵ – they should hand them over to the Governor and the Court. And if you cannot do that, then you should keep them as slaves in your midst. And they should never come to any plantation nor to Paramaribo.

*Poudroe of kruiti betere fou dem bikassi kondre de na dem bakka jetti disi dem no sabi.*³⁶ *Dem wandi fou hondi langa fou soutou gi dedi sama fou dem, no fou doe wan ogri, ma fou holi dissu fri quetti.*

Gun powder or gun shot is better for them because there are still places in the interior they are not familiar with. They want to hunt and to fire in honor of their dead,³⁷ not to do bad things, but to truly keep the peace.

*Da so dem Saramaka Ningre teki da fri na fesi fou masara Dorich langa sergeant Ritter.*³⁸ *Masara Nepveu lesi gi dem. Alle taki, da reiti so; dem wan sweri da fri. Dem hediman selfi effi di samma dem sendi nem foe dem:*³⁹ *Darie, hedeman voe alla; Abini, waca na hem baca; Coffij; Tanie, com na hem plesi; Lamotte; Jebooy, com na hem plesie; Aloetoe; Abram; Quamina, na hem plesi; Ettia (xxx); Kwakoe; Prima; Acapo na hem plesie. Maconde, foe Toefinga; Mafoengoe na hem plessie; Cabriatie & Attama selfi; Jantie Acourie; Monima; Pianga na hem plessie; Moesinga; Jantie na hem plessie. Dem alla sweri gado langa gron na dem reiti fassie taki da so dem sa holi da fri, en dem sa mekki ibriwan holi so alleki wi ben poti, dede na libi.*

This is how the Saramaka accepted the peace in the presence of Mr Dörig and Sergeant Van Rillerts. Mr Nepveu read it to them. They all said it was good this way; they wanted to take an oath on the peace. The captains themselves or the people they sent in their names: Dabí, the paramount chief; Abini, his successor; Kofi, represented by Tani; Lamotte, represented by Jebooy; Alutu; Abram, represented by Quamina; Êtja (also known as) Kwaku; Primo, represented by Akapo.

35. This refers to an event that took place during the first attempt at peace, in 1749, when three members of the colonial delegation were killed.

36. The fact that there does not seem to be any connection between this reply on the part of the Saramaka and the text of clause 15 is clarified by the Dutch text of the treaty, which contains a *Nota Bene*, saying that at this point the Whites tried to talk the Maroons into accepting an alternative gift instead of gun powder.

37. This is a well-known custom among the Saramaka.

38. These two military men are referred to in other documents as 'Dörig' and 'Van Rillerts'.

39. Since at this time the colonial government was not yet very well aware of the political organization of the Saramaka (De Beet & Price 1982: 204n3), some inconsistencies may be present in this list. In my translation I have transcribed the names as they are known from other historical sources. Additional information on the captains and their villages is given by De Beet & Price (1982: 29, 200–201, notes 2 and 3).

Makonde, of the Tufingas, represented by Afungu; Kabriati and Antamá (who were present) themselves; Jantie Akuri,⁴⁰ represented by Monima and Pianga; Musinga, represented by Jantie. They all took an oath to God and to the land, entirely according to their custom,⁴¹ saying that this is how they will stick to the peace, and they will make everybody do so just like we wrote it down, until they die.

(source: NA 1.05.10.02, 66)

11. THE VOICE OF THE MAROONS (III) (1762)

Although, as mentioned earlier, the ‘true’ voice of the Saramaka is not heard in the text of the treaty, a few quotations can be found in archival documents where they do express their view on certain issues regarding the treaty. The first quotation below is from the diary of Louis Nepveu, who, in the preparations for the negotiations with the Saramaka, had an encounter with the Ndyuka Granman Arabie (who had made peace with the Whites a few years earlier). In Nepveu’s presence, Arabie made the following disparaging remark about the Whites to his fellow Maroon Joelie:

Caba Joelie bakra membre dem gran sandie (1762)

But, Joeline: Whites think they are very important (source: De Beet & Price 1982: 130)

After the treaty had been signed, a group of soldiers who were on their way to Saramaka encountered ‘an old Negro who ..., shaking my hand, said...’:

odie massara jou cossie mie, mie cossie jou bakka, dat soo da vrie wakka (1762)

Goodday, sir. If you are courteous to me, I am courteous to you, that’s how this treaty works (source: De Beet and Price 1982: 154)

In contrast to the translation given by De Beet and Price (1982: 205n4), the word *kosi* is translated here as ‘to be courteous’ rather than ‘to curse’. As is clear from the quotation given above, the latter is completely at odds with the context in which this utterance takes place. There are two homonyms *kosi* in Sranan: one from English ‘curse’, the other from English ‘courtesy’ (cf. Focke 1855, s.v. *kósi*).

12. THE VOICE OF THE SLAVES (III) (1763–1767)

Here are some more examples of slaves’ speech, gleaned from the court records:

joe saa libe mistre worke, goo selle joe voule, joe noe sa go (1763)

you shall abandon your masonry work; go sell your poultry; you shall go now

(source: NA 1.05.10.02, 808)

40. The treaty also involved a small number of Akurio Indians, who lived among the Matawai Maroons (De Beet & Price 1982: 206n16).

41. For an interesting discussion of these ‘customs’, see Bilby (1997).

Grand Gado soli wi, date wi no doe bon, maar mi no sabi, Massingo sabi, Mattuari negre doe ougrie, mi no sabi Grand Gado(1766)

the Great Lord showed us that we did not do the right things; but I don't know; Massingo knows; the Matawai Negroes did evil things; I don't know the Great Lord

(source: NA 1.05.04.06, 330)

Jou Captein Dorig mama p---(1766)

Captain Dörig, fuck you!⁴²

(source: NA 1.05.04.06, 331)

Aja, mie sabie jou(1767)

Yes, I know you

(source: NA 1.05.10.02, 813)

13. VAN DYK (c1765)

The sections reproduced below are taken from a language primer-*cum*-‘country guide’, containing word lists, some idioms, twelve dialogues and a sixty-five page ‘reading drama’ – a play meant to be read rather than performed – about life on a coffee plantation. It is the oldest substantial text in any Suriname creole (112 octavo pages), pre-dating Schumann’s (1778) Saramaccan dictionary by more than a decade. Although the work itself is undated, it has been established that it must have been published in 1769 at the latest, since a book notice about it appeared that year (Van Trier-Guicherit 1991: 33).⁴³ This suggests that the book was published during one of the years preceding 1769. Based on this and a number of other considerations, the book was provisionally dated at c1765 (Arends 1995). This does not exclude, however, that it may have appeared a little earlier. One – admittedly slight – indication in that direction may be found in the fact that in the book, including the section on money (p. 9), no reference whatsoever is made to the so-called ‘card money’ (made out of playing cards), introduced to compensate for the chronic lack of cash in 1760. Whether this is relevant or not, a pre-1765 dating would be in accordance with the generally archaic character of Van Dyk’s Sranan (*cf.* Arends 1995 for further discussion).

42. *p---* stand for *pima* ‘cunt’; the phrase *yu mama pima* is reminiscent of the ritual insults containing sexual references to the opponent’s mother, which are still used today in the African American verbal contest known as ‘sounding’ or ‘playing the dozens’ (e.g. Abrahams 1970[1963]; Labov 1972).

43. This book notice reads as follows: ‘If the language, which we cannot judge, is represented adequately, this little work may serve to acquaint those who are in need of it rapidly with some words and idioms: however, the language appears to be an irregular hodge podge of several languages, which kind of language should be learned above all by practice. The author of this Instruction has complemented his brief colloquial dialogues with a lengthy dialogue, in which *The life and business of a Surinamese plantation manager with the slaves on a coffee plantation* is sketched: it is to be hoped he chose the very worst and that there are not many who resemble such a manager’. The latter remark is an allusion to the extremely cruel behavior of the manager in the *Life and business* part of Van Dyk’s book.

Although no biographical information on the author is available (Van Trier-Guicherit 1991), I have found the name Van Dyk to occur in Suriname as early as 1712: Hartsinck (1770: 709) mentions one Jan van Dyk as the owner of a plantation called *Dykveld*. Also, until today there is a Saramaka clan named *Fandaaki* (< Van Dyk). If Pieter van Dyk was a descendant of Jan van Dyk, this would lend further support to the idea, based primarily on the authentic quality of his Sranan, that he may very well have been a native speaker (for further discussion, see Arends 1995; for a discussion of the play from a literary point of view, see Laffrado 2001).

13a. THE BURIAL SCENE FROM VAN DYK'S READING DRAMA

The scene reproduced below, the final one of the play, describes the burial of a female slave. As is the case with other parts of the play, this section contains several accurately described features of plantation culture. Both the custom of covering the coffin with a cloth when it is lowered into the grave and the breaking of the deceased's plates and calabashes are confirmed by the description of these practices given by Hartsinck (1770: 911–912). Also, the custom of making cuts in the cloth is still found in the Suriname interior today (Lichtveld & Voorhoeve 1980: 246). The fact that Van Dyk was so knowledgeable about plantation life adds to his reliability as a source of authentic 18th-century Sranan.

Zwarte Officier. *Hoe ply oenne de da tem fo go beri potti klossi na kissi fo didde zomma den zomma wan zi da didde homan a moes kom hessi wi zey go tappe da kissi da tem da tem.*

Black overseer. What's keeping you? It's time to bury the dead. Put the cloth on the coffin. Whoever wants to see the deceased woman must come quickly. We'll close the coffin. It's time, it's time.

Anna. *a jusi konetti ziza wakke bon takki alle zomma odi myki joe wakke hessi na passe korbuy mi nem ziki gado za helpi joe.*

Anna. Farewell, goodnight sister. Get home safely and say hello to everyone. Have a quick journey. Farewell, my 'namesake god'⁴⁴ will help you.

Zwarte Officier. *Tappe kissi myki wi go mastra negere oenno zikkesi zomma ope da homen hoe ply den human lange negere alle oenno wakke na hippi kry man moe wakke na fessi oenno no vergiti wan zanti kongo kongo.*

Black overseer. Close the coffin. Let's go, master slaves. The six of you lift up the woman. Where are the women and the men? All of you walk closely together. The 'wailers' must walk in the front. Don't you forget a thing. Come, come, let's go.

44. A *nem ziki* (Modern Sranan *nen seki*; Saramaccan *neseki*) is that part of one's soul which leaves the body after death and, after the burial, serves as the 'supernatural genitor' in the conception of new children. The death of a person with whom one shares a *nen seki* places a person in grave danger until the 'second funeral' (Price 1990: 309–10).

- Zangers. *Da zo wi jarri didde zomma go mi jan do, wi zarri fo joe alle da joe go lassi zo, na tra moen wi za troy watere moffe gi joe joe no dry trokke man lassi ô! mi jan do za alle tem.*
- Singers. This is how we carry our dead away. I rejoice.⁴⁵ We're all sad because of you, that you died just like that. In a month we'll disperse saliva over you, so you won't be thirsty. Our *trokiman*⁴⁶ has died, oh! I rejoice, etcetera.
- Zwarte Officier. *Potti na gron gimi klossi doe aber kissi kotti da klossi lange neffi krassi abere potti na ini gron potti dotti bon na tappe kaba kaba a bon zo.*
- Black overseer. Put it on the ground, give me the cloth and put it over the coffin. Make diagonal cuts in the cloth with your knives. Put it into the ground and put some earth on top of it. Stop it, stop it, it's enough.
- Zillifa. *Bassia wi no zy gi jam jam lange drinki na den didde zomma disi wi ben beri fo wikki passa alredi.*
- Zillifa. Overseer, shouldn't we give food and drink to the deceased whom we buried over four months ago?
- Zwarte Officier. *Ai wi za doe wan trom hoe ply jam jam lange drinki pletti lange kallebassi fo didde zomma.*
- Black overseer. Yes, we'll do it right away. Where are the plates with food and the calabashes with drink for the dead?
- Zillifa. *Bassia a de alle zanti.*
- Zillifa. It's all here, overseer.
- Zwarte Officier. *a Bon oenno go ziddom na tappe da didde zomma jam drinki billi foele pree toe troy piekien onno locke hoe fa mi doe ziza jam jam de drinki toe a bossi mi hatti lobbi a bossi fo alle zomma takki Diki odi lange Koridon lange Januari konetti konetti mi hatti lobbi konetti fo alle mastra negere wakke bon onno broke pletti lange kallebassi na hondere pisi kaba kaba mastra negere a noefe zo da tem fo trom go na hosse bakke.*
- Black overseer. Very well. Sit down on top of the dead. Eat and drink your fill and rejoice. Throw some on the grave. See how I do it. Sister, here's food and drink too. Cheers, sweetheart. Cheers to everybody. Say hello to Diki and to Koridon and to Januari.⁴⁷ Goodnight, goodnight, sweetheart, goodnight to all fellow slaves, get home safely. Break the plates and the calabashes into a hundred pieces. Stop, stop, fellow slaves, it's enough. It's time to go back home.
- (source: Van Dyk c1765: 110–2)

45. The 'rejoicing' (*jando* lit. 'have fun') refers to the custom of singing and dancing with the coffin (Lichtveld & Voorhoeve 1980: 246).

46. A *trokiman* is the lead-singer in Surinamese call-and-response singing.

47. These are slaves who had died earlier in the play (as a result of the manager's cruelty).

13b. DIALOGUE NO. 2 FROM VAN DYK'S LANGUAGE PRIMER

As noted above, Van Dyk's booklet contains a dozen dialogues, which are meant to instruct the reader in culturally appropriate conversation in Sranan. I have selected dialogue no. 2 since this allows a comparison with one of the dialogues included in Weygandt (1798). Although the latter claims complete originality for his Sranan primer, an earlier study of the two works has shown this claim to be false (Arends 1995). This can be seen, for example, from a comparison of Van Dyk's dialogue no. 2 with Weygandt's dialogue no. 1 (see no. 20). Although in the original every sentence starts on a new line, I have grouped together sentences which seem to form one unit, either because they constitute one conversational turn or one because they are presented as alternative ways of saying the same thing. For the reader's convenience I have added abbreviations to indicate who is the speaker in the different passages (M = master; S = slave; V = visitor)

- S: *Myn Heer wan zomma hakkeze na joe. Wan man de na dore. Wan zomma kom fo takki lange joe.*
Sir, somebody's asking for you. There's a man at the door. Somebody came to see you.
- M: *Hoe man dat joe zabi hem. Hoe neffi hem.*
Who is it, do you know him? What's his name?
- S: *Mino zabbi. Mino zi hem wantem.*
I don't know. I never saw him before.
- M: *Hoe klossi a weri.*
What kind of clothes does he wear?
- S: *Riddi jakti.*
A red coat.
- M: *Joe takki hem mide na Hosse. Joe myke a kom na ine hosse.*
Did you tell him I'm home? Did you let him in?
- S: *Ai de na fessi hosse.*
Yes, he's in the front-room.
- M: *Tak hem a watti pikien. Mi za go takki lange hem. Mi za zie hoe zomma dati.*
Tell him to wait a moment. I'll talk to him. I'll see who it is.
- M: *Ki da joe myn heer. Mi bleytie foe troe. Hoe fa santi wakki lange joe.*
Oh, it's you, Sir. I'm very pleased. How's your business?
- V: *Zanti fo mi wakki bon.*
My business is fine.
- S: *Zomma de kom. Dri zomma hakkesi na joe.*
Some people are coming. Three gentlemen are asking for you.
- M: *a Hatti mi. Mi ben hangeri fo takke lange joe.*
I'm sorry. I would have liked to talk to you.
- V: *Wi za doe na wan tarre tem. Te betere tem de kom. Hoe tem mi za kom bakke.*
We'll do that another time. When there's a better opportunity. When shall I come back?

- M: *Da tem joe wandi. Na bakke dinatim joe gona dore.*
Whenever you like. Will you go out in the afternoon?
- V: *Ai mi za go na fyfi ure mi za kom na hosse bakke.*
Yes, I will, but I'll be back at five.
- M: *Offe joe kom mi za tan watti joe.*
If you come, I'll be waiting for you.
- V: *Da bon tanna den zomma disi de na joe zey. Joe doe te moesi worki na mi.*
Very well, stay with your company. You needn't bother.
- M: *Mi zi go na dore moffe lange joe. Locke bon voete no missi.*
I'll see you to the door. Watch out so you don't fall. (source: Van Dyk c1765:24–26)

14. FERMIN (1769)

Philip Fermin (1730–1813) worked as a medical doctor in Suriname from 1754 until 1762 (*Encyclopaedie* 1914–1917: 296; Van Kempen 2003: 238). In one of his books about Suriname (all of which were written in French), he presents a few sentences and some isolated words in Sranan. Fermin was born in the southern town of Maastricht, where French was a much used language at the time. Influence of French spelling conventions appears from his use of <ou> for /u/ in *hou*, although he uses Dutch-influenced <oe> in *goede*. (The same phenomenon is found in the spelling of Sranan used by two other French-oriented authors, Prince Roland Bonaparte and L. C. van Panhuys, Esq.; see Chapter 7.)

audi massera, hou fassi you tan, welkom na dissi ccontri
Hello, Sir, how are you? Welcome to this country.

goede Godi

good God!

Give mi da hedi

Give me my hat.

Forki

Fork

Pleti

Plate

Bredi

Bread

Boy

Boy

(source: Fermin 1769, Pt 1:20, 22)

15. NEPVEU (1770)

In his voluminous 'Annotations' to Herlein's 1718 book, Jan (or Jean) Nepveu (1719–1779) included a number of observations on Sranan, some of which are meant as corrections of what he perceived to be errors in Herlein's dialogues while also including a fair number of additional words, phrases, and short sentences. Jan Nepveu, a brother of Louis (the author of the Sranan version of the Saramaka Peace Treaty; see no. 10

above) was a son of Huguenot parents; he was born in Amsterdam and moved to live with his parents in Suriname in 1734. Gradually he moved up through the colonial government's hierarchy, ultimately fulfilling the post of Governor from 1770 until 1779. The text was written during a stay in the Netherlands between 1763 and 1765, while revisions and additions were added later. The manuscript of the 'Annotations' exists in several versions, all dating from between 1765 and 1770; I have used the fair copy from 1770, stored in the Municipal Archives of Amsterdam. For more information, see Arends (1995b).

15a. NEPVEU'S CORRECTIONS TO HERLEIN 1718 (1770)

As to Nepveu's corrections to Herlein's Sranan specimen, it should be noted that by the time he made these some 50 years had elapsed since the publication of Herlein's book. Even though this is a fairly short period, the language may have undergone significant changes, especially as it was still in its initial stages of development at that time. Since Nepveu's corrections to Herlein's Sranan specimen have been reproduced in their entirety elsewhere (Arends & Perl 1995; see also Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975), I have only included the most important ones here.⁴⁸

Herlein (1718)	Nepveu (1770)
<i>tem</i> (V)	<i>tan</i> (V)
<i>my bon</i>	<i>mi de boen</i>
<i>my belle wel</i>	<i>mi de bellewel</i> ⁴⁸ or: <i>mi de boen</i>
<i>mie jarij no grande bon?</i>	<i>mi jarie no mooij?</i>
<i>Oe plesje tem</i>	<i>da tem jou plessie.</i>
<i>Akesi of joe tan an house?</i>	<i>ahakisi effi missie sa tan na Hosso</i>
<i>à Wilkom loeke joe...</i>	<i>a sa kom loeke jou...</i>
<i>No mie ben benakese ta entre ples à</i>	<i>no mi sendi hakisi, na tara plessi a</i>
<i>reddi wen</i>	<i>reddi</i> or: <i>no mi de go na doro</i>
<i>as</i>	<i>effi</i>
<i>na bileau</i>	<i>na grom</i>
<i>tappe windels</i>	<i>tappe fenstre</i> or: <i>oppo fenstre.</i>

15b. NEPVEU'S ADDITIONS TO HERLEIN 1718 (1770)

As to the additional Sranan material presented by Nepveu, I have omitted those sentences and phrases that are structurally (more or less) identical to others included in his manuscript; for a complete list, see Arends & Perl (1995).

48. Although Nepveu correctly adds that '*bellewel* is more English; now, many English words have been replaced by Dutch words', it should be realized that the alternative – *boen* – is derived from Portuguese, not Dutch.

da troe?
 is it true?
da no so
 that is not so
a taki leij
 s/he is telling lies⁴⁹
da wan boen soma
 it is a good person
a leij for troe
 s/he is truly lying
da wan biggi leij
 that is a big lie
a sabi leij
 s/he knows how to lie
a hansom for troe
 it is very pretty
aben (= a ben) hansom
 s/he was pretty
a nomooij (= no mooij) moro
 s/he is not pretty anymore
mino (= mi no) wanti joe
 I do not want you
a go boen of belwel
 I am fine, or: (I am) very well
a takoeroe
 s/he is ugly
mi ben lobi him
 I loved him/her
mino (= mi no) sal lobi him moro
 I will not love him/her anymore
jou lobi mi?
 do you love me?
hoefasi jou tan
 how are you?
a pekien toe moussi
 it is too small

49. With regard to tense and aspect, I follow Nepveu in my translation even though occasionally this is at odds with what one would expect from the point of view of Modern Sranan. In the case at hand, for example, one would expect *a taki leij* to be translated as ‘he was telling lies’, while the present tense would be rendered as *a de taki leij*. Apart from the fact that TMA, especially tense, is very difficult to interpret without context, it may also be the case that changes in the TMA system that have taken place since Nepveu’s time play a role here.

da him reeti man
that is her lawfully wedded husband
dat him Souta
that is her/his concubine
a de wakka langa him
s/he has an affair with him/her
a fourfouro langa him
s/he lives with him/her in concubinage
jou wanti mi
do you want me?
a kom hia allatem
s/he always comes here
adea (= a dea) na tappoe
she/he/it is upstairs
wakkago (= wakka go)
go away
akom (= a kom), adekom (= a de kom)
s/he is coming
meki migo (= mi go)
let me go
abin (= a bin) kom
s/he has come
oemeni de?
how many are there?
kon hiaso
come right here
abin (= a bin) go
s/he is gone
a no pleij langa him
s/he does not play with it
giem (= gi (h)em)
give it
gie mi
give me
gie hem
give him/her
meki atan (= a tan)
let it be
a kaba
it's finished
tappoe moffo
shut up
no taki notti
don't say a thing

abin (= a bin) taki so
 s/he said so
a membri mi
 s/he thinks of me
a de membre
 s/he thinks
a hatti fortroe
 it hurts a lot / it is very hot
a bin hatti him
 it hurt him/her
abron (= a bron) hem
 s/he has burnt herself/himself
a dedde na watra
 s/he got drowned
a kil hem langa fomfom
 s/he killed him/her through flogging
a fom hem for troe
 s/he gave him/her a heavy flogging
a sabi santi fortroe
 s/he knows a lot
ano (= a no) sabi notti
 s/he doesn't know anything
datem (= da tem)
 it's time
a habi wissi
 s/he knows about witchcraft
ahabi wiriwiri
 s/he knows about magic herbs
joedea (= joe dea)
 are you there?
mi dea hiaso
 I'm here
membre mi
 think of me
hoefisi hem nem
 what is his/her name?
mi de jam
 I am eating
a jam kaba
 s/he has eaten
dano (= da no) pekien santi
 that is not a small thing
paaij mi
 pay me

adoe (= a doe) ogri
 s/he does (or: did) evil
adoe (= a doe) boen
 s/he does good
loekoe boen
 watch out
mi loekoe hem
 I am taking care of him/her
tanpekin (= tan pekin)
 wait a little
moen go don
 the moon goes down
mi drei
 I am thirsty
mino (= mi no) slipi
 I am not asleep
ghi pasi
 make room
passa
 pass by
hakisi hem
 ask him/her

(source: GA 231, inv. no. 298)

16. HARTSINCK (1770)

Although he never actually visited Suriname, Jan Jacob Hartsinck, author of a two-volume *Description of Guyana*, was well-informed about Suriname, especially because he had access to the documents of the *Societeit van Suriname*, the governing body of the colony. Unfortunately, he has very little to say about the language of the Blacks, especially in terms of concrete language data. The only information of any substance he provides has to do with burial ceremonies. At the end of these ceremonies, Hartsinck tells us, the Blacks use the expression ‘...*Winje mooy*, that is Farewell, you went to a happy place; remain still; others went before you, whom you will find there...’ (Hartsinck 1770, vol 2: 911). The exact meaning of this expression is unclear: while *mooij* (< Du. ‘mooi’) is a normal Sranan word meaning ‘pretty, beautiful’, the *winje* part remains obscure; is it perhaps a word of African origin? Because of the presence of *mooij* and in view of Hartsinck’s translation, I provisionally assume the expression as a whole means something like ‘have a good journey’, but this remains speculation.

17. SCHUMANN (1778) AND (1783)

Without any doubt, Schumann's manuscript dictionaries of Saramaccan (1778) and Sranan (1783) are the *pièces de résistance* of early Suriname Creole lexicography, and, with the possible exception of Oldendorp's 1767–1768 dictionary of Negerhollands, of Creole lexicography *tout court*. Schumann was not a native speaker but made extensive use of informants (one of them being Saramaka convert Johannes Alabi – see Section 7.2), which enhances the reliability of his data considerably. An edited and annotated version of the Saramaccan dictionary was published by Schuchardt (1914), while an edition of the Sranan dictionary appears in Kramp (1983). In spite of these publications, Voorhoeve's desideratum to have 'two historical lexicological studies ... based upon the old dictionaries of Schumann' (Voorhoeve 1961: 106) still remains unfulfilled. Apart from his lexicographical work, Schumann was very active in translating religious material both into Sranan and into Saramaccan. Examples are his translation of the Gospel Harmony⁵⁰ (1781) into Sranan and of a number of religious hymns into Saramaccan (1779).

Christian Ludwig Schumann (1749–1794) was the son of a Moravian Brother, Theophile Schumann, who – rather unusual for a Moravian missionary – had received an academic training and who is the author of both an Arawak dictionary and an Arawak grammar. Christian Ludwig was born at the Moravian mission post of Pilgerhut, in Berbice,⁵¹ and was sent to Europe for his education, where he probably attended the theological seminary in Barby (Lenders 1996: 81). Since we know from Stähelin (1913–16, vol II, 2: 191–9) that Schumann *père* made a trip to Saramaka in 1755, there is an – admittedly slight – chance that Saramaccan was not something completely unknown to Schumann *fils* when he arrived in Saramaka as a missionary in 1777. Whatever may be the case, the fact is that during his short stay there (May 1777–August 1778), he managed, despite many problems including various illnesses, not only to learn Saramaccan but also to compile an excellent Saramaccan-German dictionary (Schumann 1778). During the next two years he worked among the Arawak Indians, while from August 1780 onwards he lived in Paramaribo for three consecutive years. It was during this period that he compiled his equally invaluable Sranan-German dictionary. Since he did not have very much (if any) personal experience with life on the plantations, we must assume that his own knowledge of Sranan was primarily based on the language of Paramaribo while the information he provides on the language of the plantations must have been largely based on what his informant(s) told him. In August 1783, just after finishing the Sranan dictionary, he was made to

50. A Gospel Harmony is a compilation of the four gospels into one text.

51. This raises the question whether Schumann *fils* might have known Berbice Dutch, and, if yes, whether he, or his father perhaps, might have left any recordings of that language, which is not recorded at all in its early stages of development.

leave the colony, *leider wegen ein Vergehen dazu genötigt* 'unfortunately forced to do so due to an offence' (perhaps related to the fact that he had returned from his post among the Arawak unauthorized by his superiors). He was first sent back to Herrnhut and from there to the Moravian mission post in Trankebar (India), where he died in 1794. Unfortunately, nothing is known about that period in his life (Stähelin 1913–19, vol. III, part 2, p. 58).

Apart from Sranan and Saramaccan, Schumann also spoke Carib and Arawak, which he may have learned either as a child growing up among the Indians or as an adult when he was stationed at some of the Indian missionary posts in between his assignments in Saramaka and Paramaribo. His knowledge of Arawak enabled him to finish his father's Arawak dictionary, which was later published by Crevaux, Sagot & Adam (1892). Since nothing more is said about C. L. Schumann in Stähelin's (1913–19, vol III, part 1, p. 402) otherwise very detailed history of the Moravian mission in Berbice and Suriname (due to his *Vergehen* perhaps?), this is all we know about this remarkable man, who compiled two superb creole dictionaries in a time when hardly anyone thought these languages worthy of recording. Although for a full appreciation of their quality the reader will have to consult these dictionaries themselves, a first impression can be had from the lemmas presented below. They show that apart from being a good linguist Schumann was also an acute and relatively unprejudiced observer of black culture.

For his edition of Schumann's (1778) manuscript dictionary of Saramaccan, Hugo Schuchardt worked from a copy which was made for him especially for that purpose (Schuchardt 1914:44). As noted by Schuchardt (p. 44), his edition is not completely identical to the copy made available to him: he corrected the German, redundant word definitions were cut down, and homonyms were distinguished as separate entries. In other cases, additions, e.g. regarding etymology, were inserted between square brackets. The original from which the copy used by Schuchardt was made is located in the EBG archives in Paramaribo (EBGP H. III A 12(11)). Apart from this, at least two other versions, neither of them completely identical to the Paramaribo manuscript, are known to exist, both of which are stored in the EBG Archives in Herrnhut (EBGH NB VII R3, 8b and EBGH NB VII R3, 9g, respectively). The latter of these is the anonymous (c1780) dictionary hitherto ascribed to Johann Andreas Riemer (*cf.* Perl 1995), which overlaps to a large extent with Schumann (1778) but which contains interesting differences and additions as well (for further discussion, see no. 18 below). While it would be extremely interesting to compare these three versions of Schumann's Saramaccan dictionary with each other as well as with Schuchardt's edition of the Paramaribo manuscript, such a study cannot be undertaken here. With regard to the sample lemmas from Schumann's Sranan and Saramaccan dictionaries presented below, these have been selected as far as possible to enable comparison between them as well as with the Sranan dictionaries compiled by Focke and Wullschlägel (see nos 28 and 29).

17a. SAMPLE LEMMAS FROM SCHUMANN'S SARAMACCAN DICTIONARY

bi, perfective marker, subjunctive marker, optative marker. Indicates that something is already past or did already happen: *mi bi de ko hem*, I was with him; *mi bi libi ala*, I lived there. Often it means *wäre* [German, i.e. 'would, would have', JA]: *a bi bun*, *effi a bi wakka*, it would be good if he would have gone; *effi a bi jeri*, *a bi sa komm*,⁵² if he had heard about it, he would have come; *a bi so*, it may be that way; *a bi ju lau*, you must be crazy.

obia, medicine; medicinal herbs; superstitious hocus-pocus; oracular deceit; the things they use for that. *Obiaman*, someone who performs this.

(sources: Schuchardt 1914; EBP H. III A 12(11))

ben, had, is, was (auxiliary verb); never stands alone, is put in front of other words (verbs) to express something that is long past, like German 'hat' and 'ist'. Also, subjunctive marker, 'hätte', 'würde', 'wäre', to express something that is uncertain. *mi de takki*, I say; *mi takki*, I said; *mi ben takki*, I have said; also, I had said; *ju ben komm*, you have or had come; *a ben go*, he has or had gone; *a de go*, he is going; *a go*, he went; *wi de teki*, we take; *wi teki*, we took; *wi ben teki*, we have taken, we had taken; *une ben ronneweh*, you ran away, you would have run away, you have been away running; *dem ben slibi*, they have or had slept; *a ben habi*, he has or had had it; *a de*, he is; *a ben de*, he was there, he has been there; *mi bribi*, *a sa ben komm*, I think he will have come; *a sa ben go kaba*, it will have gone; *effi mi no ben takki gi ju*, *ju no ben sa sabi*, if I hadn't told you, you wouldn't know or have known; *effi a ben jeri*, *a ben sa komm*, if he would have heard, he would have come; *effi ju ben du datti grandeweh*, *a ben bun*, if you had done that a long time ago, it would be good or it would have been good.

obia, idolatrous medicine; witchcraft; especially the things the Negroes use for their alleged witchcraft and to which they ascribe magical powers. *meki obia gi mi*, make obia for me; *obia tetei*, a simple string of twine or grass or straw or something else, which they tie around their neck or their body etc. and to which they ascribe magical powers.

dem, they, these (when you talk about many) those, them, one (impers. pron.), their. Also definite and indefinite plural article, i.e. when *dem* is put in front of a word it means more things of the kind (without the word itself undergoing any change). *dem somma*, the people... However, when *dem* is stressed, then it means 'these' (it is the plural of *da* and *datti*). *dem somma*, these people... *gi dem datti*, give this to them... *datti de vo dem*, that belongs to them... *dem hosso*, their house; *hosso va dem*, their house... *dem no wanni sabi dem famili morro*, they don't want to know their kinfolk anymore; *dem takki so*, it is said... For many verbs, the passive voice can only be expressed with *dem*. For example, *dem ben meki mi na Bakkrakondre*,

52. Note that the equivalent of this sentence occurs both in Schumann 1778 and in Schumann 1783 (see lemma *ben* below).

I was born in Europe... *Gado de so grandi, dem no kann takki da grandi va hem*, God is so great, his greatness cannot be pronounced.

tongo, the tongue; the voice, language, the tone, resonance, sound; also, a single word.

Tongo tjarri hem Massra na bun, a tjarri hem na dedde tu, The tongue kan make a man happy or unhappy [lit. the tongue carries its master to good things, it carries him to death too, JA]. *Ningre tongo no has so menni trobbi va leri*, the Negro languages is not very difficult to learn. *A de singi biggi tongo*, he sings in a deep voice, (he sings) bass. *Ju tongo pikki tranga tumussi*, your voice is too loud.

hem... Furthermore, there is a distinction between *hem* and *a*, just as in Latin between *se* and *eum*; *hem* is analogous to Latin *se* and *a* to Latin *eum*; i.e., when I quote someone else's words and the quoted words refer to that person, then I use *hem*; when the quoted words refer to a third party, I use *a*. For example: *A takki, hem no komm* (Latin: *dicit se non venturum*), he says – about himself – that he won't come. *A takki, a no komm jette* (Latin: *eum nondum venisse*), he says that he – someone else – hasn't arrived yet... *da uman takki, hem no wann*i, the woman says that she (i.e. she herself) doesn't want to. *da uman takki, a no wann*i, the woman says that she or he (but someone else than the one who says this) doesn't want to. *a membre, hem de wan biggisanni*, he thinks of himself that he is great. *a membre, a de wan biggisanni*, he thinks of another person that he (the other one) is great.

(sources: Kramp 1983; EBGU H. III A 12(1))

18. ANON. [SCHUMANN] (c1780)

As was noted above (see no. 17), the anonymous (c1780) Saramaccan dictionary ascribed to Riemer by Perl (1995) is probably more correctly seen as another version of Schumann's (1778) dictionary. Although the name of the Moravian missionary Joh[ann] And[reas] Riemer is on the cover, there are serious doubts whether Riemer should be considered as the author of this manuscript. First of all, as is recognized by Perl (p. 247), Riemer, who was a weaver by profession, did not have the educational background to perform such a work. Second, he stayed in Suriname for only ten months (August 1779–June 1780), less than half of which he spent in Saramaka (September–November 1779 and January–March 1780), which seems like an awfully short period to get acquainted with a new language so thoroughly. Third, the title of the work – 'Dictionary for learning the Saramaka Negro language' – may suggest that Riemer used it as a tool in learning Saramaccan (although, of course, this may also refer to its general purpose as such). Fourth, and most importantly, the high degree of similarity between the 'Riemer manuscript' and Schumann's (1778) dictionary strongly suggests that the former was based on the latter rather than being an original work. This would be entirely in accordance with the Moravian practice of making handwritten copies of Sranan and Saramaccan texts, often modifying them in the process. For all these reasons, the so-called 'Riemer dictionary' is better seen as a version of Schumann's dictionary.

The following scenario could be imagined. While acclimatizing in Paramaribo after his arrival in August, Riemer, who was to leave for Saramaka in September 1779, received instruction in Saramaccan from Schumann, who had returned there from Saramaka a year earlier. Having just finished his Saramaccan dictionary, Schumann was, of course, an ideal teacher for Riemer. He would have been one of the very few speakers of Saramaccan available anyway. In this connection, I should add, though, that in Saramaka, Riemer received instruction in Saramaccan from Johannes Alabi, the Saramaka convert who also assisted Schumann in compiling his Saramaccan dictionary (Stähelin 1913–1919, vol 3, part 1: 217). In any case, to proceed with our scenario, Riemer, while making a copy of Schumann's manuscript for personal use made additional notes, based on Schumann's explanations. As far as practical circumstances are concerned, there are no problems with this scenario: both men were staying in Paramaribo during the same periods of time (November 1779–January 1780 and March 1780–August 1780).

An important addition in the c1780 dictionary, when compared to the 1778 one, is the inclusion of an appendix which contains a 'mini-grammar' of Saramaccan (less than 10 pages), written in German. Together with Oldendorp's more extensive manuscript grammar of Negerhollands, written some ten years earlier, this mini-grammar of Saramaccan is one of the very first serious grammatical descriptions of any creole language known to exist. The main part of it is taken up by a discussion of the verbal system, which is reproduced below (translated into English).

18a. THE VERBAL SYSTEM OF EARLY SARAMACCAN

With verbs, the first type of change [i.e. conjugation for person and number, JA] does not occur at all; the person is just put in front of it and the verb is left unchanged. For example: *go*, 'go', *mi go*, 'I go', *ju go*, 'you go', *a go*, 'he goes, she goes, it goes', *wi go*, 'we go', *une go*, 'you (pl.) go', *dem go*, 'they go'.

Regarding the second type of change [i.e. the expression of tense, JA] one should note the following: to express the present tense, *tann* is put in front of the verb. For example: *mi tann go*, 'I'm going right now', *mi tann worko* 'I'm busy working'; however, when the tense is not really important, *tann* is left out, as a result of which *mi go* may also mean 'I go', *mi worko*, 'I work'. To express the simple past, the verb is put on its own, without any addition, as in: *mi go*, 'I went'; *mi worko*, 'I worked'. This also serves the function of perfect, although this is often expressed by *bi*, as in: *mi bi go*, 'I have gone'; *mi bi worko*, 'I have worked'. The real function of *bi*, however, is to express pluperfect. For example: *mi bi go*, 'I had gone', *mi bi worko*, 'I had worked'. The future is expressed by *tanngo*. For example, *mi tanngo*, 'I will go'; *mi tann go worko*, 'I will work'. Sometimes *sa* is used instead of *tanngo*. For example, *mi sa go*, *mi sa worko*; in this usage, however, *sa* is actually 'town language' [i.e. Sranan rather than Saramaccan, JA] because in Saramaccan it means only 'should'.

Regarding the third type of change [i.e. the expression of mood, JA], the only thing worth noting is that the optative or conjunctive mood is expressed by *bi* or *bi sa*. For example: *a bi so*, 'it could be like that'; *mi bi go*, 'I would have gone'; *effi mi bi jeri, mi bi sa kom*, 'If I would have heard about it, I would have come'; *mi bi sa takki*, 'I would have said it'.

(source: Perl 1995:370–371)

19. SCHOUTEN (1783)

Hendrik Schouten came to Suriname when he was twenty-three and married a colored woman a few years later. A civil servant, he published several pieces of poetry, including the handsomely crafted one reproduced here, entitled *Een huishoudelyke twist* 'A domestic quarrel'. In this bilingual text the man, who is white, speaks Dutch while his woman, who is black, speaks Sranan. This kind of 'bi-monolingual' conversation may not have been uncommon in 18th-century Suriname, especially in conversations between a white male and a black female. According to Voorhoeve and Lichtveld (1975:7), it is 'the first Creole poem ever seen in print'; whether that is true or not, it is certainly the oldest Sranan poem ever published.

Een huishoudelyke twist

A domestic quarrel

Kind lief, laat voort de Coffij geeven!

Tan Baija, jusno a sa kom.

Dear child, let them bring the coffee!

Wait now, it'll be there in a moment.

Maak met de Slaaven dog geen leeven!

Den booijs den de toe moessie dom!

Don't make such a racket with the slaves!

These guys are so dumb!

Spreek zagtjes! waarom zoo te schreeuwen?

Te mie no balie, den no doe.

Speak softly! Why shout so loud?

If I don't shout, they don't do anything.

'T Was best jou bek maar toe te breeuwen!

Mekkie den tappou vo jou toe.

It was best to shut your mouth!

Let them shut yours too.

Kan een Creole smoel wel zwijgen?

Da ogrie te mie pikki dan?

Can a creole mouth be silent?

Is it wrong for me to answer, then?

Moet men dan altoos woorden krijgen?

Mie sabie, haksie tarawan.

Do we always have to quarrel?

I know, ask someone else.

Wat middel om die kop te breek?
Jou no kan nak em langa ston.
 How to break that head?
 You can't hit it with a stone.
 Waar moet ik dan het vuilnis steeken?
Mie swerie Gado loekoe bon!
 Where do I leave the mess?⁵³
 I swear, Lord, watch out!
 Wat zullen wij van middag eeten?
Na dienatem jou no sa sie?
 What will we have for dinner?
 You won't see that at dinnertime?
 Ik zeg, ik wel het aanstonds weeten!
Mie takkie jou no balie mie.
 I tell you, I want to know now!
 I tell you, don't shout at me.
 Wat schielijk, en niet lang te draalen!
Jou memmere mie fredde dan?
 Hurry up, don't take so long!
 You think I'm afraid?
 Moet ik de Bullepees ook haalen?
Fom mie, effe jou da wan man!
 Should I get the cat of nine tails?
 Hit me if you dare!
 Zie daar...wyl gij mij dwingt te straffen!
De Diebrie moese nakkie jou!
 Here then...since you force me to punish you!
 May the devil hit you too!
 Wilt nu maar Neeger-Engelsch blaffen!
Jou da wan schurke, dattie trou!
 Bark your Negro-English now!
 You're a rogue for sure
 Moet ik dan hier de Baas niet weezen?
Nou mie no wannie gie jam jam.
 Am I not the master here?
 Now I don't want to serve you food.
 De Slagter heeft meer Bullepeezen!
Eff jou goo Baij, jou moesse lam!
 The butcher has more whips!
 If you go buy one, may you become lame!

53. The meaning of this line in this context is not entirely clear to me.

Hoor eens dat schelden! is 't geen schanden?

Jou memmere mie sa kaba?

Hear that cursing! Isn't it a shame?

You think I'm finished?

Pas op! 'k heb 't stuur nog in mijn handen!

Kaka vo so wan Bakkera!

Watch out! I'm still in charge!

I shit on you, white man!

Wat schepzel zal dat wijf bedwingen?

Doe san jou wannie, mie no kee!

Who could ever control that shrew?

Do as you please, I don't care!

Men breekt wel eerder staale klingen!

Jou no sa brokke mie ti dee.

It's easier to break steel swords!

You won't break me today.

't Hart is door haat reeds ingenoomen!

Jou takkie reijtie, da no kij.

The heart is already filled with hate!

You say a true thing.

Zij zal nog Hel nog Duivel schroomen!

Da vo da hede wie sa scheij.

She'll fear hell nor devil!

That's why we'll separate.

(source: Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975:287–288)

20. STEDMAN (1790)

Captain John Gabriel Stedman (1744–1797), born in the Netherlands of a Scottish father and a Dutch mother, was a member of the 'Scots Brigade' of the States-General army and served in Suriname (1773–1777) in the colonial army fighting the Boni Maroons. During this period, he had a relationship with a mulatto slave, Johanna, with whom he must have communicated in Sranan. He knew Jan Nepveu, the author of the 'Annotations' to Herlein's book (see no. 15 above), who was Governor at the time (Van der Meiden 1987:66). After moving to England in 1783, Stedman wrote an extremely lively book about his experiences in Suriname, entitled *Narrative of a five years expedition against the revolted negroes of Surinam* (1796), which quickly became very popular. Since the 1796 version was heavily edited by the publisher, I have used the new edition, based on original manuscript, that was published by Price & Price (1988). It is unfortunate that this voluminous work only contains a relatively small amount of language material in Sranan, especially because Stedman shows himself to be a very keen and relatively unprejudiced observer. Because of their value, all the creole sentences found in Stedman's book are reproduced here, including those which might,

perhaps, better be regarded as Ndyuka or Boni rather than Sranan. On the other hand, since these language varieties (especially Boni) had only started to split off from Sranan shortly before Stedman was in Suriname, this does not present too much of a problem.

*da So*⁵⁴

So be it.

you man? da boy fasi

Are you a man? You act like a boy.

*Son de go Sleeby caba Mekewe liby den tara dago tay tamara*⁵⁵

The sun is going down already; let's leave the other dogs until tomorrow.

*Ah Poty backera*⁵⁶

Oh! Poor whites!

*me see Snakee*⁵⁷

I see/saw⁵⁸ a snake.

*kay Mimasera da wan See Cow*⁵⁹

Master, it's a sea-cow.

*thank ye me masera*⁶⁰

Thank you master.

*How dee mattee*⁶¹

Hello,⁶² friend.

*Who som ma datty...Sooto Sooto da Bony Kiry da Dago*⁶³

Who's that?...fire, fire, it's Boni (a Maroon leader), kill the dog.

54. This formula was used when the 1760 Ndyuka Peace Treaty was signed (e.g. Hartsinck 1770:); it is grammatical both as a Ndyuka and as a Sranan sentence.

55. Said by a Boni maroon.

56. Said by the Blacks in Stedman's regiment.

57. Said by a Black in Stedman's regiment.

58. Since in the narrative context both readings are possible, and since marking of non-statives in the present tense with *de* was not obligatory in 18th-century Sranan, no choice with regard to tense can be made in the translation of this sentence.

59. Said by a Black in Stedman's regiment.

60. Said by a Boni maroon.

61. This sentence occurs in a footnote which provides some valuable information about greeting practices among 18th-century Blacks. It runs as follows: 'the Negroes Generally Salute each other by Shaking hands, When they meet the tops of the Middle Fingers Snap them 3 times and make a bow Saying how dee Matee, how are you Friend'.

62. Contrary to Stedman, I interpret *how dee* as a representation of modern Sranan *odi* 'hello' rather than (*u*) *fa* *yu* *de* 'how are you?'.

63. Said by an unidentified Black.

*Dankee Massera*⁶⁴

Thank you master.

*Gado Sa Blesse da Woma*⁶⁵

God bless the woman.

*Gado Saby*⁶⁶

God knows.

Tessee See

Make a try (if you dare).

Mele me

Interfere with me (if you dare).

Boosy Cray

The bush is crying.

Me Salasy

I shall be lost.

Kebree me

Hide me.

*Massera Massera Bosee Negro, Boosee Negro*⁶⁷

Master, master! Bush negroes, bush negroes!

*Massera we Dede we are Dede*⁶⁸

Master, we're dead, we're dead!

*fishee hollo*⁶⁹

Fish hole.

Cot-tan teeree

Cotton tree

(source: Price & Price 1988:73, 103, 124, 139, 146, 184,
206, 327, 363, 385, 400, 407, 434, 453, 520 note, 541 note)

21. WEYGANDT (1798)

In 1798, C. G. Weygandt published a language primer very similar to Van Dyk's (see no. 13), containing a word list, some idioms, some grammar, and twelve dialogues. Five of these dialogues (numbers 1, 2, 3, 5 and 9) were largely plagiarized from Van Dyk's dialogues numbers 2, 3, 5, 7 and 11, respectively (*cf.* Schuchardt 1914:xxiii).⁷⁰

64. This was a fixed expression slaves were obliged to use after having been flogged.

65. Said by Stedman's *misi*, Johanna.

66. The following six examples all refer to names of Boni Maroon settlements; they were mentioned by a Black in Stedman's regiment, referred to as 'Captain Hannibal'.

67. Said by Stedman's black boy-servant Qwacco.

68. Said by Stedman's black boy-servant Qwacco.

69. The name of a Boni Maroon settlement near the sea, mentioned by a captive Boni woman.

70. Weygandt, in his turn, was heavily plagiarized by Helmig van der Vegt (1844) (*cf.* his lesson no. 11 with Weygandt's dialogue no. 1, reproduced here).

According to the *Voorbericht* 'Preface', Weygandt's booklet represents the Paramaribo dialect, whereas Van Dyk probably represents the language as it was spoken on the plantations (cf. Schuchardt 1914: xxiii). Voorhoeve & Donicie's (1963: 31) interpretation of the archaic features in Van Dyk as symptoms of the imperfect competence of a city-dweller is probably incorrect. No biographical information on the author is available. In order to enable comparison between Weygandt and Van Dyk, Weygandt's dialogue no. 1, which is clearly based on Van Dyk's dialogue no. 2 (see no. 13 above), is reproduced below. As in the case of Van Dyk's dialogue above, I have grouped together sentences which seem to form one unit (S = slave; M = master; V = visitor).

Dialogue no. 1 from Weygandt's language primer

S: *Masra soema dé aksie na joe.*⁷¹ *Wan Masra dee na dore. Wan soema dee foe takie nanga joe. Da wan Masra diesie dé aksie na joe.*

Sir, somebody's asking for you. There's a man at the door. There's someone who wants to talk to you. There's a gentleman who's asking for you.

M: *Da oe Masra datie. Joe sabie em? Oe fa a nem ?*

Who is it? Do you know him? What's his name?

S: *Mie no sabie em. Mie no sabie fa a nem. Mie no sabie o sama da em. Mie no ben sie em nemree deja.*

I don't know him. I don't know his name. I don't know who he is. I've never seen him.

M: *O klosie a werie ?*

What kind of clothes does he wear?

S: *A werie wan blau lake jaktie.*

He's wearing a blue cloth coat.⁷²

M: *Joe ben takie gie em datie mie dee na hoso. Joe mekie a kom na ienie ?*

Did you tell him I'm home? Did you let him in?

S: *A dee na voorhoso.*

He's in the front-room.

M: *Takie gie em mekie a tam piekien. Mie sa go takie nanga em. Mie sa go loekoe oe soema datie.*

Tell him to wait a moment. I'll talk to him. I'll see who it is.

M: *A ! da joe Masra ! A boen na mie foetroe datie mie sie joe. Oe fa joe tam ?*

Ah, it's you, Sir. I'm very pleased to see you. How are you?

V: *Heelie boen Gado tangie. Mie no sa dee na joe pasie ? Mie sa kom wan tratrom baka.*

Very well, thank God. I'm not disturbing you? I'll come back some other time.

M: *San hédee datie ? Mie begie joe tam. Mie no abie notie foe doe. Joe no dee na mie pasie.*

Why? I beg you to stay. I don't have anything to do. You're not disturbing.

71. In my transcription I do not follow Weygandt's habit of ending declarative sentences with a comma, replacing them by full stops instead.

72. Notice Weygandt's – vain! – attempt to avoid the impression of plagiarism by changing Van Dyk's red coat into a blue one.

- S: *Soema dé kom. Soema dée diesie dee aksie na joe.*
Someone is coming. There's someone who's asking for you.
- M: *Datie hatie mie foetroe. Mie ben hangrie foe takie nanga joe.*
I'm very sorry. I was anxious to talk to you.
- V: *Datie sa tam foe wan tratrom. Mie sa kom bamba baka.*
That will wait for some other time. I'll come back soon.
- M: *Joe sa doe mie plieserie foetroe. A sa boen na mie foetroe. Joe sa wanie doe datie.*
That will be a great pleasure for me. That will please me very much. Would you be so kind to do that?
- V: *San hédee no.*
Why not?
- M: *No fergietie datie doe.*⁷³
Don't forget to do that.
- V: *Mie pramiesie joe. Oe tem joe pliesie datie mie kom baka. Oe tem mie moe kom baka ?*
I promise. What time would you like me to come back? What time should I come back?
- M: *Da tem joe pliesie.*
Whenever you please.
- V: *Joe dee go baka dina na doro ?*
Are you going out this afternoon?
- M: *Mie sa dee tee fyfie joeroe na hoso.*
I'll be home until five.
- V: *Joe sa abie mie na drie joeroe deej.*
You'll see me here at three.
- M: *Doe da sanie joe takie. Mie sa tam loekoe joe. Joe no sa kom foe soso.*
Do as you say. I'll be waiting for you. You won't come in vain.
- V: *Tam na dem soema diesie dee na joe. Joe dé mekie toemoesie wroko. No goo moro fara dan.*
Stay with your company. You needn't bother. Don't go any further.
- M: *Mie sa go tee na doro. Loekoe boen. Da stoepoe glatie foe troe. No fadon. Té bamba.*
I'll see you to the door. Watch out. The steps are really slippery. Don't fall. Until soon.
- (source: Weygandt 1798:91–93)

22. RIEMER (1801)

Some twenty years after he returned from his 9-month stay in Suriname, J. A. Riemer (1801) published *Missions-Reise nach Suriname und Barbice* 'Missionary journey to Suriname and Berbice'. Apart from the Saramaccan version of the Lord's Prayer (see Section 7.2), this book includes a few pictures whose captions contain some Saramaccan. The one reproduced here, the caption to plate no. 7, describes a scene where some Saramaka man tell the culturally ignorant missionary that the bird he has just shot and is holding up proudly is, in fact, sacred:

73. Apparently, the words *datie* and *doe* were interchanged by the printer.

*Massra*⁷⁴ *bi dedde*⁷⁵ *wan Gado!*

Sir, you killed a god!

(Riemer 1801: in Price 1990: 187)

(source: Price 1990: 187)

23. BOLINGBROKE (1807)

The Englishman, Henry Bolingbroke, worked as an auctioneer in Paramaribo during the second English interregnum (1804–1816). Since he only arrived in Suriname in early 1807, he cannot have had much experience with Sranan by the time he wrote his book, which was published that same year. However, he may have been familiar with creole languages in general as he had lived in Stabroek (Guyana) from 1799 until 1806 (Bolingbroke 1807: title page; unnumbered page preceding p. 1; pages 1, 3). On the final page of his book he presents the following '[s]pecimen of the negro English, or talkee-talkee' (the English translations are Bolingbroke's):

Da wan tieri somma 'That is a free person'

No mekie bawli bawli 'Don't make any noise'

Den de mekie too mooso bawli bawli 'They make too much noise'

Mekie hesie 'Make haste'

Loeke boen 'Take care, or look good'

Tantiere 'Stand still'

Loeke deeja 'Look here'

Piekienmoro 'A little more'

Onofo 'Enough'

Oe soma die da pree? 'Who's there?'

Matie 'A friend'

Da mie 'It's me'

Da massa 'It's a gentleman'

Da misse 'It's a lady'

(source: Bolingbroke 1807: 400)

23a. A DIALOGUE BETWEEN A NEWLY ARRIVED BAKRA AND A FREE MULATTO GIRL (1829)

The author, who served for several years (1828–1831) as a lieutenant in Suriname, included the following dialogue in his book to show his proficiency in Sranan to his readers. He explicitly adds that he writes Sranan 'as it is spoken, i.e. not according to the spelling of English, even though most of the words are derived from that language' (Nagel 1840: 79–80).

74. Note that here (as in several other items in this chapter, e.g. nos 6, 27), in accordance with Sranan politeness rules, the third person is used to address someone considered to be superior.

75. Assuming my translation is correct, this is a very rare case of *dedde* 'dead, die' used as a transitive verb.

*O die,*⁷⁶ *miessie, oe fa joe tan?*
Mi die boen, masra; fa masra tan?
*So so, haffe haffe, mie dee won nioe kommer*⁷⁷ *na diessie kondree.*
Masra dee wan Duitsieman?
*Ai, miessie, joe fatta*⁷⁸ *wan Duitsieman toe?*
No no, masra, a wan Englisman.
*Uppei*⁷⁹ *a dee now?*
Ago wei na em kondree; a baai mi nenni, an gi mi fri. Adeddi kaba.
San joe wroko alla dei?
*Mi wassie kroossie; if masra wannie, sa*⁸⁰ *wassie den fo masra toe.*
*A boen; joe kan kom takie*⁸¹ *dem, na ienie foto ta marra momentie.*⁸²
*Tanji, masra; wi abie wan pokim*⁸³ *boy so*⁸⁴ *sturie, if masra pliesie.*
*Ibri wan, fassi*⁸⁵ *boen na mie, alie*⁸⁶ *sa gie em; no forget. Adjossie, miessie.*
Djossie, masra.

Howdy, miss, how are you?
 I'm alright; how are you?
 Quite alright; I'm a newcomer to this country.
 Are you Dutch?
 Yes, miss; is your father Dutch too?
 No, Sir; he's English.
 Where is he now?
 He went back to his country; he bought my mother and gave me freedom. He's dead.
 What's your everyday job?
 I wash laundry; if you wish, I'll wash yours too.

76. I.e. *odie* 'hello'.

77. The word *nioe kommer* 'newcomer', which I have not encountered in any other text, strikes me as an intrusion from English; cf. also the spelling *take* for *teki* and the English sounding *no forget*.

78. A typo for *tata* 'father'.

79. I.e. *hupe* 'where'.

80. The word *mie* 'I' is missing before *sa*.

81. A typo for *tekie* 'take'.

82. Here the word *mamantem* 'morning' is intended.

83. A typo for *pikin* 'small, little'.

84. A typo for *fo* 'to'.

85. I.e. *ibriwan fasi* 'whichever way'.

86. A typo for *mi* 'I'.

Very well; you can collect them at the inner fort⁸⁷ tomorrow morning.
 Thank you, Sir; I have a little boy that I can send, if that's alright with you.
 Any way you want is alright with me, I'll give it to him; don't forget. Goodbye,
 miss.
 Bye, Sir.⁸⁸

(source: Nagel 1840: 80–81)

24. BENOIT (1830)

Pierre Jacques Benoit was a Belgian artist, who visited Suriname in or around 1830. In 1839, he published his *Voyage à Surinam*, which included one hundred hand-colored lithographs depicting life in the colony. The book also includes a few samples of Sranan.

Poor man abi no pikin moni to bai njoen krosi
 poor man, who doesn't have money to buy new clothes⁸⁹
Mi no sabi
 I don't know
Tata, Tata, lepi mi
 God, help me
Danki, Masra
 Thank you, master
Loekoe, wan bigi boesnengre
 Look, an important bush negro

(source: Benoit 1980 [1839]: 35, 38; 39, 71)

25. ANON. (c1836)

In 1843, the Dutch literary journal *Braga* published an anonymous song/poem in Sranan, entitled *Njoe-jaari-singi voe Cesaari* 'Cesaari's New Year song'. Cesaari was probably not the author, only the distributor of the song. Cesaari was a deaf black man who walked with a limp (*cf.* the first stanza below) and who made his living distributing so-called 'signal notes'⁹⁰ (*cf.* the fifth stanza below) as well a selling songs and poems on the streets.⁹¹ Although the text was first published in 1843, Lichtveld & Voorhoeve (1980: 290–292) claim it goes back at least to 1836 or 1837. Based on the style of the piece, they feel it may have been written by a European or by by a Creole who was heavily influenced by European culture. In Voorhoeve & Lichtveld (1975: 7)

87. I.e. Fort Zeelandia.

88. Here the Dutch translation adds '(neiging)', referring to the blacks' custom of making a curtsy.

89. This expression is presented as a way of describing someone who wears repaired clothes. Note the English elements in this sentence: *poor* (instead of Sranan *poti*), and *to* (instead of *fu*).

90. The note indicating the type, name, and origin of a newly arrived ship.

91. The custom of selling pieces of literature on the streets of Paramaribo was continued well into the 20th century.

they suggest, based on ‘the clever use of Creole proverbs’ (used as a finishing line in some stanzas; cf. also Section 2 of Chapter 6), that the author may have been H. C. Focke, the man who compiled the 1855 Sranan dictionary (cf. no. 29 below). At the same time, they feel that even though the text was not written by a slave, it shows ‘how people knew how to write a very subtle poetry based on and heavily influenced by folk-culture’, while also alluding to the genre of the *du* (cf. Chapter 6) (Lichtveld & Voorhoeve 1980: 292).

Njoe-jaari-singi voe Cesaari
Soema de jompo janna so?
*Mi bribi na Cesaari;*⁹²
Pooti, a no man voe go,
Moffina fa a haari!
Wan soro no hati toe soema, loekkoe fa a mangrie,
Daggoe habi foeloe masra, a slibi nanga hangrie.

Cesaari’s New Year song
 Who is going there with that limp?
 I think it’s Cesaari.
 Poor man, he can’t walk,
 Poor thing, how he’s dragging his leg!
 One sore does not hurt two people. Look how thin he is.
 A dog who has many masters sleeps with an empty stomach.

Tangie Masra! Tangie Missie!
Ti dée mi de njan jaari;
San joe gi mi, joe sa kissie
Dobbroe na tra jaari!
Wan sreng sa tron toe sreng, effi Masra Gado prissie,
Da sanie joe lassie na vaja, joe sa venni na inni assissie.

Thank you, Master! Thank you, Madam!
 Today I’m celebrating the New Year.
 Whatever you’ll give me, you’ll get it back
 Double next year!
 One shilling will become two shillings, if it pleases God.
 Whatever you lose in the fire, you’ll find it back in the ashes.

Da ouloe jaari go agéen,
Da njoe wan dée na doro;
Effi a tjari son, ef’ a tjari a réen
Gaddo sabie; o soema moro!
A fitti mi voe takki joe houdi, na alla mi klanti mi go,
Bonjo no de soekkoe daggoe, daggoe de soekkoe bonjo.

92. Small capitals in original version.

The old year has gone again,
 The new one is waiting at the door.
 Whether it will bring sun or whether it will bring rain,
 God knows, who else?
 I must say good-bye, to all my clients I must go.
 The bone does not seek the dog, the dog seeks the bone.

*Effi a tjari wi geluk effi no,
 Datti wi sa venni na bakka;
 Mi no de baari jette : Ho !
 Soema baai poess-poessi na sakka ?
 njoe jaari bissi mi? voe monni na inni sweeti mi ron,
 Respekki voe switti braffoe mi njan soewa ton-ton.*

Whether it will bring us fortune or not,
 That we'll find out afterwards.
 I'm not shouting 'Ho!' yet,
 Who buys a pig in a poke?
 What do I care about the New Year? I'm running myself into a sweat for money.
 To get the sweet *brafu* I'll eat the sour *tonton*⁹³

*Tokkoe té wan sippi kon
 Fa mi de wakka wakka;
 Nanga briefie mi de ron
 Na alla soema bakka;
 Shjah! na troe san bijblie takki, na troe san Domine leesie,
 Wi njan wi switti-moffo nanga sweeti voe wi veesie.*

Still, when a ship arrives
 I have to run like hell.
 With the 'signal note'
 I'm running after everyone.
 Ugh! It's true what the Bible says, it's true what the Preacher reads,
 We eat our meat and fish in the sweat of our face.

*Na bakkra-kondre wan njoe sanie
 Bakkraa ben prakkiseeri;
 Mi mamma dissie meeki mi!
 Wan toori joe moesso jeeri!
 Sippi na inni winti lijki vriegrie dé go vlij
 Bakkraa de go haari den, en gi den teitij.*

In Europe the white people
 Invented something new.
 My mother who bore me!

93. *Brafu* is a tasty broth which is eaten by dipping *tonton*, balls of banana dough, in it.

You should hear this story!
 Ships flying in the wind like kites,
 Whites hauling them in and easing them off.⁹⁴

Derappée sippi na wi tappo de vlij
Lampoe sondro olie de bron;
Sjeesi sondro haasi de rij,
Na tappoe iesri paasi den ron;
Ai ba! kondre draai, poess-poessi jan slaa,
Adjoosi vlagra-tikki, boda kabaa!

Ships flying above us over there,
 Lamps burning without oil,
 Carriages riding without horses,
 On iron roads they run.
 Yes, man! Everything is upside down.
 Good-bye flag-pole, the party's over!⁹⁵

Ma, awassi wi no de konniman,
Wi no habi trobbie;
Wie Koning nanga wi Granman,
Wie Kondre wi lobbie;
Wi no leeti vaja nanga gaasi, wie no sabie boekkoe,
Wi de wrokko na Pranaasi na dati gi den koekko!

But even if we are no learned men
 We have no troubles.
 Our King and our Governor
 And our country we love.
 We don't use gas to burn our lights, we don't know many books.
 We work on the plantations, that's what gives them a profit.

Mi wensi geluk na ibrie wan,
Na inni da jaari dissie;
Alla oeman sa venni man,
Den jonkman sa venni missie;
Joe sa maala soekkroe ibrie dée, koffi sa repi na bon,
Katoen-pranaasi sa meeki so téé, a no sa kissi woron.

I wish good luck to everyone
 In this coming year.
 May all the ladies find a man,
 May all the young men find a girl.

94. This probably refers to ballooning, a fairly new phenomenon at the time.

95. This refers to the pole Ceaasri would use to hoist the Dutch flag upon arrival of a new ship. If ballooning is going to take over, he is bound to lose this source of income.

May you grind sugar every day, may the coffee ripen on the trees,
May the cotton plantation thrive so they will not be plagued by worms.

*Ma mi teeki Gaddo beggi joe,
No forgitti Cesaari!
Awassi mi pooti, tokkoe na troe,
Mi habi mi libbi voe tjaari;
Mi no habi foeloe voe wensi, mi no habi foeloe vo fredde,
Mi no habi noffo foe libbi, ma mi habi toe moessie vo dedde.*

I beg you by God,
Don't forget Cesaari!
I may be poor but still it's true,
I have to take care of myself.
There isn't much I desire, there isn't much I fear.
I don't have enough to live but I've got too much to die.

(source: Lichtveld & Voorhoeve 1980: 292–299)

26. THEM BELLY FULL (BUT WE HUNGRY) (1835)

Apart from 300 *odos*, some of which can be found in Chapter 6, Teenstra (1835) also contains the following Sranan sentence, which is presented as the general way in which Blacks in Suriname express their hunger:

Massera! Fiele (of loeke) mi belle, hangri di kili mi!
Sir! Feel (or: look at) my belly; I'm starving! (source: Teenstra 1835, vol 2: 187)

27. WINKELS (1840)

Willem Winkels arrived in Suriname in 1839, where he worked as a white overseer for some time. The text fragments reproduced below are taken from the captions to a series of unpublished watercolors satirizing plantation life, in particular the vicissitudes of a newly arrived white overseer. Since they were made only a year after Winkels' arrival in the colony, some proviso should be made with regard to the reliability of the Sranan used in these dialogues. What is especially interesting is the fact that the dialogues exhibit a fair amount of code-switching, as can be seen in some of the following examples (the Sranan is in italics, the Dutch is in roman typeface). Also note that the Dutch put in the mouth of blacks is somewhat pidginized:⁹⁶ cf. e.g. the lack

96. A similar tendency to represent black speech as a slightly pidginized form of – in this case – English is in the English-written novel *Outalissi*, where blacks are quoted as saying e.g. 'Yes, me, Massa!' in response to the accusation 'thou art the thief, thou rascal' (Lefroy 1826: 114) or, when asked 'Is she ill then?' as replying 'No, massa, not ill, but sick in heart a little' (131). Elsewhere, an Amerindian says 'No! massa! Me no Christian' (136). At the same time, the hero Outalissi, a former African prince, speaks an impeccable, not to say literay, English, occasionally even using such words as *soi-disant* (164). I should add, however, that this stylistic feature was introduced

of V2 as well as the use of the verb stem instead of the infinitive form in ‘anders ik zal loop hard weg’ (instead of ‘anders zal ik hard weglopen’) and the omission of the adverb ‘er’ in ‘ik zal zeker zijn’ instead of ‘ik zal er zeker zijn’. (Both features are still present today in Surinamese Dutch: cf. De Kleine 2002.) (The number following each fragment refers to the number of the original watercolor to which the caption belongs; the full text can be found in Medendorp 1994.)

O no no vala kaba! maar massa no sabi ningre jété, water is niet meer om voortgaan (no. 3)

Oh, no, no, the ebb-tide is finished! But you don't know Blacks yet, the water is not fit to continue rowing anymore.

O no no vala kaba! maar massa no sabi ningre jété, water is niet meer om voortgaan (no. 3)

Oh, no, no, the ebb-tide is finished! But you don't know Blacks yet, the water is not fit to continue rowing anymore.

booi go sori schriviman da kamera, opé a moesoe libie. (no. 4)

Boy, show the overseer his room, where he is going to stay.

Loekoe no so wan bakra va a don; mi denki Bakra sabi alla sanni, en disi no sabi voe krin na inni wan hamakka srefi voe slibi: Ha! ha! ha! datti na wan bigie kau. (no. 7)

Look at that *bakra*, how stupid he is; I thought *bakras* knew everything, and this one doesn't even know how to climb into a hammock in order to sleep: Ha! Ha! He is a big cow.

Hu! bakra sabi alla sanie, en a no kan zwem, mi mama! dat een Indiaan zelf kan doen. (no. 12)

Ha! The *bakra* knows everything but he can't swim, mama mia! Even an Indian knows how to do that.

Ja, ik lobi massra toemoessi, maar ik vrees directeur al te veel. (no. 13)

Yes, I love you very much, but I fear the manager a lot.

Troe? massra zal kom? maar massra moet mij geen kwaad doen, want anders ik zal loop hard weg. (no. 13)

Really? You will come? But you should not do me any harm or else I'll run away fast.

O nee massra, ik zal zeker zijn, mi lobi wan swietie tori. (no. 13)

Oh, no, master, I'll be there for certain, I like to hear sweet things.

(source: Medendorp 1994)

explicitly by the author to 'convey what appears to me the force of his impressions with more clearness (97 footnote).

28. GREETING THE MASTER (c1840)

August Kappler (1815–1887) was a German, who – with a brief intermission – worked in Suriname, first as a soldier and then as an entrepreneur, from 1836 until 1879. In 1854 he published a book about his first six years (1836–1842) in the colony. The sentence below is presented by him as an example of the ‘nonsense’ plantation managers have their slaves tell them ‘as if they were parrots’. It is part of the ceremony that took place every morning when the slaves were made to gather in front of the ‘big house’ and wish their master a pleasant day. In this case, it is not the adult slaves but the little children, who ‘at a sign given by the Creole Mama all put their hands in the air and shout’:

Odi Masra, odi Missi, fai⁹⁷ Masra dan, fai Missi dan!

Goodday Sir, goodday Madam; how are you, Sir? How are you, Madam?

(source: Kappler 1983[1854]: 28)

29. FOCKE (1855)

Hendrik Focke (1802–1856), a colored man who was born in Paramaribo, studied law in the Netherlands and returned to Suriname in 1834, where ultimately he became president of the Court. He was one of the founders of the journal *West-Indië*, in which he published a seminal article about the music of the Blacks (Focke 1858; cf. Section 1 of Chapter 6). Focke, who in all likelihood was a native speaker of Sranan, was highly regarded among his contemporaries for his knowledge of the language. His fellow lexicographer, H. R. Wullschlägel, for example, refers to Focke as ‘the astute language researcher...Focke’, whom he singles out in his acknowledgments for having checked his dictionary with him word-by-word and for providing him with valuable remarks (Wullschlägel 1856: iv). Another Moravian missionary, the prolific translator Wilhelm Treu, regularly consulted Focke, which suggests he regarded the latter’s knowledge of Sranan highly (Lenders 1996: 173).⁹⁸ Finally, the reverend Boekhoudt, who knew Sranan well enough to be able to hold sermons in it, notes that Focke was ‘unsurpassed as a connoisseur of Sranan’ (Boekhoudt 1874: 97–98).

Focke’s 150-page Sranan-Dutch dictionary is not the largest but undoubtedly the best published Sranan dictionary to date.⁹⁹ It contains a short introduction to the language, and some 100–200 *odos* are scattered throughout the text. A review of the work by Moes (1858), published in *West-Indië*, contains a list of *errata* and *addenda*, which are based on handwritten notes by Focke himself. Though published in 1855,

97. *fai* = *fa yu* (*d*)e ‘how are you?’

98. In his turn, Focke bestowed the highest praise on Treu (Focke 1855: viii).

99. Not included in this evaluation is the new Sranan dictionary (Blanker & Dubbeldam 2005), which was published, incidentally, on the very same day I wrote this.

the work was conceived several years earlier: a preliminary version is dated March 1846 (Voorhoeve & Donicie 1967). The lemmas reproduced below refer to some of the same words and grammatical phenomena as those taken from Schumann's and Wullschlägel's dictionaries (see nos 17 and 30, respectively).

29a. SAMPLE LEMMAS FROM FOCKE'S (1855) SRANAN DICTIONARY

Ben, auxiliary verb used to express the past tense (from Dutch¹⁰⁰). *Mí ben táki joe*, I had told you; *Wan Mamà ben de*, once there was an old lady; *mi ben sa korn*, I would have come.

Obia, noun, magical charm which the Negroes in their superstition bury in the ground or put somewhere in order to harm an enemy or keep off a misfortune. (2) sometimes also cicatricizations in the skin, to which certain magical powers are ascribed. *Óbia-man*, magician, witch; someone who makes *Obias* or deals with them or makes use of them; *Óbia-tetéi*, magic string or thread, charm, amulet. *Óbia boen, ji sa si na kóti* (proverb). The meaning is: You know a tree from its fruits [lit. You can see from the cut whether the *obia* is good, JA]

Herín, pronoun, *he, she, him, her*. (*Herín* is used in the nominative case to transmit what someone else said, as in the first example below.) (2) possessive pronoun, *his, her* (from Dutch) *A táki: herín no kan doe*, he (she) says that he (she) cannot do it.

Tóngo, noun, tongue in all its meanings; (2) language; (3) voice (from Dutch). *Sákka joe tongo*, lower your voice. *Pikíén tóngo*, the uvula. *Mi sàbi hem tóngo*, I know his voice. *A de táki hem kóndre tóngo*, he speaks the language of his country.

(source: Focke 1855)

30. WULLSCHLÄGEL (1854) AND (1856)

Heinrich Rudolph Wullschlägel, a Moravian Brother who was educated as a theologist and botanist, stayed at mission posts in Antigua (1844–1847) and Jamaica (1847–1849) before coming to Suriname, where he served as *praeses* 'president' of the Moravian community from 1849 until 1855. He is the author of a brief, anonymous grammar of Sranan¹⁰¹ (Wullschlägel 1854), which was reviewed, interestingly, by his 'colleague' H. C. Focke. Apart from one point of detail, Focke's only criticism is concerned with orthographical matters, in particular the inconsistency and arbitrariness of the Moravian missionaries' (Dutch-based) spelling system. As far as the book *qua*

100. The etymology proposed by Focke is incorrect: *ben* is based on English 'been'; it has nothing to do with Dutch *ben* nor (dialectal) *benne*, present tense forms of the verb *zijn* 'to be'.

101. Although this is disputed by Voorhoeve & Donicie (1963:20), who see parallels with Wilhelm Treu's 1850 manuscript grammar (itself part of the Moravian grammar writing tradition which started around 1830), it is unambiguously clear from Focke (1855:ix) that Wullschlägel is the author.

grammar is concerned, however, he is unequivocally positive. Focke is especially happy with the quality of the sample sentences: 'His truly Sranan sentences are so surprising to us that we have the impression that the author has listened to the conversations among the Negroes with an accurate ear and in an untiring effort' (Focke 1855b: 297).

Apart from his grammar, Wullschlägel also compiled a 300-page German-Sranan dictionary (Wullschlägel 1856). With the possible exception of the newly published dictionary mentioned in note 82, this is the most extensive printed Sranan dictionary in existence. It is the culmination of a 75-year long tradition of Moravian Sranan lexicography, which began with Schumann's (1783) manuscript dictionary and continued with the many revised and expanded versions based on it that were made during the first half of the 19th century. Being part of that tradition, it contains the typically Moravian neologisms needed for Bible translations, which are absent, for example, from Focke's dictionary. The dictionary concludes with a 40-page listing of some 700 *odos* with their translations (*cf.* Chapter 6 for some examples). As to its use as a resource for linguists, Voorhoeve & Donicie (1963: 29) feel that, due to the archaic and typically 'church creole' character of the language, it should be consulted with prudence. Below, a small section from Wullschlägel's grammar on logophoric pronouns is reproduced. His dictionary is represented by the lemma on 'language'. For comparison, see the parallel lemmas from Schumann (1778, 1783) and Focke (1855) above.

30a. WULLSCHLÄGEL (1854) ON LOGOPHORIC PRONOUNS

When the words of a third party, who is not present, are quoted, 'he', 'she', 'it', may not be expressed by *a*, but it should be expressed by *hem*. *Da soema taki, hem no kan kom, hem de siki*, the man says he cannot come, he is sick. *A de siki* would be the words of the speaker of the entire sentence, not those of the sick person himself.¹⁰²

(source: Wullschlägel 1854: 18)

30b. SAMPLE LEMMA FROM WULLSCHLÄGEL'S SRANAN DICTIONARY

Sprache 'language, speech'

Language, *tongo*; *taki*; in our language, *na wi tongo*; it is neither a language nor a tongue, *no wan taki de en no wan tongo de*; I don't understand the language very well yet, *mi no sabi da tongo so krin jete*; to know a language, *sabi da tongo*; to talk about something, *taki vo dati*; Negro language, *ningretongo*; (however, the African Negroes call the language spoken here *bakra* as well).

(Wullschlägel 1856, s.v. *Sprache* 'language, speech')

102. Although the entry *Er* 'he' in Wullschlägel's dictionary does not say anything on logophoricity, it does contain an example illustrating the phenomenon: 'He, *a*, *hem*...he says he doesn't want to come, *a taki, hem no wani kom*' (Wullschlägel 1856, s.v. *Er* 'he').

31. DOCUMENTS CONCERNING EMANCIPATION (1862–1873)

When slavery was finally abolished in Suriname (on July 1, 1863), it was followed by a ten-year period of *Staatstoezicht* ‘State supervision’, comparable to the ‘Apprenticeship’ period in the British colonies. During this period, the ex-slaves, though formally free, were subject to a large number of rules and regulations (see nos 31d and 31e below). But the event of Emancipation itself too was accompanied by the publication of a number of official documents, written in Dutch. In order to inform the slaves about the abolition of slavery, part of these texts, in particular those concerning them directly, were translated into Sranan, so that they could either read them themselves or have them read to them.¹⁰³ The translators of the texts are A. J. Comvalius Az.¹⁰⁴ (31a, 31b, 31c) and J. P. W. van Eijck (31d, 31e, 31f). While Comvalius accompanies his translations with the information that he is a ‘sworn translator for Sranan’, Van Eijck adds a more general statement explaining the official status of his translation. Unfortunately, I have not been able to find any biographical information about these men, except the fact that the Comvalius family were free coloreds who were employed by the government as clerks and sworn translators from early on (Brana-Shute 1985: 315).

In all six cases, the Dutch text of the original was published in the *Gouvernementsblad Suriname*, the official newspaper of the colonial government (see Table 7.2 below). However, as far as I have been able to establish, only one of the Sranan texts (no. 31c) was published there. Two others (nos 31a and 31b) were distributed in the form of a *plakati* ‘placard’, which was a normal way of making public announcements in those days. Despite serious efforts, I have not been able to locate the original version of the three remaining texts (nos 31d, 31e, 31f). For the transcription of these I have had to rely on those presented in Helstone and Vernooij (2000).

Although one or two of the shorter texts had been republished before (e.g. 31c, in *Encyclopedie* 1977: 564), it was not until Helstone and Vernooij (2000) that a more extensive selection of these texts became available (31b, 31c (partly), 31d, 31e, 31f). Unfortunately, however, this publication is not easily accessible, especially for an international readership. In addition to that, there is at least one text (31a) which is not included in Helstone and Vernooij (2000); that is the Sranan version of the Emancipation Act, of which they only present the Dutch original. Since they concern one of the most important, if not the most important, events in the history of Suriname and since they are written in Sranan, these texts are of paramount importance for the historiography both of the country and its national language. For that reason, they are reproduced here in full. Since some of the texts are quite extensive, they have been numbered separately (and in chronological order; see Table 7.1). Unfortunately, I have only been able to locate the original versions of some of these texts (31a, 31b, 31c); my transcriptions of them

103. Reading instruction of slaves was officially allowed in 1844 (writing in 1856).

104. ‘Az’ means something like ‘son of A’, a designation sometimes used in Dutch names to distinguish oneself from others bearing the same name.

are based on the original documents. For the remaining texts (31d, 31e, 31f) I have had to rely on the transcriptions provided by Helstone and Vernooij (2000). In Table 7.2 I provide the sources for both the Sranan and the Dutch versions of these texts.

Table 7.1 Sranan translations of texts concerning Emancipation

31a.	The Emancipation Act (8/8/1862)
31b.	The placard announcing Emancipation (10/3/1862)
31c.	The placard announcing amnesty for runaway slaves (10/20/1862)
31d.	The placard announcing the rights and obligations of emancipated slaves (4/16/1863) & Dornic 1967
31e.	The placard announcing an addendum to the rights and obligations of emancipated slaves (12/23/1863)
31f.	The placard announcing the end of 'State supervision' (6/14/1873)

Table 7.2 Sources for Dutch and Sranan versions of texts concerning Emancipation

#	Dutch version	Sranan version
31a.	GB 1862(6) (also in H&V: 37–43)	<i>Plakatti</i> 1862
31b.	GB 1862(7) (also in H&V: 53)	<i>Plakatti</i> 1862
31c.	GB 1862(8) (also – partly – in H&V: 54)	GB 1862(8)
31d.	GB 1863(9)	GB 1863(9)
31e.	GB 1863(29)	GB 1863(29)
31f.	GB 1873(19)	GB 1873(19)

Notes. GB = *Gouvernementsblad Suriname*; H&V = Helstone & Vernooij 2000

31a. THE EMANCIPATION ACT (1862)

Before Emancipation could be effected, a number of legal measures had to be taken, in particular the passing of the Emancipation Act in Dutch Parliament. This Act consists of 39 articles, not all of which were included in the Sranan version. As is said in the Dutch version of the Proclamation of Emancipation, the text was translated 'as far as it is of any concern to you [i.e. slaves, JA]'. This meant that articles nos 2, 4–9, 11–17, and articles nos 37–39 were left out. The former are all concerned with the financial compensation owners were entitled to for each slave (300 guilders), while the latter relate to certain formal, juridical matters affecting the Governor and the Minister of Colonies. The preamble, which among other things contains a fixed introductory formula, was also left untranslated. As to the articles that are included in the Sranan version, the translation is often seriously incomplete (e.g. Art. 18). The text reproduced below was taken from a version published as a broadsheet in 1862 and kept in the Royal Library in The Hague¹⁰⁵ (*Plakatti* 1862). Apart from the text of the Emancipation Act,

¹⁰⁵ It is not clear to me whether the 1862 *Plakatti* is identical to the text published the same year by one A. L. G. de Randamie (cf. Van Kempen 2003: 378).

this broadsheet also includes the Sranan version of the Proclamation of Emancipation (see no. 31b).

Art. 1. *Sieksi moen na bakka jari, na da fosi dei voe da moen di de meki seibi, da kati-bofassi sa kaba na Sranan kondre.*

Six months after New Year, on the first day of the seventh month, slavery will stop in Suriname.

Art. 3. *Kondre sa potti soema di de na hei kondre wrokko, voe potti en hori hai na tapoe den njoen friman; ma datti sa de voe no morro langa leki tein jari.*

The state will appoint high public servants to supervise the new freemen; but this will only be for ten years.

Art. 10. *Alla sanni die den njoen friman ben habi na da ten die den ben de katibo jette, so leki den krosi, den kweki, den sanni die de na den hosso, alla tra sanni die kondre gi passi, datti wan katibo kan habi, den alla de, en de tan voe den srefi.*

All the possessions owned by the new freemen when they were still slaves, such as their clothes, their livestock and poultry, their movable properties, and all the other things the state allows a slave to have, all these things are and remain theirs.

Art. 18. *Den soema die Kondre potti voe potti en hori hai na den tapoe, Kondre sa meki bakaten bekenti, voe ibriwan soema kan sabi san den moe doe en en da makti di den sa habi.*

As to the persons appointed by the state to supervise them, the state will make an announcement about that later, so that everyone knows what their tasks and their authorities are.

Art. 19. (xxx); *di kondre potti soema na tapoe den njoen Friman, datti de nomo, voe den kan habi? soema, di kan de voe den; voe sorgoe datti no wan soema kori den; voe kaferi gie den te den habi reti. Voe leri den voe den liebi nanga den famili, so leki a fieti voe den liebi makandra. Voe liebie na tra soema miendri na kondre da wan boen, safr?i en sakka fassi, so leki a fieti alla boen soema voe liebi makandra. Voe sorgoe, datti den no sa tan sondro doe wrokko, voe wakka soso, na wan jajo en lasra fassi; ma datti ibriwan voe den sa habi den vasti wrokko voe doe. Voe sorgoe datti den sa leri na skollo voe den sabi boekoe, en voe leri sabi Gado, en da wanni voe Gado. Voe sorgoe datti den helpi den potiwan en den di fieti voe kisi helpi, en voe meki den sikiman kisi boen loekoe, En voe sorgoe datti alla sanni voe den sa wakka nanga boen, en wan boen fassi.*

(???); the only reason for the state to appoint people to supervise the new freemen is that they will have someone who is there for them; to make sure nobody will cheat them; to represent them when they are right. To teach them how to live with a family as well as to live in society.

To live among other people of the land in a good, meek and humble manner, just as it befits all good people to live together. To make sure they will not remain without work, walk around idly, like tramps and vagabonds; and that they will all have a

steady job. To make sure they learn in school how to read and write, and to get to know God and God's will. To make sure that the poor and those who are entitled to help will get help and that the sick will get proper care. And to make sure everything will proceed well and in a proper way.

Art. 20. *Granman voe Sranan Kondre habi da makti, effi den njoen friman holi den srefi so leki a fieti, de wrokko, en sori datti den kan vertrouw den, voe a poeloe den na ondro den soema di den potti gi den; voe meki den tron en de na da srefi fassi leki ibriwan tra fri soema na kondre.*

The Governor of Suriname is authorized, if the new freemen behave like they should, if they work, and show that they can be trusted, to discharge them from State Supervision; to make them become and be exactly like every other free person in the colony.

Art. 21. *Den katibo di de go tron friman noja so, den moe teki wan famili nen, di den moe doe so meni leki den kan, voe ibriwan famili habi da srefi nen, dan den de teki da nen voe den, nanga di voe den famili skrifi na ini den boekoe di de voe datti na kantoro. Te den potti den nen na ini boekoe kaba, den sa gi den wan bewijsi di habi da nomroe voe da presi di den nen de, den famili en den fesi nen en da dei di den meki den, – di no sabi hoe ten den meki hen, den sa potti wan jari gi hen so leki den denki a kan habi. Granman voe Sranan Kondre sa sorgoe datti da skrifi voe den nen sa de bifo da dei di da katibo fassi sa kaba.*

The slaves who are going to be free men now, they should get a family name, which, as far as possible, should be the same for all members of one family, then they will take care that their names and their family names will be written in the book that is in the office for that purpose. When they have put their names in the book, they will be given a proof with the registration number, their family name and their first name and their date of birth, – those who do not know their date of birth, they will put the year that they think they were born. The Governor of Suriname will take care that the registration of names will be finished before the day slavery will stop.

Art. 22. *Alla den reti disi wan Borgroe habbi en alla strafoe di wet potti gi den te den doe ogri, sa de da srefi toe voe den njoen friman, boiti den verandri di da plakatti disi meki voe so langa leki kondre potti soema vo hori hai na den tapoe.*

All the rights a citizen has and all the punishments the law imposes on them if they do evil, will be the same for the new freemen, except for the changes stated in this placard for the duration of the State Supervision.

Art. 23. *Den njoen friman sa de leki ibriwan tra soema na kondre, ma voe den kisi den reti leki wan Borgroe voe kondre, datti sa de te den no de moro na soema ondro, ma dan den moe doe den plekti toe di kondre potti voe wan borgroe moe doe.*

The new freemen will be considered like everyone else in the colony; but they will not obtain the rights of a colony citizen until the period of State Supervision is over, but then they must also do the duties imposed by the state to a citizen

Art. 24. *Den njoen friman moe habbi den vasti wrokko de doe, en den moe doe den wrokko alla dei, boiti Sondei nanga Biddakki, leki da plakatti disi taki.*

The new freemen must have a steady job and they must do their work everyday except Sunday and Prayer Day, as stated by this placard.

A. *Voe den di de liebi na pranasi, effi di de da presi de wrokko.*

For those who live on a plantation or work at some other place.

§1. *den alla di ouwroe tien na veifi, te na den sieksi tenti jari, sa moesoe voe meki wan panpira (kontraki) voe wrokko na pranasi, nanga den eiginari, granmasra, driektoro voe pranasi effi tra soema di de doe pranasi wrokko, so leki den hatti wanni.*

All those who are between fifteen and sixty years old must make a paper (contract) to work at the plantation, with the owners, plantation managers or anyone else in the plantation business, as they desire.

§2. *Da panpira effi kontraki die den sa meki, moe meki na fesi voe den Soema di den potti na den tapoe, en a moe meki na da fassi so leki Kondre sa potti fa a moe de – ma voe no morro mindri dan wan jari, en no morro voeloe dan drie jari.*

That paper or contract which they will make, must be made in the presence of the people in charge of the Supervision and in such a way as will be established by the state – but for not less than one year and not more than three years.

§3. *Granman voe Sranan Kondre habi da makti, effi a feni datti a sa de voe wan boen, voe meki den fosi toe jari na baka da dei di da katibofassi kaba, datti den no sa meki den kontraki, (panpira voe den joeroe den srefi) voe go wrokko na wan tra presi leki na ini da divisi da presi den ben de wrokko da dei di fri kon.*

The Governor of Suriname is authorized, if he thinks this is for the best, to enforce that during the first two years after the day slavery has stopped no contracts (papers for hiring themselves out) will be made for any other place except within the district where the place was located where they worked on the day freedom came.

§4. *Den disi di no sa meki kontraki (panpira voe den joeroe den srefi voe wrokko) drie moen na bakka da dei den tron friman, Kondre sa sorgoe voe potti den voe wrokko na wan lanti pranasi, effi na wan tra wrokko di sa de boen voe Kondre.*

As to those who will not make a contract (papers for hiring themselves out for work) within three months after the day they became freemen, the state will make sure they will be put to work at a government plantation or at some other work of general benefit.

- §5. *Den disi di ouwroe moro leki sieksitenti jari, sa tan nanga den soema effi famili voe den; den pikien di moro jongoe leki tien na veifi jari sa go en tan da presi den mama de.*

Those who are above sixty years, shall stay with their folks or families; the children below fifteen years, shall go and stay where their mamas are.

- §6. *Den disi di ouwroe moro leki sieksitenti jari, en di moro jongoe leki tien na vijfi jari, den sa tan wrokko toe gi den soema, di da gransoema voe den famili effi den mama meki kontraki (effi panpira voe joeroe den srefi voe wrokko.) da wrokko di den ouwroe soema, nanga den jongoe wan moe doe, moe de so leki den man en tranga voe doe; voe datti hede toe, da paiman di den sa kisi, sa de fieti da wrokko di den de doe.*

Those who are above sixty and those who are below fifteen, they shall work for the people with whom the head of the family or their mother has made a contract (or paper for hiring themselves out for work). The work the old people and the young people must do, must be such as they are able and strong enough to do; therefore, the payment they will get will be in proportion to the work they do.

- B. *Voe den disi no ben liebi effi wrokko na pranasi.*

For those who do not live on a plantation or work at some other place.

- §1. *Den alla di de telli tien na vijfi te nanga sieksi tenti jari, sa moesoe voe meki wan kontraki effi panpira voe joeroe den srefi foe wrokko na wan soema di den hatti sa wanni.*

All those who are between fifteen and sixty shall have to make a contract or or paper for hiring themselves out for work with someone of their choice.

- §2. *Da kontraki effi panpira di den sa meki, moe meki na fesi voe da soema di den potti na den tapoe, ma no voe moro mindri leki drie moen, en no moro langa leki wan jari, voe den wrokko na fotto; – ma effi den meki panpira vo go wrokko na pranasi dan a sa moe de voe da srefi langa ten leki a de voe den disi di de liebi en wrokko na pranasi en dan, da srefi sanni di da plakkatti disi potti voe pranasi soema di moro ouwroe leki sieksi tenti jari, en den di moro jongoe leki tien na vijfi jari, sa de toe voe den fotto soema di joeroe den srefi voe wrokko na pranasi.*

The contract or paper they will make, should be made in the presence of the people in charge of the Supervision, but not for less than three months and not for more than one year, to work in town; – but if they make a paper for working at a plantation, then it will have to be for the same length of time as it is for those who live and work on a plantation and then the same things stated in the placard about plantation people who are above sixty and below fifteen will also go for the town's people who hire themselves out to work at a plantation.

- §3. *Den disi kan gi da soema di kondre potti na den tapoe, wan bewijzi datti den sabi wan wrokko voe doe di den kan verdien noffo voe sorgoe voe den srefi nanga den famili, dan den sa kisi passi voe de na den srefi, sondo voe meki kontraki effi panpira nanga ini wan soema voe doe wan wrokko, ma den sa moesoe voe bai wan patenti na kantoro, so leki Kondre Wet potti, voe ibri wan soema di de doe srefi wrokko. Voe a kan habi makti voe doe datti, a de kisi wan bewijzi voe da soema di Kondre potti voe hori hai na den tapoe, en alla jari a sa go kinki da bewijzi voe teki wan njoenwan.*

Those who can give some proof to those charged with their supervision that they know a trade by which they can earn enough money to support themselves and their families, will get a pass to live independently, without making a contract or paper with anyone to do some work, but they will have to buy a patent right at the office, as the law of the colony requires from anyone who does that kind of trade. In order to be authorized to do so, he will get a proof from the person charged with their supervision, and every year he shall go and change the proof for a new one.

- §4. *Den di, dri moen na bakka da katibofassi kaba, no meki kontraki voe wrokko, en den di kisi passi voe voe de na den srefi, kaba den no de doe wan wrokko, Kondre sa potti den na wan lanti pranasi na wrokko, effi, na wan tra wrokko voe boen voe kondre, di den sa man en sabi voe doe.*

As to those who have not made a work-contract within three months after slavery has stopped and those who have received a pass to live independently but are not working in a trade, the state will put them to work on a state plantation or at some other work of general benefit, which they will know and are able to do.

- §5. *Den di ouwroe moro leki siksi tenti jari, en pikien di ouwroe twaarfu te tien na vijfi jari, den sa doe likti wrokko, so leki den kan en man voe doe.*

Those who are above sixty and children who are between twelve and fifteen shall do light work, just as they can do and know how to do.

- §6. *Pikien di ouwroe twaarfoe jari no sa prati nanga den mama, ma pikien di ouwroe moro leki twaarfoe te tien na vijfi jari den datti sa kan wrokko na wan tra presi leki den mama.*

Children who are (below) twelve shall not be separated from their mothers, and children who are between twelve and fifteen, they may work at a different place from their mothers.

- Art. 25. *Voe leri Gado tori en voe leri sabi boekoe, Kondre de sorgoe voe datti, en so meni leki a kan, voe helpi den, gi den tranga en plisiri voe doe datti.*

The state will take care that they will learn about God and how to read and write and to help them, give them strength and pleasure to that as much as it can.

- Art. 26. *Den njoen friman en den fri wrokkoman di den sa tjari kon na Sranan no mak voe habi voe den srefi, effi de tjari wakka gon, pistoor, ponjarti, en den soortoe speri sanni moro, sondo den kisi passi voe datti.*

The new freemen and the free workers that will be brought to Suriname are not allowed to have for themselves or carry along guns, pistols or machetes and other similar things, if they do not have a pass for it.

Art. 27. *Boiti den di moe wrokko strafwrokko voe wan ogri di den doe, alla tra wrokko na lanti pranasi, en alla tra lanti wrokko den sa kisi paiman voe datti. Da paiman en da marki voe da wrokko Kondre sa meki bekenti voe ibriwan soema kan sabi; en datti sa de voe alla tra pranasi so srefi toe, effi den wrokkoman no ben kroederi wan tra fassi di den ben de meki kontraki. Wan wrokko dei sa de aiti joeroe langa, effi den wrokko na fieri, en tien joeroe langa, effi den wrokko na hosso effi sei hosso, en wan jari sa habi drie hondro wrokkodei.*

With the exception of work that has been imposed for an evil they have done, all other work on state plantations and all other work for the government will be paid. The state will announce the pay and the amount of work, for everyone to know; the same will be the case for all other plantations if the workers have not agreed by any other means when they made a contract.

A working day will be eight hours long, if they work in the field, and ten hours, if they work in or near the house, and in one year there will be three hundred working days.

Art. 28. *Effi Kondre wanni voe joeroe soema voe tjari sroedatti go wan presi, effi voe doe wan wrokko di de boen voe kondre, kaba a no kan kisi soema di wanni go, kondre habi makti voe teki so meni voe den njoen friman di no moro jongoe leki tien na vijfi en no moro ouwroe leki sieksi tenti jari, effi noso tra fri pranasi wrokkoman di a sa habi van nodoe voe do da wrokko.*

If the state wishes to hire people to bring soldiers to some place or to perform some work for the general benefit and they cannot get people who are willing to go, the state is authorized to take as many new freemen between fifteen and sixty or, if necessary, other free plantation workers as it will need to do the job.

Art. 29. *En di lesi, de wakka passa den ten sondro wrokko, no habi wan vasti tanpresi, de wakka na wan jajo fassi, lasra den srefi, den sa kisi strafoe voe datti so leki wet takki.*

As to those who are lazy, pass the time without working, do not have a permanent residence, roam like vagabonds, or neglect themselves, they shall be punished for it according to the law.

Art. 30. *Den Eiginari effi soema di ben habbi kattibo die kon fri, sa de verplikti voe wan heli drie moen langa, effi den no habi wan presi voe den tan, voe sorgoe den datti; ma effi den wanni den kan poeroe datti na den tapoe, effi den pai gi den voe den libie wan tra presi so langa da drie moen no tapoe, ma nanga wanni voe da soema di de voe loekoe den. Ma di datti moe passa toe, den slavoe di kon fri sa moesoe voe wrokko ibri wan wieki no morro mindri leiki fô dei, gi da soema di gi den presi voe liebi.*

Owners or (other) persons who had slaves who have become free, will be obliged during three months, if they do not have a place to stay, to provide one; but if they wish, they can be released from that obligation if they pay for them to live at some

other place as long as the three months are not over, but with the permission of the person charged with their supervision. But when that happens, the slaves who have become free shall have to work not less than four days every week for the person who gives them a place to live.

Art. 31. *Ibri wan soema di sa meki den njoen friman wrokko gi den, effi gi den wan presi voe den liebi, sondo a meki kontraki nanga den, so leki datti moe de, a sa kiesi strafœ voe datti, voe pai wan boetoe, en effi a no pai datti, den sa potti hen na benifotto, so leki den sa potti bakaten fa datti moe de.*

Everyone who will make the new freemen work for them or give them a place to live without making a contract with them as they should, will be punished for it by paying a fine, and if he does not pay it, he will be put *benifotto* [inside the fort, JA] as it will be established later how it should be.

Art. 32. *Voe den, di den potti soema voe loekoe den, Kondre sa sorgoe, voe den kisi datra, nanga dresi en boen loekoe te den sieki. Voe den di de wrokko na pranasi, kondre sa potti san da soema di joeroe den sa moesoe voe doe, voe sorgoe wan boen presi voe siekiman tan, voe den kiesi datra nanga dresi en boen loekoe, en na alla tra presi kondre sa meki hatti hoso so meni leki datti sa de van nodoe. Den disi di voe ogri sieki hede den poeroe den na tra soema miendri, so leki kondre wet de takki, Kondre de tan sorgoe datti den de loekoe den na da presi di den meki voe den tan.*

For those who are put under state supervision, the state will take care for them to get doctors and medicine and good care when they are sick. For those who work on a plantation the state will establish what the person who has hired them shall have to do, to provide a good place for the sick to stay, for them to get a doctor and medicine and good care, and everywhere else the state shall have built as many hospitals as will be needed. As to those who have been isolated from society because of a contagious disease, as prescribed by law, the state will take care they will be looked after at the place they prepared for them to stay.

Art. 33. *Den soema di sa joeroe den njoen friman sa habi da verplekti na den tapoe di den moesoe voe doe voe sorgoe den wan boen hosso, voe den nanga den famili liebi, en voe gi den wan piesi gron so langa leki den de na den joeroe, di den habi van nodoe voe den kan prani den njanjan, so leki kondre sa potti fa datti moe de.*

Those who will hire the new freemen shall be obliged to provide a good house for them and their family to live in and to give them a piece of land as long as they hire them, which they need to grow their crops as the state will establish how it should be done.

Art. 34. *Den njoen friman di no wrokko na pranasi, den moe sorgoe voe den srefi nanga den famili, so voe presi voe den libi, leki alla sanni di den habi van nodoe na sieki joeroe, effi den no kroederi wan trafassi, di den meki den kontraki voe wrokko.*

As to those new freemen who do not work on a plantation, they should provide for themselves and their families both a place to live and everything they will need when they get sick, unless they agreed otherwise when they made their work-contract.

Art. 35. *Kondre sa teki na hen tapoe voe doe so leki a kan de, voe sorgoe den pikien di no habi tata nanga mama, voe notti moe mankeri den; – so srefi toe voe den tra poti wan, di habi helpi van nodoe. Voe helpi Kondre nanga alla den someni sanni di de voe doe, di moe kostoe so voeloe voeloe moni, meki voe datti hede a sa de na tapoe alla den njoen friman di sa meki kontraki effi panpira voe joeroe den srefi voe doe fieri effi pranasi wrokko, di de wrokko na fotto, so toe den disi kisi passa? voe bai patent, den alla sa pai ibri jari na lanti: Man Soema, sieksi banknotoe. Oeman, drie banknotoe; Da paiman disi, sa de voe pai, na begin voe alla jari na lanti kantoro, den soema di sa joeroe den voe wrokko, sa pai, en poeloe san den pai bakka na ini den joeroe moni, na ini da srefi jari; – den di de pai patent, en den trawan di no de toe na ondro soema, da san di den moe pai, den sa pai ibri jari na da soema di de na den tapoe, te den go teki, effi kenki da bewiysi di den kisi datti den no de na ondro voe soema, di alla jari den moe kisi effi teki wan njoen wan.*

The state will do all it can to look after the children who do not have a father and a mother, that they will want nothing; – the same with regard to other poor people who need help.

To help the state with all the many things that need to be done, which cost an awful lot of money, for that reason all the new freemen who will make a contract or paper to rent themselves out to do field work or plantation work, or who work in town, and similarly those who have got a pass to buy a patent right, all of them shall pay to the state every year: Men, three guilders. Women, one-and-a-half guilders; This tax will have to be paid at the beginning of every year at the government office; the people who shall hire them shall have to pay it and shall subtract what they paid from the wages in the same year; – those who bought a patent right and the others who do not work for someone else, they shall pay what they have to pay to the person charged with their supervision when they go to pick up or change the proof they received that they do not work for someone else, which they have to get or change every year.

Art. 36. *Da strafoe voe den di no doe so leki da kontraki effi panpira di den joeroe den fri wrokkoman voe wrokko – takki sa de so: Voe da soema di joeroe den, Sa pai wan boetoe; te a no pai da boetoe, den sa kisi hen potti na benifotto, en da kontraki sa kan brokko toe, en effi da kontraki brokko, kaba dati fiti voe de, da wrokkoman sa kisi paiman voe da san a de lassi voe dati hede. Voe den wrokkoman, wan boetoe toe; te a no pai da boetoe, voe kotti datti na joeroe moni di a moe kisi. strafoe wrokko voe wrokko gi kondre. Alla so leki baka ten, da wet voe datti sa meki fa alla sanni moe wakka, hoe soema sa de voe kotti kroetoe en fa da fassi sa de voe soekoe reti.*

The punishment for those who do not as the contract or paper when they hire the free workers to work – is as follows: For the person that hires them, They shall pay a fine; when they do not pay the fine, they will be put in *benifotto* and the contract may be destroyed too, and if the contract was destroyed and it was right to do so, the worker will receive payment for what he lost because of that. For the workers, also a fine; when he does not pay the fine, to subtract it from his wages. Forced labour for the state. Everything according to how the law later shall establish everything should be done, how the judicial system shall be organized and how justice shall be performed.

Da Plakatti disi, da mi tjari hen abra na nengre tongo, A. J. Comvalius Az., Sweriman na nengre tongo.

This placard was translated into Sranan by me, A. J. Comvalius Az., Sworn translator for Sranan.

(source: *Plakatti* 1862)

31b. THE PLACARD ANNOUNCING EMANCIPATION (1862)

Although the original Dutch text of the Proclamation of Emancipation (*Gouvernementsblad* 1862(7)) says that the Negro-English translation is ‘attached to this document’, it does not appear in that issue nor anywhere else in the 1862 volume. The text reproduced below was taken from the same broadsheet used for text no. 31a above.

Plakatti voe Granman, gi alla Katibo na ini Sranan Kondre!

Wi Konoe pliesi voe poti da dei, di da Katibofassi di oen de, sa kaba voe alla ten na Sranan kondre.

Sieksi moen na bakka jari, na da fosi dei voe da moen de meki seibi, Oen alla Fri! Ma di datti sa passa, Konoe wensi oen alla, di a de na oen tapoe leki wan Tata, voe si oen alla na wan boen fassi; datti hede a wanni datti da boen njoensoe moe go na oen alla jessi nojaso kaba, voe oen hatti kan njam pre, habi plisiri na hatti en de tevredefassi, voe wakti so wan bigi ten di de kon. Nanga mi heli hatti toe mi flisiteri oen, en wensi oen alla sanni di de voe boen, so leki mi flisiteri en wensi mi srefi toe, di mi de na oen mindri na presi voe Konoe, en di da mi moe habi da boenhede voe tjari so wan switi njoensoe gi oen. Mi hopoe datti da vertrouw di mi potti na oen tapoe no sa kori mi, ma datti mi sa si na oen alla da plisiri di de na oen hatti sa de toe voe si na den wrokko di den gi oen voe wrokko; holi oen srefi so leki a moe de; meki notti moe de voe takki na oen tapoe; harki nanga sakkafassi da wanni voe oen masra; so wan fassi sa meki oen sori datti oen waarti voe kisi da boen hatti di passa nanga oen, en di de wakti voe passa jette nanga oen na da fosi dei vo da seibi moen na bakka jari. Mo no morro mindri mi de verwakti voe oen toe, te da joeroe sa fon di oen sa takki da katibofassi voe oen adjosi, oen tron friman, oen sa holi oen srefi toe leki a fiti alla boen soema, voe liebi na wan sakkafassi, voe sabi datti kondre de na oen tapoe; doe san oen moe doe, leki an frisoema; holi oen wrokko dorro, voe oen verdien oen moni, di oen kan habi voe loekoe oen srefi nanga oen soema, en voe doe san oen hatti sa wanni voe doe nanga hen. Effi datti passa so, dan oen no sa gi mi trobi, ma nanga alla boenfassi oen sa meki mi doe alla den boen sanni, di Konoe wanni moe passa nanga oen.

Voe oen srefi jessi kan jere morro betre da san oen moe sabi voe doe te da ten kisi, mi meki den potti disi, nanga da Plakatti, na nengre tongo voe oen kan jere en oen kan sabi.

Paramaribo, da 3 Octobroe 1862.

(a ben tekien) Van Lansberge .

Nanga ordroe voe Granman, Da Ambtinari di de doe da wrokko voe Secretaris voe Granman, (a ben tekien) J.E. Wesenhagen.

Da Plakatti disi da mi tjari hen abra na nengre tongo, A. J. Comvalius Az. Sweriman na negre tongo.

(source: *Plakatti* 1862)

Placard of the Governor for all the slaves of Suriname!

It has pleased our King to fix the day when the system of slavery in which you live will be finished forever in Suriname. Six months after the beginning of the new year, on the first day of the seventh month, you will all be free! But now that this will take place, the King, who is above you like a father, wants to see all of you happy; therefore, he wants this good news to be given to your ears already now, so that you can rejoice, be happy and content to await this important moment to come. With all my heart I congratulate you, and wish you all the best, just as I congratulate and wish myself, that I am among you in place of the King, and that I am so fortunate as to bring you such sweet tidings. I hope that I will not be deceived in the confidence I put in you but that the pleasure that is in your hearts will also be seen in the work that you will be given to do; behave yourselves like you should; make sure that nothing can be said against you; listen humbly to your master's wishes; through such behavior you will show that you deserve the fortune that has happened to you and that is still waiting to happen to you on the first day of the seventh month of the new year. But no less do I expect from you too, when the hour will come when you will say goodbye to your days of slavery, when you are free men, that you will behave as befits all good people, to live humbly, to know that the government is above you; do what you have to do, like a free man; work steadily, to earn your money, which you can use to look after yourself and your loved ones, and to do what your heart shall wish to do with it.

If things will go this way, you will not give me any trouble, but with all your good behaviour you will make it possible for me to do all the good things the King wants to happen to you. In order for your ears to better understand the things you should know how to do when the time comes, I have had a translation into Sranan made of this [i.e. the Emancipation Act, reproduced above under 31a, JA] and of this placard, so that you can hear and you can know.

Paramaribo, 3 October 1862.

(was signed) Van Lansberge.

On order of the Governor, The public servant who is acting as secretary of the Governor (was signed) J.E. Wesenhagen.

I translated this placard into Sranan, A. J. Comvalius Az. Sworn translator for Sranan.

31c. THE PLACARD ANNOUNCING AMNESTY FOR RUNAWAY SLAVES (1862)

The Proclamation of Emancipation was followed by a placard of October 20, 1862, granting amnesty to those runaway slaves who had escaped after the peace treaties of the 1760s had been signed. Although this text was published at least twice before (*Encyclopedie* 1977: 564; Helstone & Vernooij 2000: 54), in both cases only the text of the actual article was included (i.e. from *Na da enkri pisi disi* onwards), not the preamble.

Plakatti.

Na nen voe Konoe! Granman voe Sranan Kondre, Wensi boen gi alla soema di sa si, effi jere den lesi da Plakatti disi, a sa meki den sabi: Di wi prakseri na alla fassi, datti a kan de nanga noffo voe den katibo, di dorro nomo de ronwe voe den Masra effi Pranasi di den de, datti notti leki frede voe kisi strafoe di den ronwe, de tappoe den voe den drai kon bakka; datti so srefi a kan de toe nanga den krioro voe boesi, di sonten de hangri voe go we libi den kampoe, voe kon na soema miendrie, effi na den presi di soema de liebi na kondre; Wi jere na da Hei Kroetoe voe Kondre; En feni voe boen: Voe do so leki da makti di wi kisi voe Konoe de takki voe potti:

Na da enkri pisi disi.

Datti alla den katibo di ben ronwe granoewe kaba, nanga den di go we bakkaten, effi den di ronwe na da kriboi ten nojaso – effi den srefi drai kon bakka, Wi de pramisi den, en da pramisi de voe troe troe, datti voe da ronwe, di den ronwe, den no sa kisi strafoe voe datti. So srefi toe den krioro voe boesi, no ha voe frede toe, den kan kon bakka na den masra effi na da pranasi di den denki den mama, effi Granmama ben de liebi. Voe alla soema kan sabi en jere san da plakatti disi takki, den sa doe so leki den njoensoe voe doe alla ten voe meki hen bikenti, en potti hen nanga di den tjari abra na mengre¹⁰⁶ tongo, na koranti voe kondre.

Paramaribo, da 20 October 1862.

(a ben tekien) Van Lansberge.

Da Ambtinari di de doe da wrokko voe Secretaris voe Granman,

(a ben tekien) J. E. Wesenhagen.

Da Plakatti disi da mi tjari hen abra na mengre tongo, A. J. Comvalius Az. Sweriman na mengre tongo.

(source: *Gouvernementsblad* 1862 (8), 10/20/1862)

Placard.

In the name of the King! The Governor of Suriname, Greets all those who will see or who will have read to them this placard, he lets them know: As we thoroughly believe that it is possible that many slaves who ran away from their masters or from the plantations they lived on are held back from returning by fear of being punished

106. A typo for *nengre*.

for having run away; and that the same thing goes for the ‘bush creoles’,¹⁰⁷ who may be anxious to leave their ‘camps’,¹⁰⁸ to come among the people and the places where the people live; Having heard the ‘High Council’,¹⁰⁹ we see fit to decide, as the power conferred to us by the King says:

This is the only article.

We promise to all slaves who ran away a long time ago as well as those who did so later and those who did so recently, if they come back voluntarily – and it is a true promise – they will not be punished for running away. Similarly, those who were born as Maroons should not be afraid; they may return to their master or to the plantation where they think their mother or grandmother lived. In order for everyone to be able to know and understand what this placard says, the same thing will be done as is always done, namely to make it known and publish it, together with a translation into Sranan, in the government newspaper.

Paramaribo, October 20, 1862.

(was signed) Van Lansberge.

The public servant who does the job of the Governor’s secretary

(was signed) J. E. Wesenhagen.

I, A. J. Comvalius Az., sworn translator for Sranan, translated this placard into Sranan.

31d. THE PLACARD ANNOUNCING THE RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF EMANCIPATED SLAVES (4/16/1863)

Since the slaves were put under State supervision for ten years following Emancipation, the colonial government published a text in which their rights and obligations were clearly stated. Since I have not been able to locate the original version of the Sranan version of this placard the transcription presented here is taken from Helstone and Vernooij (2000: 44–50).

PLAKKATI

Disi meki alla njoen friman disi de na ondro lanti, en dem soema disi joeroe dem, sabi san na dem reti en san da dem plikti toe.

(Gouvermentsblad 1863 No 9)

PLACARD,

Which makes known to all the new freedmen who belong to this country and to those who hire them what their rights are and also what their duties are.

(Gouvermentsblad 1863 No 9)

107. Maroons who were born ‘in the bush’.

108. This was the usual word used by the colonial government to refer to Maroon villages.

109. The Colonial Council, a representative body of the elite among Suriname’s population of the time.

NA NEM FOE KONOE!

Granman foe Sranam Kondré Si dati a de fannodoe, foe meki wan plakkati, disi meki alla njoen friman disi de na lanti ondro, en dem soema disi joeroe dem, sabi san na dem reti, en san na dem plikti toe; En disi Granman jere san da heikroetoe disi de helpémeki plakkati taki; A finni boen foe poti, so leki da Plakkati disi de taki:

IN THE NAME OF THE KING!

The Governor of Suriname, Seeing that it is necessary to make a proclamation to make sure all the new freedmen who fall under the jurisdiction of the government and the people who hire them know their rights and their obligations, the Governor, having heard the High Court that helped make this proclamation, thinks it is right to proclaim, as is proclaimed in this proclamation:

Foe alla njoen friman disi de na lanti ondro, so na Foto leki na Pranasi.

Concerning all the new freedmen who fall under the jurisdiction of the government, both in Paramaribo and on the plantations.

Supervisorsi foe ibri riba en disi foe foto sa meki wan boekoe, so leki Granman sa sori hem.

The supervisors of every river and those of Paramaribo shall keep a book like the Governor will show them.

2. *Na ini da boekoe Supervisorsi sa skrifi alla dem njoen friman nomroe, dem nem, ho tem dem meki dem, iffi ho meni jari a denki dem habi, soortoe wroko da friman de doe; so srefi dem nem, jari en da wroko foe hem mama, nanga di foe dem tra famili, en iffi da mama trou kaba, dan a sa skrifi da tata nem toe. Boiti na ini dem boekoe pé kondré meki dem skrifi alla soema nem disi tron, disi meki pikien, nanga disi dede, Supervisorsi sa skrifi toe na ini da boekoe, pé dem njoen friman nem de, dem njoen friman disi tron, disi meki, iffi disi dede. Ibri friman disi ouroe 15 jari kaba, de kom aparti na boekoe.*

In the book the supervisors shall write the numbers of all the new freedmen, their names, when they were born or how old they think they are, what kind of work the freedman does; similarly the names, years and work of their mother and of the rest of their family, and if the mother is married he shall write the name of the father too. Apart from the book in which the government has them write the names of everybody who got married, who had a baby and who died, the supervisors shall write in the book containing the names of the new freedmen the new freedmen who got married, who had a baby, or who died. Every freedman who has reached the age of fifteen shall be entered separately in the book.

3. *Iffi wan soema komopo foe wan riba go na trawan, Supervisorsi foe pé a komopo sa poeloe hem na hem boekoe, en da Supervisorsi foe da riba pé a go, sa potti hem na hem boekoe.*

If someone leaves one river to go to another one, the supervisor of his place of origin shall remove him from his book and the supervisor of the river he is going to shall enter him in his book.

4. *Dem friman disi sa kisi in wan tem primisi foe Granman foe komopo na lanti ondro, Supervisorsi sa poeloe dem nem na ini da boekoe.*

Whenever freedmen shall get permission from the Governor to be dismissed from the jurisdiction of the government, the supervisor shall remove their names from the book.

5. *Ibri wan njoen friman foe 15 té 60 jari, so srefi dem, disi, alwasssi dem habi moro leki 60 jari, tokoe kroederi foe wroko, nanga dem disi kisi primisi foe doe wan ambakti iffi wan tra wroko na dem srefi, de kisi foe Supervisorsi wan pikien boekoe; a moesoe pai 25 sensi foe segri; – da soema disi joeroe hem sa pai da segri-moni na fesi, en a sa poeloe dati bakatem na ini hem joeroe-moni. Dem disi kisi primisi foe wroko na dem srefi, moesoe pai da segri-moni so hesi leki dem kisi da pikien boekoe.*

Every new freedman of fifteen to sixty years old and those who have agreed to work even though they are over sixty as well as those who have permission to ply a trade or to work independently shall get a little book from the supervisor. He must pay 25 cents for the seal. The person who hires him shall pay the money for the seal in advance and shall subtract it later from his wages. Those who have permission to work independently shall pay the money for the seal as soon as they receive the little book.

6. *Te da pikien boekoe foeloe, da friman de kisi wan trawan foe soso, mara iffi a lasi, kaba Supervisorsi ondroesoekoe en a finni dati da soema no lasi iffi trowé hem foe espresi, dan a kan kisi wan tra pikien boekoe, mara a moesoe pai agèn 25 sensi foe segri. Iffi a kom na krien dati wan friman priti, trowé iffi pori da pikien boekoe foe espresi, a sa pai, boiti da segri-moni, wan boekoe foe 2 té 5 banknotoe. Wan friman disi farsi hem pikien boekoe, iffi meki gebruiki foe wan farsi wan, iffi foe wan tra-soema pikien boekoe, Supervisorsi sa strafoe hem foe a wroko na strati, njoen foto, iffi lanti pranasi, foe wan moen te dri moen langa. Soema disi joeroe njoen riman en alla tra soema, iffi dem farsi wan pikien boekoe, iffi helpi foe farsi wan pikien boekoe, dem sa kisi strafoe, so leki plakkati foe kondré poti.*

When the little book is full the freedman will get another one for free, but if he loses it and the supervisor finds he didn't lose it or threw it away deliberately, he can get another one but again he should pay 25 cents for the seal. If it turns out that a freedman destroyed or threw away or damaged the little book deliberately, he shall pay, apart from the money for the seal, a fine of two to five banknotes. A freedman who makes a counterfeit book or makes use of a counterfeit book or of someone else's book, the supervisor shall punish him with having to work on the streets, in the new part of Paramaribo or on the government's plantations for one to three months. Persons who hire new freedman and everybody else, if they make a counterfeit book or help make a counterfeit book, they will be punished according to the laws of the country.

7. *Na ini da pikien boekoe dem nomroe, dem nem en jari foe da friman de kom, so srefi da kroederi, disi a meki, Supervisorsi sa teeken hem nem na da fosi en da kriboi sei foe da boekoe en a sa marki dem tra blad nanga dem fosi letter foe hem nem.*

In the little book will be the number, the name and the age of the freedman, as well as the working agreement he makes; the supervisor will sign it at the front and at the back and on the other pages he will put his initials.

8. *So langa dem njoen friman de na lanti ondro, dem de verplikti foe kroederi foe wroko doro, na wan reti fasi, na wan pé; foe dati hede dem moesoe meki wan kontraki (dati wani taki wan pampira, pé Supervisorsi skrifi alla sani disi dem kroederi.). Alla kroederi foe wan jari en moro langa moesoe de na tapoe wan segri foe 25 sensi, en foe moro sjatoe tem leki wan jari, 10 sensi. Moro leki wan soema kan kroederi na tappoe wan segri.*

As long as the new freedmen are under the jurisdiction of the government they are required to agree to work in a correct way at one place. Therefore, they should make a contract (that is a piece of paper on which the supervisor writes down everything they have agreed upon). All agreements for one year and more will be done on a seal of 25 cents, those for shorter periods, 10 cents. More than one person can make an agreement on one seal.

9. *Dem pikien foe dem njoen friman disi de na lanti ondro, alwass dem tata nanga mama habi foe taki na dem, tappoe so langa dem no ouroe 23 jari, tokoe, iffi den habi 18 jari, dem kan meki kontraki sondo primisi foe dem tata iffi mama. Iffi dem, disi na tapoe 18 jari, no kan kisi primisi foe dem tata iffi mama, foe meki kontraki, den Supervisorsi sa koti da trobi.*

The children of the new freedmen who are under the jurisdiction of the government, even though they fall under their parents' authority until they are twenty-three, if they are eighteen they can make an agreement without their parents' permission. If those who are eighteen cannot get permission from their parents to make an agreement, the supervisor will decide.

10. *So hesi a kom na krien, dati dem tata iffi mama, iffi dem soema disi teki da sorgoe na dem tappoe, foe pikien disi no habi 18 jari jette, de teki da moni disi dem pikien de wroko sondo foe gi dem san dem habi fannodoe, Supervisorsi sa bemoei na ini en a sa meki dati da san dem pikien verdieni tan foe dem.*

As soon as it turns out that parents or caretakers of children below eighteen take the money their children earn without giving them what they need, the supervisor will interfere and he will make sure that what the children earn remains theirs.

11. *Alla kroederi foe wroko moesoe meki na fesi foe Supervisorsi en a moesoe teeken da pampira foe dati toe. A sa skrifi da kroederi na ini da pikien boekoe; te da tem foe da kroederi kaba en dem srefi soema kroederi so srefi agèn, Supervisorsi sa poti dati na tappoe da kontraki en na ini da pikien boekoe; so toe iffi dem srefi soema no meki njoen kontraki, Supervisorsi sa poti na ini dem boekoe foe san hede dem no doe dati.*

All agreements should be made in the presence of the supervisor and he should sign the paper too. He shall write the agreement in the little book. When the agreement runs out and the same people hold on to it, the supervisor will put it in the contract and in the book. Similarly, if the same people do not renew their agreement, the supervisor will write in the book why that is.

12. *Iffi wan friman di de na lanti ondro wani joeroe hem srefi na wan tra riba, a moesoe meki da Supervisorsi foe hem riba sabi dati, dan iffi Supervisorsi si na ini da pikien boekoe dati da soema kontraki kaba, a sa gi hem wan bewijsi foe sori da Supervisorsi foe da tra riba. So hesi leki so wan soema meki da njoen kontraki, da wan Supervisorsi sa meki da trawan kisi foe sabi, foe kan poeloe da friman na hem boekoe.*

If a freedman who is under the jurisdiction of the government wants to get hired on another river, he should notify the supervisor of his river; then, if the supervisor sees in the little book that that person's contract has expired, he will give him a proof to show to the supervisor of the other river. As soon as such a person makes a new contract, the one supervisor shall notify the other one so he can remove the freedman from his little book.

13. *Ibriwan soema kan joeroe hem srefi foe someni moni leki a kan kisi; mara iffi no wan tra kroederi de, dan da pai sa de foe pranasi wroko, so leki da plakkati disi sori lanti marki poti kaba, iffi tra plakkati sa poti bakkatem. Dem, disi dri moen na bakka dem fri, no ben kan meki kontraki, so dati lanti moesoe poti dem na wroko, habi allatem passi foe kroederi en meki kontraki nanga tra soema.*

Every person can let himself be hired for as much money as he can get. But if there is no other agreement, payment shall be that for plantation work, just like it was already established in the proclamation that showed the government's tasks or will be established by other proclamations in the future. Those who, three months after emancipation, have not been able to make an agreement, so that the government has had to employ them, maintain the right to make an agreement with someone else.

14. *Dem njoen friman disi de na Lanti ondro, iffi dem foefoeroe wan pikien sani, iffi dem feti nanga makandra; iffi dem sori kaprisi nanga mofo, iffi ibri wan tra asrantifasi, gi da soema disi joeroe dem, iffi driktoro, iffi dem kosi, nakki, dreigi foe nakki, iffi pramisi trawan, iffi dem droengoe, lesi, mankeri wroko foe espresi, iffi dem no doe dem plikti so leki a fiti en dem kontraki taki, iffi meki oproeroe na pranasi, sondo dati moro bigi ogri kon na tappoe, Supervisorsi sa strafoe dem nanga wan boetoe disi no sa de moro foeloe leki 5 banknote; iffi nanga doengroe hoso foe dri dei te dri moen langa; iffi nanga strafoe wroko na Lanti, srefi na ini ketien-boei foe aiti dei te dri moen langa. Di soema meki – foe ogri hatti hede, iffi bikasi a no loekoe da sani boen – wrokosani, sani foe mierihoso, iffi foe bakrahoso, iffi ini wan tra sani foe da soema disi joeroe hem, iffi disi foe driktoro, lasi, broko iffi kisi mankeri, Supervisorsi kan meki da soema disi sani pori, poeloe san da sani waarti na ini da joeroe moni foe da friman, boiti da strafoe disi a sa kisi.*

The new freedmen who fall under the jurisdiction of the government, if they steal something small, if they fight with each other, if they use foul language or show any other kind of impudent behavior towards the person who hires them, if they curse, hit, or threaten to hit, or threaten others, if they are drunk, lazy, do not perform their duties deliberately, if they do not fulfill their obligations like they should and like the contract says, if they cause a riot on the plantation, without any other serious offences in addition to that, the supervisor shall punish them with a fine that will not exceed five banknotes, or with imprisonment from three days to three months, or with forced labor for the government, even in chains for eight days to three months. If someone, out of spite or carelessness, causes equipment, things belonging to the mill or to the owner's house or anything else belonging to the person who hires him or to the manager, to get lost or broken or be missing, the supervisor may allow the person whose things have been damaged to subtract the value of those things from the freedman's wages, apart from the punishment he will get.

15. *Dem njoen friman disi de na lanti ondro habi réti te wan soema joeroe dem, kaba a no pai dem da joeroe-moni, foe soekoe dem réti na kroetoe, sondro pai onkostoe foe dati. Dem disi de na foto anga den disi de na pranasi kan doe dati na Pikienkroetoe na foto, en dem disi foe Nickerie en Coronie, na da kroetoe disi de na dem plesi dati.*

The new freedmen who are under the jurisdiction of the government have the right, if someone hires them but does not pay them their wages, to seek justice at the Court without incurring any costs. Those who are in Paramaribo or on the plantations can do so at the Small Court in Paramaribo, and those in Nickerie and Coronie can do so at the Courts in those places.

16. *Alla klagi disi dem njoen friman habi, den kan doe dati na Supervisorsi.*
All complaints the new freedman may have should be directed to the supervisor.
17. *Iffi Supervisorsi kisi foe sabi dati wan soema disi joeroe njoen friman, iffi wan driktoro no doe so leki a kroederi en hem kontraki de taki,- so srefi iffi a no doe dem plikti disi plakkati foe kondre poti, – Supervisorsi sa meki Fiskari kisi dati foe sabi; Te Fiskari finni dati fitti so, a sa tjari, dem disi doe so na kroetoe fesi. Te kroetoe finni dati dem soema disi joeroe dem njoen friman, iffi den driktoro no habi réti, a sa strafoe dem nanga wan boetoe foe 50 banknotoe te wan doesoen banknotoe; en srefi kroetoe kan broko da kontraki, en meki dem pai da friman alla san a lasi foe dati héde.*

If the supervisor finds out that a person who hires new freedmen or a manager does not act according to the agreement and the contract, similarly if he does not fulfill the obligations mentioned in the law of the country, he shall notify the *fiskari*. If the *fiskari* finds this confirmed, he will bring those who do so to justice. If the Court feels that the persons who hire the new freedmen or the managers are wrong, it will punish them with a fine of fifty to one thousand banknotes. The

Court may even break the contract and have them pay the freedmen every damage they incurred because of it.

18. *Iffi kroetoe broko da kontraki, dan Supervisorsi sa helpi da friman foe meki wan njoen kontraki nanga wan tra soema; te a no finni wan joeroe hesi, Lanti sa poti hem na wroko, mara allatem a habi passi, alwassi a de na Lanti, foe kroederi en meki kontraki nanga tra soema.*

If the Court breaks the contract, the supervisor will help the freedman make a new contract with someone else. If he does not find employment quickly, the government will employ him, but he always maintains the right, even though he works for the government, to make an agreement and a contract with someone else.

19. *Iffi kroetoe strafoe wan soema disi joeroe wan njoen friman, iffi wan driktoro morotron bikasi a no noli hem na dem kontraki, iffi bikasi a no de libi nanga dem soema disi de na hem ondro so leki a fiti, Fiskari kan tjari hem baka na kroetoe fesi, foe tapoe hem foe joeroe wrokomani iffi foe kommanderi dem.*

If the Court has punished someone who hires new freedmen or a manager several times because he does not adhere to the contract or because he does not treat his employees the way he should, the *fiskari* can bring him to Court again in order to keep him from hiring workers or being in charge of them.

20. *Granman kan gi dem njoen friman disi de na Lanti ondro, primisi foe habi hoso, gron, pranasi, foe dem srefi; mara Granman habi da reti toe foe tapoe dem foe libi na dem gron iffi pranasi, te dem no doe alla plikti disi wet poti na dem tappoe do langa dem de na ondro Lanti. So srefi iffi dem wani joeroe wan gron, Granman moe gi primisi fosi, en iffi dem no doe dem plikti, dem so sa kan habi pasi foe libi pé dem joeroe, iffi prani da gron.*

The Governor may give the new freedmen who are under the jurisdiction of the government permission to have a house, land, and a farm for themselves. But the Governor has the right too to keep them from living on their land or farm if they won't fulfill all the obligations the law imposes on them as long as they are under the jurisdiction of the government. Similarly, if they want to rent a piece of land, the Governor must give permission first, and if they do not fulfill their obligations they will not be permitted to live where they rent or cultivate the land.

21. *Lanti sa sorgoe so meni leki a kan, meki dem pikien foe dem njoen friman disi de na Lanti ondro, go na skólo en foe dem leri sabi Gado. Na dem presi, pé skólo de, dem pikien foe 7 te 15 jari moesoe go na skólo; ma dem disi habi 12 té 15 jari de go ibri dei toe joeroe nomo na skólo. Tata, mama en alla tra soema disi teki pikien foe loekoe, moesoe sorgoe foe dem pikien go na skólo, iffi no so, dem sa pai wan boetoe foe 5 banknotoe. Dem soema disi joeroe dem njoen friman, iffi dem driktoro disi sa tapoe dem pikien foe go na skólo iffi na leri, sa pai 50 té 200 banknotoe boetoe.*

The government will take care, as much as it can, that the children of the new freedmen who are under the jurisdiction of the government will attend school and learn about God. At the places where there is a school, the children of seven to fifteen should go to school, but those from twelve to fifteen shall attend only for two hours a day. Fathers, mothers, and caretakers should make sure the children go to school; if not, they will pay a fine of five banknotes. The persons who hire the new freedmen or the managers who keep the children from going to school or from learning will pay a fine of 50 to 200 banknotes.

22. *Alla boetoe disi da plakkati disi poti de foe lanti. Dem boetoe, disi dem njoen friman moesoe pai, de komopo na ini dem joeroe-moni, iffi dem no pai hem wantem.*

All fines mentioned in this proclamation belong to the government. The fines to be paid by the new freedmen will be subtracted from their wages unless they pay them immediately.

23. *Alla njoen friman disi de na Lanti ondro, disi no sabi foe skrift, kaba dem moesoe teeken kontraki iffi iri wan tra pampira, Supervisorsi iffi hem Sekretarsi sa meki dem meki wan kroismarki na plesi foe den nem.*

All new freedmen who are under the jurisdiction of the government and who cannot write, if they are required to sign a contract or any other paper, the supervisor or his secretary shall have them make a cross instead of their name.

24. *Foe helpi pikienso nanga dem bigi onkostoe disi a habi foe boekoe dem pikien disi no habi tata iffi mama, en dem ouroe en malingri njoen friman disi no kan wroko moro, alla njoen friman disi de na Lanti ondro en disi moesoe meki kontraki foe wroko, en alla dem disi kisi primisi foe wroko na dem sreft, moesoe pai Lanti kantoro ibri jari, dem manwan 6 banknotoe en dem oemanwan 3 banknotoe ibri soema, boiti da patent-moni foe da ambakti disi dem de doe. Na bigien foe ibri jari dem soema, disi joeroe dem njoen friman, moesoe pai Lanti-kantoro gi dem, en na ini da jari dem sa poeloe dati baka na ini dem joeroe-moni; – dem njoen friman disi de wroko na dem sreft, moesoe pai kantoro-moni da sreft dei di dem kisi da bewijsi foe Supervisorsi, dati dem kan wroko na dem sreft.*

To assist a little in the big costs the government makes to support the orphans and the sick and elderly new freedmen who are no longer able to work, all new freedmen who are under the jurisdiction of the government and who must make an employment contract, and all those who have permission to work independently, every one of them must pay to the government's office every year six banknotes per man and three banknotes per woman, apart from the 'patent money' for the trade they ply. At the beginning of every year the people who hire the new freedmen must pay the government's office on their behalf, and during the year they will subtract it from their wages. The new freedmen who work independently must pay the 'office money' the same day they get the official permission from the supervisor to work independently.

B. *Foe dem njoen friman na Lanti ondro, disi ben de libi, iffi ben de wroko na pranasi.*

Concerning all the new freedmen under the government's jurisdiction, who used to live or work on a plantation

25. *Dem njoen friman disi ben de libi allatem na pranasi, iffi ben njoensoe foe wroko na pranasi en disi ouroe 15 té 60 jari, de verplikti foe meki kontraki, foe dem srefi nanga dem famili, foe tan wroko na pranasi na ondro ibriwansoema disi dem srefi wani en disi plakkati gi makti foe joeroe. Da kontraki moesoe de foe moro sjatoe tem leki wan jari en no moro langa leki dri jari.*

The new freedmen who always used to live on a plantation or used to work on a plantation and who are between fifteen and sixty years of age, are obliged to make a contract for themselves and their families to continue working on a plantation for anyone they want to who is permitted by this proclamation to hire people. The contract should be for at least one year and at most three years.

26. *Dem disi ouroe moro leki 60 jari de tan nanga dem famili; pikien disi no habi 15 jari jete, moesoe go pé dem mama de. Ma dem ouroe soema en dem pikien, so meni leki dem kan, dem moesoe wroko gi da soema disi joeroe da famili iffi da mama, en da soema sa pai dem so meni leki dem wroko waarti.*

Those who are above sixty stay with their families. Children below fifteen must go with their mothers. But the elderly and the children must work, to the extent they can, for the person who hires the family or the mother and the person shall pay them what their labor is worth.

27. *Foe wan oeman disi trou, dem no mak soekoe moro wroko leki toe poorsi na ini wan marki; (dati wani taki, dem sa prati da marki na dri poorsi, en toe poorsi (2/3) foe dati a sa moesoe wroko). Foe oeman, disi habi 5 moen béré dem no mak soekoe moro wroko leki háfoe marki, té da bere ouroe 7 moen; -abra 7 moen, da soema disi joeroe hem no kan soekoe wroko moro na hem. Iffi wan oeman meki wan dédé pikien, dan fotenti dei na baka a moesoe go na wroko, mara iffi da pikien dé na libi, dan té a ouroe dri moen fosi.- Dem heeli dri fosi moen, disi a de na wroko, a no de go na fili, ma a de wroko na seihoso té 6 moen tapoe; dan a de go na háfoe marki so langa da pikien no ouroe wan jari. Bifosi háfoe aiti joeroe na mamantem, en na baka sieksi joeroe sapatem, no wan soema kan soekoe wroko na dem mama disi habi pkien na bobbi, so langa da pikien no ouroe wan jari. So langa dem béréman en mekiman no de wroko heeli marki, dem no kisi moro paiman, leki da wroko waarti disi dem doe. Iffi dem srefi finni dati dem kan doe moro wroko leki da soema disi joeroe dem mak soekoe na dem, dan dem sa kisi paiman foe da wroko disi dem doe na tappoe.*

A married woman may not be given a job of more than two thirds of a full task. (That means they will have to divide the task into three parts and she shall do two parts of that.) A woman who is five months into her pregnancy may not be given a job of more than half of a full task, until she gets into her seventh month. Past her seventh month, the person who hires her may not employ her anymore. If a

woman gives birth to a still-born baby, she should go back to work after 40 days, but if the baby lives only after three months. The entire first three months when she is back at work, she shall not go to the field but she shall work in the house until the end of the sixth month. Then she will return to half-task until the baby is one year old. Before half past seven in the morning and after six o'clock at night, nobody may require work from the mothers who are suckling their babies until the baby is one year old. As long as the pregnant women and the women who gave birth recently do not perform a full task, they will not get more payment than the work they do is worth. If they themselves feel they can do more work than the person who hires them is allowed to require from them, they will get payment for the extra work they do.

28. *Iffi dem njoen friman no meki wan tra kroederi, dan dem moesoe doe ibriwan wroko disi dem gi dem foe doe en disi dem kan doe, boiti da fasti wroko disi dem joeroe dem srefi na kontraki, foe doe na pranasi. Foe dati hédé dem no mak weigri foe holi wakti na sloisi, iffi na ini njanjam gron, na dei, iffi na neti; so srefi toe, dem sa moesoe doe alla soortoe wroko, disi joeroeman mak soekoe na dem, na Sondei en Feestti dei, so leki ro boto iffi pondo, doe hoso wroko, loekoe kweki en alla so soortoe wroko. Na dem pranasi pé watra-miri de, kaba a de tem foe mala, dem moesoe wroko na Sondei toe, foe koti en tjari ken; -na ini miri en boli-hoso en foe meki soekroe; so srefi toe na kofi-, kakau- nanga katoen pranasi, te dem de piki iffi wroko kofi, kakau iffi katoen, dem wrokoman no mak weigri foe wroko na Sondei, iffi a dé fanodoe; mara dan dem moesoe kisi bakatem so meni dei foe bloo, leki so meni Sondei disi dem lasi.*

If the new freedmen do not want to make an agreement, they must do any kind of work that they are given and that they can do, apart from the steady work they hired themselves to do on the plantation by contract. For that reason they may not refuse to hold watch over sluices or provision grounds, day or night. Similarly, they will have to do all kinds of work their employer may require from them, on Sundays or holidays, such as rowing boats or ferries, do domestic work, look after children and all that kind of work. At the plantations where there is a water-mill, when it is time to grind, they must work on Sundays too, cut and carry the sugar-cane into the mill and the boiling-house and make sugar. Similarly, at coffee, cocoa, and cotton plantations, when they pick or process coffee, cocoa or cotton, the workers may not refuse to work on Sundays if it is necessary. But they should get as many resting days in return as the number of Sundays they lost.

29. *Ibri joeroeman nanga wrokoman no kroederi trafasi, dan dem wrokoman moesoe wroko aiti joeroe ibri dei na fili, en ten joeroe na sei hoso; – wan jari habi drie hondro wrokodei. Dem soema disi wroko na neti, habi reti da tra dei foe kisi so meni joeroe baka foe bloo, leki dem ben lasi na neti; dem sa kisi foe da dei dati so meni paiman leki da wroko disi dem doe waarti. Dem soema disi de wroko na fili moesoe go seebien joeroe mamantem na wroko, en dem disi de wroko na miri iffi na sei hoso, sieksi joeroe; boiti iffi dem kroederi trafasi.*

Unless employer and employee agree otherwise, the employer must work eight hours in the field and ten hours in the house a day. A year has three hundred working days. The people who work at night have the right to be given as many hours of rest the next day as they lost during the night. They shall get for that day as much payment as the work they did is worth. The people who work in the fields should go to work at seven in the morning and those who work at the mill or in the house at six, unless they agreed otherwise.

30. *No wan soema habi makti foe komopo na da gron iffi pranasi pé a joeroe hem srefi foe wroko, go na wan tra plesi, sondro a habi wan passabrifi foe hem driktoro. Foe wan soso sanni hédé hédé hédé dem driktoro no mak weigri wan soema wan passa-brifi, – en nooiti, iffi a aksi dai foe go gi klagi na Supervisorsi, mara no moro leki dri soema kan kisi passi makandra foe go na Supervisorsi. Iffi wan driktoro weigri brifi foe wan soso sanni hédé, iffi no wani gi brifi foe go klagi na Supervisorsi, a sa pai wan boetoe foe twinti banknotoe té toehondro banknotoe.*

No-one is allowed to leave the land or the plantation where he got himself hired to work, to go somewhere else without permission from his manager. The manager may not refuse permission for some petty reason and he may never do so when asked for permission to bring a complaint before the supervisor. But no more than three people may get permission to go to the supervisor at the same time. If a manager refuses to give permission for a petty reason or does not want to give permission to bring a complaint before the supervisor, he shall pay a fine of twenty to two hundred banknotes.

31. *Iffi dem kisi wan njoen frman sondro passa-brifi foe hem driktoro, dan a moesoe pai wan boetoe foe 5 banknotoe, iffi a moesoe doe srafoe wroko 8 dei té wan moen, so leki Supervisorsi sa finni foe boen; biti iffi da friman kan bewijsi dati a ben aksi wan passa-brifi foe go klagi na Supervisorsi en hem driktoro no ben wani gi hem.*

If a new freedman is caught without permission from his manager, he must pay a fine of five banknotes, or he must do a slave's work for eight days to one month, just as the supervisor thinks is right, unless the freedman can prove that he had asked for permission to bring a complaint before the supervisor and his manager refused to give it to him.

32. *Ibri soema disi joeroe njoen friman, moesoe pai dem da joeroe-moni alla wiki; a moesoe gi dem, nanga dem famili, wan boen hoso foe libi; a moesoe gi ibriwan foe da famili disi ouroe moro leki 15 jari, wan pisi gron disi bigi wan kétien na langa en wan ketien na bradi, na ini poldroe en so dati dem gotro kan poeloe den watra. Da pisi gron sa dé foe dem prani dem njanjam; ma foe prani baâna, dem moesoe habi aparti rimisi foe driktoro; a moesoe gi dem nanga dem famili datra nanga dressi en san sikiman habi fanodoe, en a moesoe sorgoe foe boen siki-hoso.*

Everyone who hires new freedmen must pay them their wages every week. He must give them and their families a good house to live in. He must give every member of the family who is over fifteen a piece of land of one *ketting* wide and one

ketting long, in the polder so the water can be drained by gutters. That piece of land will be for them to grow food. But to grow bananas they need special permission from the manager. He must give them and their families a doctor and medicine and whatever sick people need, and he must make sure there is a good hospital.

33. *Iffi wan soema siki en driktoro senni hem na siki-hoso, a dé verplikti foe go, en a moesoe doe alla san driktoro taki, so foe a kon bétré hési, leki foe a tan krien. Dem soema srefi, ibriwan foe hem poorsi, moesoe krien da plasi rontoe foe dem hoso. Da soema, disi joeroe dem, moesoe sorgoe foe ondrohou da hoso nanga dem gotro.*

If a person is sick and the manager sends him to the hospital, he is obliged to go and he must do everything the manager says in order to get well quickly, as is clear. The people must clean the space around their house, everyone their own part. The person who hires them must take care of the maintenance of the house and the gutters.

34. *So langa da dri moen no passa, disi dem njoen friman no meki kontraki jete en dem de san dem ouroe masra plesi, dern moesoe wroko fo dei na ini wan wiki gi da masra; foe dati a moesoe gi dem datra, en a moesoe pai dem toe poorsi foe da moni, disi plakkati potti foe lanti-marki (186, No. 1.) (dati wani taki, dem sa prati da joeroe moni disi lanti potti foe dem marki wroko na dri poorsi, en toe poorsi (2/3) sa de da paiman).- Foe dem ouroe en malingri soema en foe dem pikien disi no kan wroko, en foe dem pikien disi no habi soema foe loekoe dem, Lanti sa sorgoe, ma dem ouroe masra moesoe gi dem plesi foe tan da dri moen dóro. Dem massra disi no wanni joeroe dem soema disi ben dé dem katibo, alwassí dem moesoe gi dem plesi foe libi dri moen langa, sa meki Granman sabi dati so hesi leki dem kan, foe Lanti kan potti dem njoen friman so langa na wroko té dem meki kontraki nanga tra soema. Iffi wan massra no wanni hem ouroe katibo tan libi da dri moen na hem pranasi, a kan joeroe wan tra plesi gi dem.*

During the first three months, if the new freedmen have not made a contract yet and they are at their old plantation, they must work four days a week for their master. For that he must give them a doctor and he must pay them two thirds of the money required by the law of the country (186, no. 1) (that means, they shall divide the wage fixed by the government for a full task into three parts, and two parts of that will be their payment). The government will take care of the elderly and sick people and of the children who have no-one to look after them, but their former master must give them a place to stay for three months. The masters who do not want to hire the people who used to be their slaves, even though they are obliged to give them a place to stay for three months, shall notify the Governor as soon as they can, so that the Government may put them to work for the time being until they make a contract with someone else. If a person does not want his former slave to stay on his plantation for three months, he may rent another place for him.

- C. *Foe dem njoen friman na Lanti ondro, disi no ben de libi iffi no ben de wroko na pranasi.*

Concerning the new freedmen under the government's jurisdiction who did not use to live or work on a plantation.

35. *Dem njoen friman disi de na Lanti ondro, foe 15 jari té 60 jari, en disi no ben de libi iffi no ben de wroko na pranasi, dé verplikti foe meki kontraki foe wroko na soema ondro disi dem srefi wannu. Wan heeli famili makandra, iffi ibri soema aparti kan meki kontraki, mara foe no moro mindri tem leki dri moen en no moro langa leki wan jari: iffi dem joeroe dem srefi foe wroko na foto. Pikien, disi no moro ouroe leki 12 jari, no kan prati nanga dem mama.*

The new freedmen who are under the government's jurisdiction, between fifteen and sixty, and who did not use to live or work on a plantation, are obliged to make a contract to work for someone of their own choice. An entire family may make a contract or each person separately, but not for less than three months nor for more than one year, if they hire themselves out in Paramaribo. Children below the age of twelve may not be separated from their mothers.

36. *Dem disi passa 60 jari, en pikien foe 12 té 15 jari moesoe doe wroko disi no hebi foe dem jari.*

Those who are over sixty and children between twelve and fifteen should do work that is not too heavy for their age.

37. *Dem njoen friman, disi kan bewijsi Supervisorsi, dati dem sabi wan ambakti iffi wan wroko boenboen, en dati dem kan verdini nanga dem wroko someni moni dati dem kan ondrohou dem srefi en dem famili, Supervisorsi kan gi dem primisi foe wroko na dem srefi, en dan dem no habi fanodoe foe meki kontraki. Alla jari Supervisorsi sa skriji na ini dem pikien boekoe, dati a gi dem passi foe wroko na dem srefi. Iffi Supervisorsi si dati dem no meki wan boen gebruike foe da primisi disi a gi dem, dan a sa poeloe dati baka, en dan dem sa moesoe joeroe dem srefi na kontraki.*

The new freedmen who can prove to the supervisor that they know a trade or a type of work very well and that they can earn enough money through their work to support themselves and their families, the supervisor may give them permission to work for themselves and they do not need to make a contract. Every year, the supervisor will write in their little book that he gave them permission to work for themselves. If the supervisor sees that they do not make the right use of the permission he gave them, he will withdraw it and they will have to hire themselves out by contract.

38. *Dem njoen friman disi joeroe den srefi foe doe wan fasti wroko na soema ondro, so leki foetoe-boi, bakra-hoso-oeman, djariman, ambaktiman, sjouman na soema disi de holi winkri, koki, wassiman en alla so soortoe wroko, no mak weigri, iffi a de fanodoe, foe doe wan tra wroko gi da soema disi joeroe dem, alwassu dati no de na dem kontraki. En dem de verplikti foe harki en foe doe alla san disi moesoe de foe holi boen ondroe na wrokoplesi en na ini hoso.*

The new freedmen who hire themselves to do a steady job for someone, such as personal servant, domestic servant, gardener, skilled worker, porter for someone who runs a shop, cook, laundry woman and all kinds of jobs, are not allowed, if it is necessary, to refuse to do another kind of work for the person who hires them, even though that is not in their contract. And they are obliged to obey and to do everything that must be done to keep everything in order in the workshop and in the house.

39. *Iffi toe wiki bifosi da kontraki kaba dem soema disi ben meki hem no bedanki dem srefi, dan da joeroe de go doro foe dri moen agèn.*

If two weeks before the contract expires, the persons who made the contract have not terminated it, the hire will continue for another three months.

40. *Wan soema disi joeroe wan njoen friman, habi reti foe bedanki hem té a wannì, sondo foe taki san hédé, ma dan a moesoe pai da friman, boiti san a wroko kaba, jete sieksi wiki joeroemoni, en a sa meki Supervisorsi sabi dati da soema no de na hem joeroe moro. Iffi da joeroe no libi sieksi wiki moro foe kaba, dan da njoen friman habi reti na tappoe da joeroe-moni foe alla dem tem disi mankeri jete.*

A person who hires a new freedman has the right to terminate the employment whenever he wishes, without giving a reason, but he must pay the freedman, apart from his wages, an extra six weeks and he shall notify the supervisor that he does not hire that person anymore. If the contract period left is less than six weeks, the freedman is entitled, in addition to his wages, to the money for the remaining period.

41. *Na soema disi joeroe ambaktiman, kaba a no habi wroko, iffi noffo wroko, foe gi dem, a kan gi da joeroe abra na tra soema, iffi da ambaktiman tefredi nanga da soema; ma foe da srefi moni leki a ben joeroe hem, en a sa meki Supervisorsi sabi bifosi.*

The person who hires skilled workers but does not have employment or not enough employment for them, may transfer the hire to someone else, if the skilled worker is agreed with that. But for the same wages he hired him for and he shall notify the supervisor.

42. *Na wroko-joeroe dem njoen friman no mak libi da wroko-plesi, winkri iffi hoso pé dem joeroe dem srefi, sondo primisi foe da soema disi joeroe dem.*

During working hours the new freedmen are not allowed to leave the work place, shop or house where they are hired without permission from the person who hires them.

43. *Iffi dem no meki wan tra kroederi, dan dem soema disi joeroe dem njoen friman moesoe pai dem alla wiki dem joeroe-moni.*

Unless they have made a different arrangement, the persons who hire the new freedmen should pay them their wages every week.

44. *No wan soema de verplikti iffi a joeroe wan njoen friman foe wroko na foto, foe gi hem hoso foe libi foe soso, iffi datra nanga dressi té a siki; boiti iffi dem kroederi na fesi en dem potti na dem kontraki toe. Pé wan mama habi fri hoso foe libi, dem pikien foe hem, so langa dem no ouroe 12 jari, kan libi nanga da mama toe.*

No-one is obliged, when he hires a new freedman to work in Paramaribo, to give him free housing or a doctor or medicine when he is sick, unless they agreed otherwise in advance and put it in the contract. When a mother has free housing, her children may live with their mother as long as they are under twelve.

45. *Alla sanni da plakkati disi taki foe dem njoen friman na pranasi, de toe foe dem fotowan, iffi dem joeroe dem srefi foe wroko na pranasi.*

Everything this proclamation says about the new freedmen at the plantations goes for those in Paramaribo as well when they hire themselves to work on a plantation.

46. *Nanga da dei foe fri (1 Julij 1863), da plakkati disi de bigien. En so leki dem njoensoe foe meki alla plakkati kom bekenti, so srefi dem sa doe nanga disi toe, en dem sa potti hem na ini plakkati-boekoe.*

This proclamation is valid from the day of emancipation (1 July, 1863). This proclamation will be announced the same way all proclamations are usually announced, and it will be put it in the book of proclamations.

Paramaribo, 16 April 1863

(A ben teeken) VAN LANSBERGE

Nanga ordroe foe Granman,

Da Sekretarsi foe Granman,

(A ben teeken) E. A. van EMDEN

Foe meki dem njoen friman sabi boenboen, ho san da plakkati disi de taki, Granman meki dem potti hem na ningre-tongo.

Paramaribo, 16 April 1863

(It was signed) Van Lansberge

By order of the Governor,

The Governor's secretary,

(It was signed) E. A. van Emden

To make sure the new freedmen know very well what this proclamation says, the Governor had it translated into Sranan.

Paramaribo, 1 October 1863

Da Sekretarsi foe Granman

(A ben teeken) E. A. van Emden

Nanga ordroe foe Granman, mi potti da plakkati disi na ningre-tongo.

Paramaribo, 1 October 1863

The Governor's secretary

(it was signed) E. A. van Emden

By the order of the Governor I have translated this proclamation into Sranan.

Paramaribo, 1 October 1863

J. P. W. van Eijck.

(A drokoe na drokoerij foe J. C. Muller Az.)

(Gouvernementsblad 1863 No 9)

Paramaribo, 1 October 1863

J. P. W. van Eijck

(Printed at J. C. Muller Az.'s printing shop)

(Gouvernementsblad 1863 no. 9)

(source: Helstone & Vernooij 2000: 44–50)

31e. THE PLACARD ANNOUNCING AN ADDENDUM TO THE RIGHTS
AND OBLIGATIONS OF EMANCIPATED SLAVES (1863)

A few months after the previous document had appeared, an addendum to article no. 28 was published concerning the rights for freedmen to have four (unpaid) holidays during the New Year season. The addition of this clause may be a reflection of a belated awareness on the part of the colonial government of the great importance attached by slaves to the festivities surrounding New Year. The transcription is taken from Helstone and Vernooij (2000: 56).

Plakkati

Disi potti sani moro na ini da plakkati, disi meki alla njoen friman disi de na ondro Lanti, en dem soema disi joeroe dem, sabi san na dem reti en san na dem plikti. Na nem foe konoe! Granman foe Sranam Kondré Wanni datti alla soema disi lesi iffi jere dem lesi na plakkati disi, sa sabi: Datti a de fannodoe foe potti wan sani moro na ini da plakkati, disi meki alla njoen friman disi de na ndro Lanti, en dem soema disi joeroe dem, sabi san na dem reti en san na dem plikti toe; foe datti hede, disi Granman jere san da heikroetoe disi de helpi meki plakkati taki; a finni boen foe potti, so leki da njoen plakkati disi de taki: Da san da plakkati disi meki alla njoen friman disi de na ondro Lanti, en dem soema disi joeroe dem, sabi san na dem reti en san na dem plikti toe, potti datti dem njoen friman disi joeroe dem srefi foe wroko na pranasi no mak weigri foe holi wakti na sloisi, iffi na ini njanjamgron, na dei iffi neti, so srefi toe dem moesoe doe alla soortoe wroko disi joeroeman mak seekoe na dem, na Sondei en Feesti-dei, so leki ro boto iffi pondo, doe hoso wroko, loekoe kweki en alla so soortoe wroko; na datti de tan so; mara tokoe alla njoen-jari dem njoen friman disi meki kontraki foe wroko na pranasi, iffi dem wani, dem kan kisi dri dei foe njam jari en wan dei foe bloo dem skien, mara da soema disi joeroe dem no habi fannodoe foe pai joeroe-moni foe dem fo dei datti. Dem, disi teki nanga dem wanni srefi moro leki fo dei foe njam njoen-jari en foe bloo, Supervisorsi sa strafoe dem nanga boetoe, iffi doengroe-hoso, iffi strafoe-wroko na Lanti, srefi na ini wan likti kétien-boei; ibri strafoe Supervisorsi sa potti so fara leki plakkati gi hem makti foe doe. So leki dem njoensoe foe meki alla plakkati kom bekenti, so srefi dem sa doe nanga disi toe, en dem sa potti hem na ini plakkati-boekoe.

Paramaribo, 22 December 1863.

(A ben teeken} Van Lansberge.

Nanga ordroe foe Granman.

Paramaribo, 23 December 1863.

Da Sekretarsi foe Granman,

(a ben teeken) E. A. van Emden.

*Da Sekretarsi foe Granman,
(A ben teeken} E. A. van Emden.
Paramaribo, 23 December 1863.
Foe meki dem njoen friman sabi
boen-boen, ho san da plakkati disi
de taki, Granman meki dem potti
hem na ningre-tongo.*

*Nanga ordroe foe Granman, mi potti
da plakkati disi na ningre-tongo.*

P. W. van Eijck.

(a drokoe na drokoerei foe J. C. Muller Az.)

(source: Helstone & Vernooij 2000: 56)

Placard.

This contains additional statements to the proclamation that informed all new freedmen who are under the government's jurisdiction as well as those who hire them what their rights and obligations are. In the name of the King! The Governor of Suriname wants everybody who reads this proclamation or hears it read to them to know: That it is necessary to add another clause to the proclamation that informed all new freedmen who are under the government's jurisdiction as well as those who hire them what their rights are as well as their obligations. Therefore, the Governor, having heard the 'High Council'¹¹⁰ that helped make this proclamation, thinks it is right to proclaim, as is proclaimed in this new proclamation: The stipulation made in the proclamation that informed all new freedmen who are under the government's jurisdiction as well as those who hire them about what their rights and obligations are, said, namely that the new freedmen who hire themselves to work on a plantation may not refuse to keep watch at sluices or at provision grounds, day or night, and that they must similarly do all kinds of work that their employer may require from them, on Sundays and holidays, such as rowing a boat or a ferry, doing domestic work, look after children and all kinds of work, that stipulation remains as it was. But still, every New Year the new freedmen who made a contract to work on a plantation, if they want, they may take three days off to celebrate New Year and one day to rest, but the person who hires them is not obliged to pay for those four days. Those who, on their own account, take more than four days off to celebrate New Year and to rest will be punished by the supervisor with a fine or imprisonment or forced labor for the Government, in chains even. The supervisor will push every punishment as far as the proclamation allows him to. This proclamation will be announced the same way as all others are usually done and it will be put in the book of proclamations.

Paramaribo, 22 December 1863
(It was signed) Van Lansberge
By order of the Governor
The Governor's secretary,
(It was signed) E. A. van Emden
Paramaribo, 23 December 1863
To make sure the new freedmen know
very well what this proclamation says,
the Governor had it translated into Sranan.

Paramaribo, 23 December 1863
The Governor's secretary,
(It was signed) E. A. van Emden
By order of the Governor I translated
this proclamation into Sranan

P. W. van Eijck
(Printed in J. C. Muller Az's printingshop)

110. The Colonial Council.

31f. THE PLACARD ANNOUNCING THE END OF 'STATE SUPERVISION' (6/14/1873)

When the State supervision period was nearing its end, the Colonial government felt it opportune to publish another placard telling the freedmen to 'stay humble' and to 'do what the Whites tell you to do'. The transcription is taken from Helstone and Vernooij (2000: 57).

Plakkati

Granman foe Sranam Kondré. Na alla dem friman, disi de jéte na Lanti ondro. Di na ini da jari 1863 da katibo-fassi foe oen ben kaba en Konoe ben gi oen fri, A ben potti oen na Lanti ondro foe oen boen srefi. Wan pikien tem jéte, ja, nanga da fosi dei foe da moen Juli foe disi jari, oen sa komopo na Lanti ondro en oen sa kisi so srefi réti leki alla tra borgroe foe disi kondré habi. Boen-hede foe oen nanga da sannu disi sa passa da dei datti! Ma' Mi wensi oen alla sa sori no wawan datti oen waarti so wan bigi boen, ma' datti oen sa doe oen plikti toe so leki a fiti ibri wan boen borgroe, na ini kondré, bikasi datti oen de tron nojaso. En oen kan sori oen de datti troe-troe, iffi oen tjari en tiri oen srefi na alla saka en respeki fassi; iffi oen doe san Weti potti; iffi oen sorgoe foe loekoe oen famili na alla boen fassi en foe lobi oen pikien en sori da lobi nanga datti, te oen meki dem teki leri, disi dem kan kisi na kerki en na skolo; iffi oen no gi oen srefi abra na lési; iffi jajo en lasra-libi, ma' holi wroko leki a fiti en leri en kweki oen pikien na ini wroko. Da moro bétre fassi disi oen kan passa oen tem, me de: iffi nanga wroko na tra soema ondro foe moni, so leki da wroko waarti; iffi foe holi dem ambakti disi oen ben leri; iffi foe wroko da pisi gron disi oen srefi habi, so leki a fiti. Foe oen boen srefi en foe boen foe oen pikien toe, nojaso en foe bakatem, mi de rai oen, iffi oen de joeroe oen srefi, meki wan kontraki foe wroko fasti na wan prési. No déнки taki da kontraki sa potti na ini katibo-fassi baka, kwéti-kwéti, ma' a de boen so srefi foe oen, leki foe da soema disi meki hem nanga oen, bikasi so wan fassi hem sabi datti a habi, wrokoman foe hem moni en oen sabi oen habi wan fasti wrokoprési,- ma' boiti datti, hoso foe libi, wan pisi gron foe prani oen njanjam, en, iffi oen siki, datra nanga dréssi foe soso, troe, alla datti de sani disi waarti foeloe. Sori toe nanga lobi foe wi Konoe en foe hem Kondré, dati oen sabi en oen hatti fili da bigi boen disi Konoe doe na oen.

Paramaribo, 14Juni 1873

(A ben teken} Van Idsinga

So leki Granman skrifi da Plakkati na Dóisi, mi tjari hem abra na Ningré-tongo.

J. P. W. van Eijck

(source: Helstone & Vernooij 2000: 57)

Placard

The Governor of Suriname. To all freedmen who are under the government's jurisdiction. When in the year 1863 your enslavement was terminated and the king granted you freedom, he put you under the government's jurisdiction for your own good. Not long from now, yes on the first day of July of this year, you shall leave the government's jurisdiction and you shall acquire the same rights like every other citizen of

this country. Congratulations to you on the event that will happen on that day! But I wish all of you will show not only that you deserve such a great good thing, but also that you will do your duty just like every good citizen in the country, because that is what you are now. And you can show you really are good citizens if you behave yourself in a humble and respectful manner, if you do what the Whites tell you to, if you take good care of your family and love your children and show your love by having them take lessons, go to church and attend school, if you do not indulge in laziness, or behave like vagabonds or hoodlums, but hold on to your work like you should and teach your children how to work. The best way for you to pass the time is either to work for someone for money, whatever your labour is worth, or to ply the trade they taught you, or to work the piece of land that you have, whatever is fitting. For your own good and for that of your children too, now and in the future, I advise you, if you hire yourself, to make a contract for a steady job in one place. Don't think the contract will put you back in enslavement, not at all, but it is good both for you and for the person who makes the contract with you, because that way he knows that he has workers for his money and you know you have a steady job, but apart from that, a house to live in, a piece of land to grow your food, and, if you are sick, a doctor and medicine for free, all things that are worth a lot. Also show with love for our king and for his country that you know and that your hearts feel what a good thing the king has done for you.

Paramaribo, 14 June 1873

(It was signed) Van Idsinga

Just like the Governor wrote the Proclamation in Dutch, I translated it into Sranan.

J. P. W. van Eijck

32. BLACKS TALKING BACK

Although the voice of the blacks is hardly ever heard in connection with Emancipation, in spite of the enormous importance this event had for them, there are a few rare cases where, however briefly, we hear them speak. In both cases, ex-slaves remind their former master that the time of slavery is over.

No no masra, fonfon kaba noja (1863)

No, no, master, the time of beating is over now

A no mi wan friman leki joe? (shortly after 1863)

Am I not free just like you?

(source: Klinkers 1997: 106, 154)

33. NDYUKA-TRIO PIDGIN: CREVAUX (1883)

When in the first half of the 18th century the Ndyuka began to settle in the south-eastern part of Suriname, they came into contact with Amerindian groups, especially the Trio, with whom they established trade relations. Out of the contact between Ndyuka (an English-lexicon creole) and Trio (a member of the Cariban language family) a new trade language emerged, called Ndyuka-Trio Pidgin. Although this pidgin may

have been in use from before 1800, the earliest substantial documentation dates from the early 20th century (De Goeje 1908: 204–16; see no. 35 below). While many words (especially pronouns, adverbs, and verbs) are derived from Ndyuka, the grammatical structure is largely based on Trio. Apart from the fact that the basic word order is OV, there are also a number of Trio grammatical elements, such as the negative suffix *-wa* and the facsimile suffix *-me*; the preverbal element *so* is probably derived from the Trio desiderative marker *-se* (Carlin 2002: 25). Since the pidgin is no longer known among younger people, it will probably not survive very long. The very earliest data are from Crevaux (1883), who reports what a Trio woman said to him when he was traveling in southern Suriname. (For more information on Ndyuka-Trio Pidgin, see Huttar & Velantie 1997; this paper also gives some information on another creole-based pidgin, used between Boni Maroons and Wayana Indians.)

Panakiri ouani oua...A la pikininialele...Nono poti...Echimeu ouaca...Cassava mia oua

Whites not wanted... all children dead...(they have been) put in (this) hole... quickly leave...no cassava to eat

(source: Crevaux 1883: 276, as quoted in Huttar & Velantie 1997: 120n7)

34. A SRANAN GRAMMAR IN SRANAN: HELSTONE (1903)

J. N. Helstone (1853–1927), the author of the first (and, until now, only) grammar of Sranan written entirely in Sranan, was a black musician, director and composer and a native speaker of Sranan. He studied in Leipzig (Germany) for two years (1880–1881; 1893–1894), obtaining a doctoral degree in music in 1894. Ironically, the aim of his Sranan grammar was not to promote Sranan but to facilitate its replacement by Dutch (p. viii). In order to encourage the learning of Dutch by the local Creoles, the author thought it necessary to impose rules on Sranan bringing it in line with Dutch as much as possible. Because of the ‘Netherlandicized’ flavour of his Sranan, the book should only be consulted with much care.

The fragment reproduced below, however, is very different from the rest of the book. Here Helstone discusses different styles of speaking, making a plea for a more natural pronunciation of colloquial Sranan, especially when speaking to strangers. His observations regarding the differences in pronunciation between ‘ordinary style’ and ‘elevated style’ are among the very earliest of this phenomenon known to exist. What is also interesting is that to illustrate unnatural (i.e. spelling) pronunciation, Helstone refers to the Sranan as it was used in church. While others, such as Moravian missionary Heinrich Wullschlägel, felt that it was the blacks who used the wrong pronunciation (!), Helstone makes it very clear that it is the whites who do not know how to pronounce some words correctly (cf. Chapter 4 for a discussion of ‘church Sranan’).

Da fasi vo taki

Net so leki na hollandsch en foeloe tra tongo, da alladei fasi vo taki, en da taki b.v. vo wan rede – wan toespraak, wan preeki ofoe wan begi – habi wan bigi onderscheid, net so a dee na da tongo disi. Na dem moreo foeloe vreemdesoema a dee wan trobi sani vo verstaan ofoe vo volge wan taki boen, te toe sranamsoema de taki nanga makandra. Da foutoe disi no komopo na dem vremde soema, ma dem kondreman vo mi habi hem. Sodra wan sranamsoema de taki nanga wan vreemde soema, wantem a de bigin vo taki woord vo woord so duidelik leki a kan, vo meki da vreemde soema kan versta hem boen, en da so da fasi vo taki nanga vreemde soema dee wan heeli trawan dan te toe sranamsoema de taki nanga makandra (dem na dem). Ma moro etee. Da moro takroe gewenti vo dem sranam soema dee, dati alwasi da nooiti dem sa helpi da soema, vo taki gi hem fa a moe taki da woord reti; ja, na pleesi vo dati, so hesi da sranamsoema jeeri da verkeerti fasi toe, nomo di somtem a de meene, dati efi hem taki da woord reti, dan da trawan no de go versta hem. Da takroe gewegti disi a geersi na mi leki a dee wan vo dem gewenti ofoe frede di da slavoetem ben habi. A kan dee toe dati na ini da onwetende fasi vo datem, dem soema ben de denki dati da vreemde soema moese sabi da taki moro boen leki dem sreefi. En so dem vreemde soema de tan allatem na ini da sreefi verdwale. Tee tidei joe kan sidom na kerki en alladi dem woortoe ibri leisi de taki nanga so verkeeryi accent, jete no wan lafoe, ja no na dem skoloboi sreefi joe de si wan lafoe na dem feesi. Alladi wan rede, begi ofoe preeki de haksi dati dem woortoe moe dee taki net so leki dem dee skrifti, da alladei fasi vo taki de haksi heli trafasi. Dia nofo letters en lettergrepen sreefi dee djompo. Dia wan toe voorbeeld dee:

De wijze van spreken

Gewone stijl

M'kal' en m̃a no kon.

Na tap'sei n'ina kedre.

F'a d'ang'is'sa.

M'taag'ien m̃a no kee.

A g'adoro m̃a nee go tan langa.

Fosfos'a ben ee kon dia.

W'im go loek'en.

Mem'ri m̃enò jag'en.

D'a ñee pik'i'idenk a no sabi?

Deftige stijl

Mi kali hem ma a no kom.¹¹¹

Na tapo sei na ini da kedre.

Fa a dee nanga joe sisa.

Mi taki gi hem ma a no kee.

A go na doro ma no de go tan langa.

Fosifosi a ben de kom dia.

We joe moe go loekoe hem.

Membre joe ben de go jagi hem.

Di a no de piki joe, joe denki a no sabi?

Dem weinigi voorbeeld disi kan soori krin dati a moese trobi pikinso vo verstaan al-lasani, te dem soema vo da tongo de taki dem na dem, ma mi hopoe da boekoe disi sa tjaari nofo sani kom na krin, gi dem kondeman vo mi net so boen leki gi dem vreemde soema.

(source: Helstone 1903: 110–112)

111. In the transcription I have omitted the Dutch equivalents of these sample sentences given by Helstone.

Ways of speaking

Just like in Dutch and many other languages there is a big difference between everyday speech and the language used in oratory – a speech, a sermon, or a prayer –, it is the same in this language [i.e. Sranan, JA]. Most strangers have trouble understanding or following a conversation when two Surinamese are talking to one another. This error is not on the part of the strangers, it's the fault of my fellow countrymen. As soon as a Surinamese is talking to a stranger, immediately he will start to pronounce every word as clearly as he can in order for the stranger to be able to understand him well, and that is how the way of speaking to a stranger is completely different from the way two Surinamese talk to one another (*tête-à-tête*). But there is more. The worst habit of Surinamese people is that, even when a stranger pronounces a word incorrectly, they will never help that person, telling him how he should pronounce the word correctly; yes, instead of that, as soon as a Surinamese hears the incorrect word from the stranger, immediately he will pronounce that word incorrectly too, only because he may think that if he pronounces the word correctly the other will not understand him. To me this bad habit looks like one of those habits or fears which existed during slavery. It may also be that in the ignorance of those days the people thought that the stranger necessarily knew the language better than they did themselves. And this way, the stranger will always continue making the same errors. To this very day you can sit down in a church and even though every time the words are pronounced with a completely wrong accent, yet no one laughs, yes, you won't even see a smile on the faces of the schoolboys. Even if a speech, a sermon or a prayer requires the words to be pronounced just as they are written, everyday speech requires something completely different. Here many letters and syllables are deleted. Here are a few examples:

Speech styles: Ordinary style vs elevated style

I called him but he did not come.

On top in the basement.

How is your sister?

I told him but he does not care.

He went out but he will not be away for long.

He used to come by here in the past.

Well, you should look him up.

Remember you were going to chase him away?

Since he does not answer you, do you think he does not know?

These few examples may show clearly that it must be a little problematic to understand everything when native speakers are talking among each other, but I hope this book will shed light on a number of things, both for my fellow countrymen and for strangers.

35. NDYUKA-TRIO PIDGIN: DE GOEJE (1908)

Twenty-five years after Crevaux (1883; see no. 33 above), De Goeje (1908) presented a 10-page wordlist of Ndyuka-Trio Pidgin plus a short discussion of its structure and a very short conversation he had with a Trio captain. ‘We shook hands, and immediately he asked: *mooimee kong? krasji-wa?* ‘do you come in peace? not to fight?’, to which I replied: *mooimee kong, matimee wanni* ‘we come in peace and want your friendship’ [italics mine, JA] (De Goeje 1908: 117). He also included a more elaborate piece of text, which is reproduced below. It is, in De Goeje’s words, ‘the story as it was told to the Trio by the [Ndyuka] Maroons in order to put them at ease’ (p. 214). The Ndyuka, who were part of De Goeje’s expedition, tell the Trio not to worry about the white men ‘making papers’. This refers to the activities of the technicians, such as a land surveyor and an engineer, who were part of De Goeje’s expedition (cf. De Goeje 1908: 139). In order to preserve as much of the structure of the original as possible, I have remained close to De Goeje’s original, pidgin-like Dutch translation in my translation into English.

A Ndyuka-Trio pidgin text

Panakiri so kong, pai, mooimee kong, krásji-wa, oli wanni-wa, pikinini wanni-wa; tingenée passi so wakka, pampila meki; sabana so moenoe loekoe wanni, Sipaliwini wanni, hésimee pampila potti, tlonbaka; akabá, tlawan kong-wa, passi so atapoe. Panakiri tingenée so kong, no no, móoimee wa, aalla Tlio pelele, hésimee boesi kibri, sonten allele, no no, takroemé pai! Mékolo akoloni kong, Tlio pelele-wa. Mékoloso grandwei Tlio akoloni broedoe miáng, panakiri, granwee matti-wa, tidéi jenoeloe loekoe. Panakiri mooimee, sosomee passi wakka, pampila meki. Tlio akoloni, Mékolo akoloni kassaba miáng, napěkěmiáng, asikaloe miáng. Kaikoesi wanni-wa.

(source: De Goeje 1908: 214)

Whites come, friend, in nice way they come, not fight, women not want, children not want; only walk path, make papers; want see savanna so big, want Sipaliwini,¹¹² quickly put on paper, turn back; finished, others come not, path closed. Whites only come, no no, not nice, all Trio afraid, quickly hide in bush, perhaps die, no no, bad friend! Negroes come, Trio not afraid. Long ago Negroes and Trio drink blood, long ago whites not friends, now first see. Whites nice, only walk path, make papers. Eat cassave with Trio and with Negroes, eat *napi*,¹¹³ eat sweet potatoes, eat sugar cane. Dogs not want.

112. A river in southern Suriname.

113. A tuber species.

36. SAYING 'HELLO' IN NDYUKA: DE GOEJE (1908)

Apart from his observations on Ndyuka-Trio Pidgin, De Goeje (p. 58) also included a few remarks about Ndyuka, in particular about greeting ceremonies, which he says 'are performed with great care', something which is still the case among Surinamese Maroons today. He notes the following greetings:

Morning:

neti kabá 'the night has passed'

Or: *dei bloko baka* 'the day has broken again'

Daytime:

bala (sisá, dá, má) odió, how fá joe de ba? 'brother (sister, father, mother), hello, how are you?'

Upon meeting someone again:

wi mitibaka 'we met again'

37. KOENDERS (1946)

Julius G. A. 'Papa' Koenders (1886–1957), born in a lower-class black family, worked as a school-teacher until 1936; after his retirement he became the founder and editor of *Foetoe-boi* 'Errand boy', a weekly 'one-man' magazine written in Sranan (and Dutch). It appeared between 1946 and 1956 and it was aimed at promoting cultural awareness among Suriname's Creole population. Being Suriname's first true cultural nationalist, Koenders may be considered a predecessor of *Wi Eygi Sani* 'Our Own Things', an emancipatory movement of the 1950s that tried to promote Suriname's culture and languages among young Surinamese. A native speaker of Sranan, he was one of the first teachers to propagate its use in education at a time when many still considered it improper to use it at all. The text reproduced below is one of many in which he addresses the more general issue of the status of Sranan, urging its speakers to take pride in their native tongue. To me it seems precisely the right piece to end this section with.

Wie tongo

Datie a no san din de karie 'neger-engelsch' ofoe 'nengre-tongo'. Neger-engelsch datie na da broko broko Engelsch, san wan nengre de takie: 'mie no no' na presie foe 'I don't know'. Nengre tongo na da tongo foe ala nengre en datie wie tongo no de toe, bieka die na Sranan kaba, din abra soeal nengre habie din eegie tongo. Wie tongo na Sranan 'nengre tongo', datie na da tongo foe na moro biegie hiepie Sranan nengre. Net so lekie na ienie ala tra tongo joe habie wörtoe, die din ben tekie foe trawan, so na wie tongo toe, ma broko broko foe wan tra tongo a no de; a habie in eegie fasie, a de mekie wörtoe na in eegie fasie. Wan piepel, die liebie ofoe lassie in tongo ofoe a frontoe in foe wan tra tongo hede, awansie sört'wan, na piepel datie don moro din afo fow wie; bieka din bin kotie na odo kaba takie: 'joe kan kibrie granmama, ma joe na kan tapoe koso koso'. Efie foe joe brede ofoe prieserie joe moe lerie wan freemde tongo, lerie in boen, ma a no foe datie

hede joe moe feraktie joe eegie tongo en trowe in. Wan dee mie bin de takie nanga wan jonkoeman, die bin finie ala tra kondre (die noitie a bin sie) ala sanie moro boen lekie Sranan en na Sranan. Sranan tongo a takie na foe te na Branspin. We, datie na troe, ma fa a de nanga Hollandsch tongo, Japaneesie tongo nanga foeroe trawan moro? Na herie grontapoe de takie din? Trawan, die kisie piekiensio lerie takie, 'er is geen literatuur in die taal'. We mekie mie mie aksie din söroe soema datie: Sörtoe piekien de opo waka wantin, fa a fadon na gron? Na literatuur foe Hollander, Doisrie en trawan, soema bin mekie in gie din? Na joe, na mie, ofioe na den srefie? Takie san die joe wanie, Soema sanie a no joe sanie,¹¹⁴ Soema pe a no joe pe, Sör' mie pe die f' joe de!

(source: *Foetoe-boi* 1 (1): 1–2) (1946)

Our language

That [i.e. Sranan, JA] is not what they call 'Negroes' English' or 'Negroes' language'. 'Negroes' English' is the broken English spoken by a Negro: 'me no no' instead of 'I don't know'. 'Negroes' language' is the language of all Negroes, and that is not what our language is either, because here in Suriname alone the Negroes in the interior have their own language. Our language is 'Surinamese Negroes' language, i.e. the language of the majority of the Surinamese Negroes. Just as in other languages you find words that were borrowed from other languages, so it is in our language too. But it is not a broken version of some other language; it has its own principles, it makes words in its own way. A people that abandons or loses its language or looks down on it for the sake of another language, whichever that is, that people is more stupid than our ancestors; because they made up the *odo: yu kan kibri granmama, ma yu no kan tapu koso koso* 'You can hide your grandmother but you can't keep her from coughing'. When you must learn a foreign language, either for business or for pleasure, learn it well. But this is no reason for despising or rejecting your own language. One day I was talking to a young man, who felt that all other countries (which he had never seen) were better than Suriname and that everything was better than it is in Suriname. Sranan is only spoken as far as Braamsput.¹¹⁵ Well, that's true, but how are things with regard to Dutch, Japanese, and many other languages? Are they spoken by the whole world? Others, who have had a little education, say: 'There is no literature in that language'. Well, let me ask those kind of people: What child gets up and walks right away, how does it fall to the ground? As to the literature of the Dutch, the Germans, and others: Who made it for them? Was it you, was it me, or was it themselves? Say whatever you want, The things of others are not your things, The places of others are not your places, Show me where yours are!

114. This line is reminiscent of the name of the *Wi Eyyi Sani* movement, whose founders were very much inspired by Koenders' writings.

115. The most western point of the Commewijne district coast, symbolic for 'the end of Suriname'.

7.2 Religious texts

Apart from the secular texts discussed in the previous section, a large number of early religious texts have been preserved, often in manuscript form. This is largely due to the work of the Moravian Brethren, who produced an enormous amount of religious writing in Saramaccan and, especially, Sranan. While their Sranan texts cover the entire period from the 1770s onwards, their Saramaccan work is limited to a fairly short period, roughly 1780–1810. This has to do with the fact that the Moravian missionaries' activities among the Saramaka were severely reduced in the early 19th century. In these thirty years they produced, apart from descriptive works such as Schumann's Saramaccan dictionary, some 2,000 pages of texts – Bible translations, hymns and other religious works (*cf.* Arends 1995 for further information). Unfortunately, however, until now only a few of these documents have been made available for linguistic research. The most important among these are Wietz's (partial) translation of the Acts of the Apostles, published by Schuchardt (1914), and a selection of the Saramaka Maroon Letters, published in Arends & Perl (1995) (*cf.* nos 40 and 42 below).

As to the amount of Moravian missionaries' religious writings in Sranan, this is much and much larger. The total number of manuscript pages, preserved in the archives in Paramaribo, Herrnhut, and Utrecht, should be estimated at least several tens of thousands, if not well over a hundred thousand. If one knows that the total corpus of Suriname-related material (written in German, Dutch, Sranan, Saramaccan and other languages) stored in the Moravian archives in Herrnhut, Paramaribo, and Utrecht, amounts to at least 50 running meters of archival records, one will understand that it is not possible to make a more precise estimate of the total amount of material written in Sranan and Saramaccan. Although creolists have only recently begun to scratch the surface of this goldmine of early language material, a good impression of its contents can be had by consulting works such as Voorhoeve & Donicie's (1963) invaluable *Bibliographies du négro-anglais du Surinam*, which despite its title includes both Sranan and Saramaccan texts. Other bibliographical surveys were published by Arends (1992, 1995) and Stein & Perl (1995) (and much earlier by Wullschlägel 1856).

As mentioned earlier, the Moravian Brethren have a reputation as knowledgeable and acute observers of the Suriname creoles, although a normative and Europeanizing influence in their use of these languages cannot be denied. This tendency, however, is largely confined to orthography, phonetics and lexis, affecting syntax to a much lesser degree (Voorhoeve 1971). A similar tendency is present in the writings of those who were taught reading and writing by the Moravian missionaries, such as Johannes Alabi, Christian Grego, and Johannes King, whose writings are represented below. Apart from the Moravian Church, the Catholic

mission has also left us some texts in Sranan, including a catechism from 1822 and a papal bull from 1878 (cf. nos 43 and 46 below).

Before presenting the sample texts below, a few words will have to be said about a manuscript which, despite serious efforts, I have not been able to locate. If it exists, it is the earliest substantial text in Sranan (with the possible exception of Herlein's Sranan specimen, of course, depending on whether that may be considered 'substantial'). The author, Andreas Mauricius, was the son of Jan Jacob Mauricius, governor of Suriname from 1742 until 1751. Interestingly, his Sranan teacher was the 'celebrated Quassie van Nieuw Timotibo', a Suriname-born black¹¹⁶ who gained a reputation as a connoisseur of indigenous medicine and as a negotiator between the colonial government and the maroons (see Price 1983a: 155–159; Dragtenstein 2004). Shortly after his arrival in Suriname, Andreas' father had conceived the idea of having a number of christian texts translated into Sranan and distributed in Suriname in order for the slaves to be taught from them (Wolbers 1861: 198). Among these texts was a work known at the time as 'Borstius' queries'.¹¹⁷ These translations had to be made in such a way as to be fit for teaching the essentials of christianity to the slaves 'in a simple and concise manner' and 'in accordance with their limited powers of understanding' (J. J. Mauricius, quoted in Wolbers 1861: 198). In a document written around 1750, Mauricius *père* writes:

...shortly after my arrival [in 1742, JA] I made a proposal to the Court¹¹⁸ to make only a small beginning by translating Borstius' queries and other principles of the faith into Negro-English, which translation, made by my son, was already finished, but from the reply of the Court one can judge the general sentiments of the general public. (Recueil 1752, vol. 4: 4¹¹⁹)

Although *Encyclopaedie* (1914–1918: 505) claims that the translation by Mauricius *fils* of this Catechism was published around 1750, Voorhoeve and Donicie (1963: 57) strongly deny it ever was: 'Elle n'a sans doute pas été imprimée'. Even if the work was never published, that does not mean it may not exist in manuscript form. For the time being, however, we will have to do without it and contend ourselves with the texts collected here.

116. In contrast to what has been generally assumed until now, Quassie was not born in Africa but in Suriname, as is demonstrated on the basis of archival documents by Vrij (2005: 193).

117. This work, a version of the Heidelberg Catechism, was known in the Netherlands as *De vraagjes van Borstius* 'Borstius' queries'.

118. Either the Court of Police and Criminal Justice or the Court of Civil Justice, the two main governing bodies of the time.

119. Note that vol. 4 of *Recueil* contains two instances of 'p. 4'; the Mauricius quote can be found at the end of the book, where, for some reason, pagination starts anew.

38. SKIPIO (1768): ASKING FOR HELP WITH A SORE FOOT

One of the earliest specimens of native writing was recorded in 1768 by a Moravian missionary, Brother Stoll, who noted in his diary that his Saramaka pupil, David Skipio, who had a sore on his foot, had written the following mini-prayer on his writing tablet:

Jesus meki mi foette kom boen

Jesus make my foot get well

(source: Price 1990: 97)

As in other cases of early Saramaka writing, such as the Saramaka Maroon Letters (see no. 40 below), we cannot exclude the possibility that Skipio's Saramaccan was influenced by the Sranan of the missionaries who taught him how to write. In this case, however, it is impossible to establish with certainty since all the words used occur both in Saramaccan and in Sranan.

39. SCHUMANN (1779) AND ANON. (1803): 'OH HEAD SO FULL OF BRUISES'
IN SARAMACCAN AND SRANAN

Sometime after he returned to Paramaribo from his 15-month stay in Saramaka, Schumann finished a manuscript containing Saramaccan translations of a number of texts used during service, including the Easter Litany and several religious hymns. Among the latter is the well-known 'Oh Head so full of bruises,'¹²⁰ the first and last stanza of which are reproduced below. (For biographical information on Schumann, see no. 16 above.)

O heddi ko brudu en Wonden

na liba Kruis ala,

o heddi, hufa dem tai ju

ko Krone va makka!

O heddi, bevo so hansem

na Tabor-kunnunu,

jusnu ju de va dedde:

wi takki ju grang hodi

Oh head with blood and wounds

On the cross there

Oh head, how they tied you

With a crown of thorns!

Oh head, so beautiful before

120. This hymn is typical of the religious outlook of the Moravian missionaries, which was very much focused on the physical aspects of the sufferings of Christ (Price 1990: 60). In fact, this particular hymn seems to have been a favorite of Count Zinzendorf, the founder of the Moravian community (Price 1990: 294n7). Many readers will be familiar with it from Bach's *Matthäus Passion* ('O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden...').

On Tabor mountain,
Now you are about to die:
We salute you.

*Mi takki ju grang tangi,
hatti lobbi Jesu,
va tule penna en hati
teh dedde bi killi ju.
Tru tru didè mi sabi,
ju no sa dissa mi:
wan bunne Massra mi habi,
a lobbi tumussi*

I say thanks to you,
Dearly beloved Jesus,
For all your suffering and pain
Until death killed you.
This I truly know:
You will not leave me.
A good Lord I have,
He is loved very much.

(source: EBGH NB VII R 3 8 I (= Schumann 1779: 8, 10))

For the sake of comparison, I also include the Sranan version of the first stanza, dating from 1803.

*O heddi nanga wonden
en brud na kruis janda;
O heddi hufa dem tai ju
nang krone va makka.
Na fossitem dem fredde
va lukku ju Glori;
Jusnu wi si joe dedde.
Wi takki joe grangodi.*

(source: Price 1990: 60)

40. CHRISTIAN GREGO AND JOHANNES ALABI (1790–1791):

THE SARAKAKA MAROON LETTERS

Apart from Skipio's one-line prayer quoted above (*cf.* no. 38) and Boston's short notes written in a mixture of Jamaican Creole and Ndyuka (*cf.* no. 9 above; *cf.* also Chapter 4), the ten Saramaccan letters written by Christian Grego (c1755–1824) and Johannes Alabi (1743–1820) between 1790 and 1818 are the first true native texts written by Blacks in any Suriname creole.¹²¹ Alabi and Grego were the very first Saramaka

121. Apart from the Negerhollands 'Slave Letters,' dating from the mid-18th century (Van Rossem & Van der Voort 1996), they are probably among the earliest native texts in any creole.

to be converted to Christianity ('Johannes' and 'Christian' are their christian names; Grego sometimes also uses the surname '(Van) Aliedja'). Their letters were part of the correspondence network that was established by the Moravian missionaries in order to foster communication between converts and missionaries as well as among converts themselves, who lived in different parts of the world. (In order to enable understanding between, say, converts in Saramaka and Greenland, Saramaccan letters were translated twice: from Saramaccan to German and from German to Inuktitut; for letters from Greenland, of course, the same procedure was followed in the opposite direction.)

Due to the Moravian missionaries' habit of recording in their *diaria* 'diaries' even the most minute details of their activities, quite a lot is known about these men as well as about the circumstances of their lives (see Price 1990). Alabi, Saramaka *granman* 'chief' from 1783 until his death in 1820, was the very first Saramaka convert. Grego, who was also among the first Saramaka to be baptized, lived in the missionaries' household (Lenders 1996: 127) and he was one of the first pupils the Moravian missionaries taught how to read and write. Presumably, Alabi never mastered the skill very well and dictated his letters to Grego. This assumption is based on the fact that the handwriting of Alabi's and Grego's letters is very similar.

The story of the conversion of Alabi, Grego, and a few others to christianity and its impact on Saramaka society is magnificently told in Richard Price's *Alabi's world* (1990), from which most of the extralinguistic information below was taken.¹²² Alabi was baptized on January 6, 1771. He was the principal consultant for Schumann's (1778) Saramaccan dictionary and he was also helpful in teaching Saramaccan to other missionaries, such as Brother Riemer (Stähelin 1913–1919, vol. 3,1: 217). He is said to have had an excellent memory, especially for the concepts and terminology of the Christian faith. Christian Grego was still a boy when he got into contact with the missionaries in 1768; he was baptized in 1775 (Wolbers 1861: 794). Although, according to one of the missionaries, Grego did 'not show much talent for [reading and writing]' (Price 1990: 95), he eventually mastered the skill rather well, as appears from these letters.

In fact, it was the acquisition of reading and writing skills by young Saramaka rather than a desire for religious instruction which was the primary motive for their parents to bring them into contact with the missionaries. Alabi and Grego were among the very few converts among the Saramaka who showed an authentic interest in the Christian faith and who remained christians throughout their lives. They even served as *leriman* 'teachers, missionaries' among their fellow Saramaka. In 1813, when the

122. Additional information was obtained from Wolbers (1861: 791–799). The primary reference, however, which also provided most of the information on the Moravian part of the story for Price, is Stähelin (1913–1919), a detailed three-volume account of the Moravians' missionary activities in Suriname and Berbice, based on the diaries, letters and other records written by the missionaries during their stay in these colonies.

last Moravian missionary left Saramaka, the missionary task was left entirely to Alabi and his few fellow Saramaka converts.

With regard to Alabi and Grego's language situation a few things may be important to note. Alabi was a *matu kreòl* (lit. 'bush creole', i.e. a Saramaka who had been born in the bush, not on a plantation or in Africa). In fact, as can be inferred from Price (1990: 3–9), he belonged to the third or fourth generation of native Saramaka. Although we have no such specific information about Grego, we may assume that he was also born in Saramaka and that, therefore, he was a native speaker of Saramaccan.¹²³ Both men visited Paramaribo several times (Wolbers 1861: 796), occasionally for prolonged periods of time: Alabi's visit to Paramaribo in 1768, for example, lasted as long as six months (Price 1990: 101). Inevitably, these stays involved speaking Sranan, since the explicit purpose of Alabi's stay was to trade and very few people in town knew Saramaccan. Apart from visiting Paramaribo, they also made several missionary journeys upstream the Suriname River in their function of *leriman*, trying – rather unsuccessfully – to convert their fellow Saramaka. One such journey is referred to in one of the letters below (see also Price 1990).

As a result of their contacts with the missionaries, their language may have undergone serious influence from Sranan (see below). This is so because in the early days of the Moravian mission in Saramaka (which began in 1765), religious teaching must have been almost entirely in Sranan, simply because the missionaries did not know Saramaccan well enough. (Stähelin 1913–1919, vol. 3, 1 contains numerous references to the problems many missionaries had in mastering the language.) This influence turned out to be a long-lasting one, as appears from the fact that even today Christian Saramaka 'often speak a Srananized version of Saramaccan' (Price 1990: 277).

As to the addressee of the letters included here, Brother Liebisch was a Moravian bishop who visited Paramaribo from November 1790 to May 1791; he never actually served there. Apparently, he never visited the Saramaka missionary post: no such visit is mentioned in the otherwise very detailed description of Liebisch's stay in Stähelin (1913–1919, vol. 3, 2: 152–170). It is very unlikely he knew either Saramaccan or Sranan, so the letters were probably translated into German for him.

To conclude, I will say a few words about the language used in these letters. Being sister languages, Sranan and Saramaccan have a great deal of vocabulary in common. While nowadays these shared lexical items often differ in their phonetic shapes, due to phonological changes of the last two centuries, this was not the case when these letters were written. This means that in order to determine to what extent the language used here is Saramaccan or Sranan or a mixture of both, one has to look at non-shared vocabulary only. If we do this, we find that one third of these words (types) are Sranan,

123. Grego was still a boy when he got into contact with the missionaries in 1768 (Price 1990: 95). This was only six years after the 1762 Peace Treaty, which had made it more difficult for runaways to join the Saramaka community.

while two thirds are Saramaccan.¹²⁴ This means that, lexically speaking, the language is not 'pure' Saramaccan, as we know it from other contemporary sources, such as Schumann's Saramaccan dictionary. In other words, we are dealing here with letters written in a Saramaccan which has borrowed heavily from Sranan.

Apart from forms that are used only in either the Saramaccan or the Sranan variant, there is also a number of words that are used in free variation. Some of the most frequent examples are the following pairs: *bi/ben* (tense marker), *di/da* (determiner), and *dal/gi* ('give', dative marker) (the Saramaccan variant is mentioned first in all cases). In some cases, the members of these pairs are used interchangeably within one and the same letter. Surprisingly, in almost half of the cases, the items concerned are function words rather than content words. Although this is remarkable at first sight, since in language contact situations in general function words are much less likely candidates for borrowing than content words, it may be explained by the fact that the languages in question are closely related varieties of each other (*cf.* cases of koineization).

Although the addressee of the letters included here did not know Sranan nor Saramaccan, a motivation for the use of Sranan words in the Saramaka Maroon Letters as a whole may have been a desire on the part of the authors to accommodate linguistically towards the group they perceived as their primary audience, the Moravian missionaries. Oral communication between missionaries and Saramaka probably took place in some form of mixed Sranan/Saramaccan, using mainly shared vocabulary. As mentioned earlier, many missionaries had great difficulty in learning Saramaccan (due to it being a tone language, perhaps?). But even if they did master the language, their knowledge was often only short-lived due to the extremely high mortality among them. It does not seem too far-fetched to assume that in such a situation some sort of compromise language developed which was accessible to both parties involved.

The selection of the letters reproduced below is based on the fact that as yet the other letters pose too many problems of transcription and interpretation to be included here. Although the first two letters – written on the same date, in the same hand, and directed to the same addressee – are treated as one in the Herrnhut Archive, they are better seen as two separate letters: it appears that the first letter, which ends with a greeting from Grego in the first person, was both conceived and written by Grego, while the second, which ends with a greeting from Alabi in the third person, may have been dictated to Grego by Alabi. Finally, the third letter seems to have been conceived and written by Grego.

124. The criterion used to determine whether a word belongs to shared vocabulary or not, is its occurrence in Schumann 1778, in Schumann 1783, or in both. Although, obviously, such a criterion is not watertight, it provides – in the absence of other criteria – a heuristic tool for the preliminary analysis presented here.

Grego to bishop Liebisich, December 5, 1790

mi hangri va takki na Joe lobbi Brara va Joe sabbi, mi ha sanni va takki na Joe en Joe no sabbi da Moeffe va mi bieka Joe kan Jerri gweette gweet

Nuwe Bambey den 5 December 1790

Mi biegin va Schriffi wan Briffi na Fotto va dem lobbi Brara sabbi, va hoefa mi ben go na lieba, va loecke mi Tatta, ala mi bi findi dem Sombreh ala, dem hangri va Jerri di boene tori va Massra Jesus Christus; en Mi ben takki gi dem hoefa hem ben Dedde va dem heddi, so a boen va oene sabbi hoefa Helpiman ben kom na di Grond tappéva lobbi heddi hem ben kom na Contri, va loesse wi sombreh na Mouw Dubri, so a dé na ieniwan Sombreh dem ha va beggi na mi Lobbi Massr Jesus Christus na hem Ala somma kan findi boene liebi va teh go, mi zih hoefa dem somma bribi wan retti faassi, mi no sih wan korri faassi na dem, mi takki dem hoefa Massra Gado ben lehri mi na hatti, so mi no minga va takki, da dem, bieka di oto va Gado a dé va toelle Sombreh musse Jerri di oto, A no va kubri hem na baassoe manda, ma hoppo na lieba va ienewan Jessi kan Jreri, mi bribi na Gado nanga mi Helli hatti, en mi hangri va kissi ienetem morre lobbi va Massra di dé Jamjam va mi Schee mi tan bribi ienidaga va hem musse gi mi tranga va lobbi hem morre morre, mi beggi o Massra kom na mi poti hatti va limba hem va no wan Soengoe fieka na hem, va a musse kom retti limbo Hosse va Massra, en hem musse kom va liebi na Hosse, di dé mi hangri va kissi di de Mi De Christian Grego van Aliedija (source: EBGH R 15 Lb 32b)

I am anxious to speak with you, beloved brother, so you'll know the things I have to tell you. And you don't know my language because you can't understand it at all.

New Bambey, December 5, 1790

I start writing a letter so my beloved brothers in Paramaribo will know how I went upstream to visit my father. There I found all the people, anxious to hear the good story of our Lord Jesus Christ. And I told them how He died for their sake, and that it is good that you know how our Saviour came to the world and to Saramaka out of love, to release us people from the hands of the devil. And everybody should pray to my beloved Lord Jesus Christ. In Him everybody can find eternal life. I saw how these people believed in a true manner, I didn't see any deceit among them. I told them how our Lord God instructed my heart, so I couldn't help but tell them, because the story of God is for all people to hear. It should not be kept at the bottom of the basket, but lifted up so everyone's ears can hear it. I believe in God with all my heart and I am anxious to receive more love from the Lord all the time. It is food for my soul. Every day I believe He will give me strength to love Him more. I pray: Oh Lord, come to my poor heart to make it clean, so no uncleanness will be left in it. And it will become a truly clean house for my Lord and He will come and live in it. This I long for very much. I am Christian Grego van Aliedija.

Alabi/Grego to bishop Liebisich, March 24, 1791

Nuwe Bambey den 24 Mart 1791

mi lobbi Grang Brara Liebisich va Bakkara Contri diessi mi bi sieh na Paramaribo, na Massra Liebiessi, na hem mi tan sindi di briffi gi hem va a sabbi hoefta wi liebi na Contri Nuwe Bambey, en wi tan kreh na Helpiman va a da wi Potti tranga na hatti va lobbi hem morre, so mi wenschi va jam da boen na Helpiman Jesus Christus; va da mi di Santa Jeje na mi, va tieri mi Potti soma va tan na iene da lobbi va Helpiman so mi hatti jam wan swutti Peh na di Dedde va Jesus; na hem mi findi liebi va teh go bieka na di Mondoe mi no sih wan boen va hem, va da heddi mi da mi na han va Helpiman, en mi ha wan sanni va takki na oene Grang Brara va Bakkara Contri, Grang Massra Gado ben sindi di lehriman na wi, en hem bi doe toeloe sanni so lekki Helpiman ben gi hem. A takki da wi na Kerki limbo limbo ote va Jesus Christus da wi so dem blakka brara toelloe lobbi di brara J. L. Wietz toemoeschi kaba a meekki sarri kissi wi toele va di hem tan hoppo va kom loekkoe oene, na Hatti wi ha Preh ma oye a meeki sarri, en dem brara va wi takki grang oudi gi oene, en mi beggi oene va oene membre wi na di beggi va oene toe na bakkara kondre, en di lobbi grang brara Johanus takki grang oudi oene (source: EBGH R 15 Lb 32b)

New Bambey, March 24, 1791

My beloved great brother Liebisich from Europe, who I have seen in Paramaribo, to master Liebiessi, to him I send this letter so he knows how we live in the village of New Bambey, and how we are crying out to our Saviour to give us poor people strength in our hearts to love Him more. So much do I wish to experience the goodness from our Saviour Jesus Christ, that He give me the Holy Ghost in me, that He steer me, poor person, to stay in the love of the Saviour. Thus my heart shall enjoy a sweet place in the death of Jesus. In Him I found eternal life, because in the world I do not see any of His good things. Therefore I am in the hands of the Saviour. And I have something to tell you, great brothers in Europe. God, our Great Lord, sent us the missionary, and he did everything just like our Saviour gave it to him. He told us the story of Jesus Christ very clearly in our church. So all the black brothers loved brother J. L. Wietz very much, but he made us all sad, because he left to visit you. In our hearts we had joy, but our eyes he made sad. And our brothers say goodbye to you, and I beg you to remember us also in your prayers in Europe. And the beloved great brother Johanus [Alabi, JA] says goodbye to you.

Grego to bishop Liebisich, March 24, 1791

mi dé brara Christian di Potti wan en mi takki hoe biegi sanni Gado ben du na mi a dangra mi en mi no kan kissi hem ko Konni, ma Gado hem musse da mi di tranga morre, va wakka na Paazi, so langa mi liebi na da Potti moendoe, va mi beggi na Helpiman ko wan retti Hatti, hem sa da mi ondi mi beggi na hem Nem Jussnu a tam helpi mi, so mi beggi na Helpiman va a Loekkoe di brara Wietz ko wyffie na di Grang Watra lieba, va no wan sanni sa doe dem, teh mi Jerri dem dorre boene a Swutti na wi toeloe, mi ko brara

*Wietz ben go morre na dem Contrieman va mi; na lieba, va takki gi da, tori va Helpiman
 We dem sombreh bi kom hiera va harka di boene ote va mi lobbi helpiman en di sann
 bi kom swutti na mi va troe va da heddi mi sindi boeka na oene Grang brara va Bakkar
 Contri, hoefa mi bi findi dem Contriman va mi na lieba, dem hangri va tron liebi en mi
 hangri effi oene sa Pris va sindi da lehriman va wi Bakka gi wi dide sa boene toemoeschi.
 mi takki grangoudi na oene mi Lobbi Brara va Bakka Co. Mi De Christian Gr. Aliedja*

(source: EBGH R 15 Lb 32b)

I am brother Christian, the poor one, and I say what big things God has given me. He was obscure to me and I could not grasp Him with my intellect, but God's word gave me the extra strength to walk the path, as long as I live in this poor world, and to beg the Saviour with an honest heart, that He shall give me what I ask for in His name. He has been helping me just now. I begged the Saviour to take care of brother Wietz and his wife on the Atlantic Ocean, so nothing would hurt them. When I heard they had arrived safely, it was sweet for all of us. Further, I and brother Wietz went to my fellow Saramaccans upstream to tell the story of the Saviour. Well, the people came in great numbers to hear the good story of my beloved Saviour. And it was truly sweet to me. Therefore I sent you a message, great brothers in Europe, to tell you in what situation I found my fellow Saramaccans upstream.¹²⁵ They are anxious to convert and I am anxious to know whether you will be so kind as to send our missionary back to us. This would be very good. I say goodbye to you, my beloved brothers in Europe. I am Christian Grego Aliedja.

41. THE LORD'S PRAYER IN SARAMACCAN AND SRANAN (1779, 1801, 1829, 1884)

A text one would certainly expect to have been translated into the Suriname creoles by the Moravian missionaries is The Lord's Prayer. In fact, several versions exist both of the Sranan and of the Saramaccan translation. As to the latter, I found two translations dating from the late 18th century, one in Schumann's *Verse in die Saramacka-Neger-Sprache* (1779), the other in Riemer's (1801) account of his 10-month visit to Suriname in 1779–1780.¹²⁶ It is not entirely clear to what extent Riemer's version is of his own making rather than being based on an existing translation, e.g. Schumann's, to which it is largely identical, at least structurally (*cf.* the remarks made above in connection with the anonymous (c1780) Saramaccan dictionary; see no. 18). The oldest Sranan translation I found is the text as it appears in the 1829 translation of the New Testament (partly republished in Anon. 1966). I have also included a later Moravian translation which I found in Bonaparte (1884).

^{125.} This probably refers to the letter above.

^{126.} Riemer's version was also included in Adelung & Vater's *Mithridates* (1807–1817), a collection of versions of The Lord's Prayer (plus some other language data) in several hundreds of languages.

41a. LATE-18TH-CENTURY SARAMACCAN VERSION I: SCHUMANN (1779)

Massra Gado, Tatta va wi na liba, ju santa nemm komm santa na wi tu; kontri va ju komm na wi; kumma dem du wandi vo ju na liba, so srepi a musse kai na mundu tu; da wi jamjam inidagga; iniwan missi, wi missi, takki na hatti vo wi dasnotti, kumma wi du na sombre dem missi na wi; no tesi wi va kai na wan pikkado, ma lussu wi va tule ougri! Bika tule kontri de na ju, tranga ko grandi nemm, nanga tule hansem va ju no go kaba. Amen!

(source: EBGH NB VII R 3 8 I (= Schumann 1779: 1))

41b. LATE-18TH-CENTURY SARAMACCAN VERSION II: RIEMER (1801)

Masra Gado Tatta va wi na Liba, ju santa nem kom santa na wi tu. Kondre va ju kom na wi, kumma dem du wanni va ju na Liba, so srepi a mussu koi na mundu tu, da wi jamjam iniwan Dagga, iniwan missi wi missi, takki na hatti va wi dasnotti, kumma wi da dasnotti na sombre dissi missi na wi, notjarri wi na dindru tesi, ma lussi wi va tulu ougri. Bika tulu Kondre de na ju, Tranga, ko grang nem ko tulu hansem va ju no go kaba. Amen.

(source: Riemer 1801:249–50)

41c. EARLY 19TH-CENTURY SRANAN VERSION: ANON. (1829)

Wi Tata na hemel, joe nem moe de santa! Joe kondre moe kom! Joe wani moe go doro na grontapo leki na hemel! Gi wi tidei da njanjam vo wi! Gi wi pardon vo dem zondoe vo wi, so leki wi toe de gi pardon na dem soema, disi doe wi ogri! No meki wi kom na ini tesi! Ma poeloe wi na da ogriwan!

(source: Anon. 1966:70, 72)

41d. LATE 19TH-CENTURY SRANAN VERSION: BONAPARTE (1884)

Wi Tata, die de na hemel. Joe neem moe dee santa! Joe kondré moe kom. Joe wanni wi moe doe na grontapoe, so leki dem doe na hemel. Gi wi tidei da njanjam va wie. Gi wi pardon vo dem ogri di wi doe, so leki wi toe de gi pardon na dem soema disi doe wi ogri! No meki wi kom na ini tesi, Ma poelse wi na da ogriwan; Bikassi alla kondré da vo Joe, alla tranga nanga glorie, da vo Joe tego. Amen.

(source: Bonaparte 1884: 193)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

42. THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES IN SARAMACCAN AND SRANAN (1805 [1793], 1829)

As mentioned earlier, most of the Moravian missionaries' translation activities were directed at the Bible. Among the first Biblical texts to be translated, both in Saramaccan and Sranan, were the Acts of the Apostles. The Saramaccan translation (covering only the first half of the text) was made by Brother I. L. Wietz, who worked

in Saramaka for many years from 1779 onwards. Although Wietz himself said that in the beginning he had problems learning Saramaccan, his Saramaka pupil, Christian Grego, later wrote that he spoke it well. As a translator he was very prolific: apart from Acts, an extract of which is reproduced below, he also made an integral translation of a 600-page work entitled *Idea Fidei Fratrum* lit. 'Summary of the Faith of the Brethren', the religious doctrine of the Moravian Church. In addition to that, he is probably also responsible for some anonymous translations (cf. Voorhoeve & Donicie 1963: 106–9).

The copy of Acts, dating from 1805, which was used for this book is based on Wietz's original translation made in 1793, which is probably lost (Voorhoeve & Donicie 1963: 108). The edition published by Schuchardt (1914) is based on another copy which was made for him especially for that purpose (Schuchardt 1914: 44); this edition does not include verses 13: 34–52 and 14: 1–28, which are part of a different manuscript (Voorhoeve & Donicie 1963: 108). In contrast to Schuchardt's (1914) edition, the fragment presented here is based on the original 1805 manuscript; as a result, my transcription differs from Schuchardt's here and there.

The Sranan translation of Acts used here is part of the first printed integral Sranan translation of the New Testament, which was published in 1829. Parts of it were republished in Anon. (1966), which is the source used for the fragment reproduced below. In a sense, the 1829 translation represents a culmination point in a tradition of New Testament translations begun around 1770 (Voorhoeve & Donicie 1963: 49). Being a collective work, it cannot be attributed to a specific (group of) author(s). Therefore, no biographical information is provided here.

42a. ACTS 1: 1–10 IN SARAMACCAN: WIETZ (1805[1793])

Di fossu takki da mi bi takki, mi lobbi Theophili va tulu di sondi dissi Jesus bi begin va du, en va leri, teh na di dagga teh a hoppo subi go na liba, so srefi a bi da bukka na dem apostel dissi a bi kuje nanga Santa Jeje. Kaba teh a bi jam di penna en dedde, kaba dem bi si hem na so menni faasi a bi tan votentin dagga na dem mindrie, a takki oto nanga dem va Gado Kondre. Kaba teh a bi sunta dem, a takki da dem, dem no mussu komotto na Jerusalem; ma dem mussu lukku di pramüssi va Tatta so leki unu bi jeri va mi. Kaba a takki; Johannes bi da doop ko watra; ma unu sa kissi doop ko Santa Jeje, no langa va tideh. Dem sombre dissi kom sunta, dem haksi hem, dem takki: Massra ju sa hoppo kondre va Israel djusnu? Kaba Jesus pikki a takki da dem, a no füti unu va sabi di tem effi üre, bika mi Tatta bi kibré dide vo hem srefi. Ma unu sa kissi di tranga va Santa Jeje, hem sa kom na unu liba, kaba unu sa kom takkiman va mi na Jerusalem, na Judea, en na Samaria, teh na baka va mundu. Teh a takki dide kaba; A hoppo na dem feesi, kaba wan ahu va liba teki hem, pulu hem na dem ojo. Kaba teh dem lukku so na hem bakka, lukku, dem si tu omi va liba tan na dem sei, dem bisi weti klossi.

(source: EBGU H. III A 10(5) (= Wietz 1805 [1793]))

42b. ACTS 1: 1–10 IN SRANAN: ANON. (1829)

Da fosi tori mi ben skrivi kaba, mi lobbi Teofilus, vo ala demsani, disi Jezus ben begin vo doe en vo leri, Tee na da dei, disi a ben hopo go na hemel, na baka di a ben gi dem Apostel ordre nanga santa Jeje, dem, disi a ben verkizi, En disi a ben sori hem srefti toe gi dem liebi liebi na baka da pina vo hem, a gi dem foeloe krin marki; fotentien dei a ben meki dem si hem na dem mindri, en a taki nanga dem vo Gadokondre. En di a ben de nanga dem makandra, a taki gi dem taki, dem no moese komoto na Jerusalem, ma dem moese tan wakti da pramisi vo Tata, disi oen ben jeri na mi – so hem taki – Bikasi Johannes ben doopoe nanga watra, ma oenoe sa kisi doopoe nanga santa Jeje, en dati no sa tan langa. Ma dem, disi ben kom makandra dapee, haksi hem taki: Masra! Joe sa hopo da koningkondre vo Israel baka noja? Hem taki gi dem taki: Oenoe no ha vo sabi da tem ofoe da joeroe; dati mi Tata wani, a moe tan vo hem tranga wawan. Ma oenoe sa kisi da kragti vo santa Jeje, disi sa kom na oen tapo; oen sa de mi getuige na Jerusalem, na heeli Judea nanga Samaria en tee na dem moro farawei kondre na grontapo. Di a taki dati, nomo a hopo na dem fesi, en wan wolkoe teki poeloe hem na dem hai. We, di dem tanapoe so, loekoe na hemel, fa a hopo gowei, loekoe! Toe mansoema nanga weti klosi kom tanapoe na dem sei.

(source: Anon. 1829, reprinted in Anon. 1966)

The first story I wrote, my beloved Theophilus, about all the things that Jesus began to do and to teach, until the day he went up to heaven, after he had given directions through the Holy Spirit to the Apostles he had chosen. To them he also showed himself alive after his sufferings of which he gave them many clear proofs. He appeared to them during forty days and he spoke with them about the kingdom of God. And when he was together with them, he told them they should not leave Jerusalem but they should wait for the promise of the Father, which you heard from me – so he said. Because John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit, and it will not be long from now. But they, when they had gathered there, asked him, saying: Lord! Are you going to restore the kingdom of Israel now? He told them, saying: It is not up to you to know the time or the hour; my Father keeps those things to himself. But you shall receive the power from the Holy Spirit, which will come upon you; you shall be my witness in Jerusalem and in all of Judea and Samaria and to the most far-away countries on earth. When he said that, right then he went up before their faces, and a cloud took him out of their eyes. And while they were standing there, looking at the sky, how he went up, behold! two men in white clothes were standing by them.

43. THE APOSTLES' CREED IN SRANAN: A CATHOLIC AND A MORAVIAN TRANSLATION (1822, c1830)

Although the great majority of the translations of religious texts into Sranan were made by Moravian missionaries, the Catholic Church also took its share. While the Moravian missionaries were active among Suriname's black population from 1765 onwards, the Catholic mission – ignoring a false start in the late 17th century – did

not get involved in missionary work until the early 19th century. The text reproduced below, for which both a Catholic and a Moravian translation are available, is known as ‘The Apostles’ Creed’. The former is taken from a printed catechism published in 1822, the latter from an anonymous manuscript catechism dating from around 1830. Apart from differences in spelling and vocabulary, the two versions differ in other respects as well, for example in their use of the aspect particle *de*: while it is present with *sidden* ‘sit’ and absent with *bribi* ‘believe’ in the Catholic translation, it is precisely the reverse in the Moravian version.

43a. THE CATHOLIC VERSION (1822)

Mi bribi na Gado, Tattà almagtig, disi ben meki va noti Hemeli nanga Gron. E na Jesus Christus, da wawan pikien va hem Masra va wi. Disi da njoe wenke Maria ben kissi va Santa Jeje, è ben meki hem. A ben pinà ondro Pontius Pilatus, den ben spikri hem na kruisi: a ben dede, è den ben beri hem. A ben go na hel na ondro gron: a ben oppo na dede na ini drie dey. A ben go na tappo na Hemel: a dee sidden na reti han va Gado hem Tattà almagtig. Na dapree a sa komotto foe doe reti na den libiwan è den dedewan. Mi bribi na Santa Jeje.

Da Santa Catholyke Kerki: na makandra kompee va den Santawan. Da pardon va zonde. Da oppo va skien.

E da libi va teego. Amen.

(source: Wennekers 1822:6)

43b. THE MORAVIAN VERSION (c1830)

Mi de briebe na Gado Tatta, dissi ben meki Hemel en Grontappo nanga da Gadotranga va hem. Mi de briebe na Jesus Christus da wan, Pikien va Gado, Massra va wi. Hem ben kom somma nanga worko va Santa Jeje, da njoe Wendje Maria ben geboore hem. Hem ben pinna na Kroettoe va Pontius Pilatus, dem ben hengi hem na Kruis, a ben dedde, dem ben beri hem. Hem ben sakka go na ondro, na hell; drie deh na bakka a ben hoppo na dedde. Hem ben hoppo go na inni Hemel, siddom na reti han va Gado Tatta, dissi habi alla tranga. Hem sa kom bakka vo Hemel, va holi da Grangkroettoe va dem Liebiwan nanga dem Deddewan. Mi de briebe na Santa Jeje. Wan santa Christenkerki, da Gemeenschap va dem Santawan. Da pardon en dasnotti va pikado. Da hoppo va dedde. Da Liebi va tehgo.

(source: EBGU H. III A 7(2), pp. 10–12)

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead; on the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit. The holy catholic/christian church, the communion of saints. The forgiveness of sins. The resurrection of the body. The life everlasting. Amen.

44. JONAS ADAM: A SRANAN LETTER WRITTEN BY A SLAVE (1835)

Apart from the Saramaccan letters, some of which were discussed above (see no. 40), there is a much larger collection of letters in Sranan, many of which were written by slaves (cf. e.g. Voorhoeve & Donicie 1963: 4). Like many of these letters, the one reproduced below is part of the Moravians' correspondence network meant to enhance communication between converts and missionaries all over the world (cf. no. 40 above).

Paramaribo den 23 Augustus 1835

na mi boenne leerman Wetting mi Jonas Adam dissi joe sreffu ben tjari na inni da bigie lobi vo Massra Jesus christus senni takki joe bigie odie, mi de hoop alla deh vo genade en frie vo wie boenne tatta en Massra Jesus christus moesse de nanga joe mie boenne leerman en mie de senni grang odi na dem twalf grang somma, dissu wi boenne Massra ben potti da boene filie na dem member vo den ben seni gi wi potti blendi nenger da swititorie vo wi boenne Massra Jesus christus en mi senni bigie odie na da heel gemeente, noffe trom mi de jerie hoefta dem senni odi gie wi, en hoefta dem de doe da switti wani vo wi boenne Massra, kaba datti de gi na mi wan retie filie vo mi moe kom loekoe dem ma dissu da bigi zout water platti wi na midrie vo da hedde a no de mogelijk vo mi kan kom na dem, maar mi de hoop alla deh vo wi alla sa romboto da glorie stuloe vo wi boenne helpiman Jesus christus na baka vo dissu liebie. En mi senni taki joe grang tangi vo den boek dissu joe ben senni gi na wi sens da tem dem boek ben kom na da sreffu tem mi ben kissi da amt vo dienaar, dem lidmaat vo joe noffe de jette na libi en noffe go slibi kaba, en da bigi deh vo Massra dissu joe ben si Engel kaba joe ben kali da heel gemeent vo wi ben kan kom toe vo geniete da Santa Avondmaal, mi no vergiti jette bikassi mi ben sikkisi hem na mi hatti. En mi de wensche alla deh vo da heel gemeent sa holi da reti saka fassi na onder kruis vo wi boenne Massra Jesus christus, en vo wi sa harkie na dem leerman, en vo wi sa hoppo da grang neem vo wi Massra Jesus christus dissu de da winniman, Hallelujah Amen. Jonas Adam.

(source: EBGH R15 Lb 32 b 15)

Paramaribo, August 23, 1835

To my good teacher Wetting, I, Jonas Adam, whom you yourself brought to the great love of our Lord Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings. Every day I hope that the grace and peace of our good Father and Lord Jesus Christ may be with you, my good teacher. And I send my greetings to the twelve great men in whose minds our good Lord put the good feeling in order to send us poor blind negroes the sweet story of our good Lord Jesus Christ. And I send my greetings to the whole community. I often hear how they have sent us their greetings and how they do the sweet will of our good Lord, and that gives me the right feeling that I should visit them but the big ocean separates us. That's why it's impossible for me to come to them, but I hope every day that we shall be around the glorious throne of our good Saviour Jesus Christ after this life. And I send you my thanks for the books you sent us. When the books arrived, since that time I have held the office of servant. Of the members of your church many are still alive

and many have passed away. And the big day of our Lord, when you saw an angel and you called the whole community to have Holy Supper, I didn't forget it because I have sealed it in my heart. And I wish every day that the whole congregation will keep its humble ways below the cross of our good Lord Jesus Christ and that we shall listen to the teachers and that we shall raise the big name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the victor. Hallelujah Amen. Jonas Adam

45. 'LITTLE WHITE MAN TALKING SWEET': W. BOEKHOUDT'S SERMON
IN SRANAN (1846)

W. Boekhoudt was a minister for the Reformed Church, who stayed in Suriname from 1845 until 1849 (Van Kempen 2003: 378). A quarter century after his return to the Netherlands he published his memories of the time he had spent in Suriname (Boekhoudt 1874). During his residence there he gave several sermons in Sranan, one of which (delivered in 1846) is included in its entirety in his book (pp. 145–56); the first paragraphs of it are reproduced below. Boekhoudt's Sranan sermons were well received, as appears from the praise of a black woman, who expressed her approval as follows: *fa da pikien bakkra takki switi!* 'How sweet the little white man speaks!' (p. 37). Nevertheless, the language used in the sermon clearly bears a *bakratongo* stamp. (Perhaps that was precisely what the woman appreciated in it!) The somewhat stilted style may also be a result of the fact that Boekhoudt had not had much exposure to everyday spoken Sranan when he gave this sermon: he had arrived in Suriname only the year before. Boekhoudt's example of preaching in Sranan was followed a few years later by another minister of the Reformed Church (Wolbers 1861: 772).

Soleki wi no kan sabi wan soema boen-boen sondo sabi 'fa a ben libi en san a ben doe, so wi no kan sabi reti-reti wi lobi Masra Jesus Kristus té wi no sabi san a ben taki en doe disi a libi na grontapoe. Den fo Evangelist nanga wantoedri foe dem Apostel ben taki wi foeloe foe alla den woortoe, disi Hem ben taki en foe dem foeloe wroko, disi Hem ben doe, alwass den no ben skrifi na ini Gadoboekoe alla wroko, disi Hem ben doe, bikassi – sol-eki da Apopstel Johannes taki – iffoe den ben skrifi alla sanni di Jesus ben doe, da heeli grontapoe no ben sa kan kibri wan so bigi boekoe. Ma alwass wi no sabi dan alla sanni di wi Masra Jesus Kristus ben wroko, disi a wakka na mindri den soema, tokkoe wi sabi nofo foe si na ini Hem wan soema, disi Masra Gado srefi ben senni, wan bigi profeet, da Pikien foe Masra Gado. Datti wi dé si krien, iffoe wi lezi 'fa Hem ben wakka go na kro-eboi foe Hem libi na Jerusalem, da bigi foto foe da kondre Judea, foe njam na Djoefassi Paaska. Na datti wi wanni memre na ini disi joeroe. Gado srefi bresi wi! Hem jerepi mi na da wroko en opo oen hatti foe oen teki Gado woortoe! Den woortoe foe disioen sa jeri mi taki, oen kan finni na ini da Evangelium foe Johannes, kapittel tiennatoe, verstiennatoe té tiennanegi, offoe da Evangelium foe Lukas, kapittel tiennanegi, versi toetentien nanegi té fotientiennafo.

(source: Boekhoudt 1874[1846]: 147–148)

Just as we cannot know somebody really well without knowing how he lived and what he did, we cannot truly love our Lord Jesus Christ as long as we don't know what he said and did while he lived on earth. The four Evangelists and several Apostles have told us a lot about all the words he said and about the many deeds he did, even though they didn't write up all the deeds he did in the Bible, because – as the Apostle John says – if they would write up all the things Jesus did, the whole world would not be able to contain such a large book. But although we don't know all the things our Lord Jesus Christ did while he walked among the people, still we know enough to see in Him a person who was sent by our Lord God himself, a great prophet, the child of the Lord God. That we see clearly when we read how He went up to the end of His life in Jerusalem, the capital of Judea, to celebrate Jewish Passover. It is that we wish to remember at this moment. God himself blessed us! He helped me in my work and he lifted up your hearts so that you would accept God's word! You can find the words about which you will hear me speak in the Gospel according to John, chapter twelve, verses twelve until nineteen, or in the Gospel according to Luke, chapter nineteen, verses twenty-nine until forty-four.

46. A PAPAL BULL IN SRANAN (1878)

One of the most curious texts in Sranan is the translation of a papal bull known as the *Bulla "Ineffabilis"*. This bull, in which the doctrine of the 'immaculate conception'¹²⁷ is formulated, was issued by Pope Pius IX in 1854.¹²⁸ In 1878, a translation was published in no less than fifteen dialects of Dutch and in Frisian, supplemented with translations into four languages spoken in the colonial empire: Malay, Javanese, 'Negro-Spanish' (i.e. Papiamentu), and Sranan (Berns 1997: 3–4). The Sranan translation was made by Monsignor S. Meurkens, with the assistance of Father J. P. A. van Mens (Berns 1997: 4). I have no biographical information about these men, except that Meurkens had done several translations before, including a catechism (Voorhoeve & Donicie 1963: 59, 74).

Foe datti hede, di wi teki hem Pikien presenteri wi srefi begi nanga den begi foe Kerki makandra gi Gado da Tata kaba na sakkafasi nanga vasti, foe A sa teki da tranga foe santa Jeje prisi tiri wi gi wi krakti – di wi begi alla Gado kondresoema kaba, meki den assisteri wi, di wi senni wi soktoe gi santa Jeje, disi de foe helpi, begi helpi kaba, – di Hem poti datti so na wi hatt kaba; wi poti sani na krien, taki leti opo, poti fasti foe gi da santa Driwanfasi grani, foe gi mooifasi nanga krienfasi na da santa krienjoenwenke, da Mama foe Gado, foe opo da Katoliki bribi meki da christen bribi kom moro foeloe,

127. Contrary to what many people seem to think, the doctrine of the immaculate conception states that the virgin Mary conceived without bearing the burden of the original sin, *not* that the conception of Christ took place in some 'immaculate' fashion.

128. I am grateful to Hein Eersel for making this text available to me.

bicasi wi Masra Jesus Christus ben taki so, den Apostel Petrus nanga Paulus nanga wisrefi leri so, taki da tori de troe, disi leri, taki na Gado srefi ben meki wi sabi datti, na so alla bribi-soema doro den moesoe bribi tranga toe, taki da santa krienjoenwenke Maria ben de wantem sondro flakka foe da sondoe foe wi fossi tata Adam da srefi joeroe di a kom na hem mamaskien, – da Almakti Gado nanga bigi genade nanga bigi boen foe hem wawan ben meki datti kom so foe da verdini foe Jesus Christus da helpiman foe alla soema hede. – Datti hede, di soema de somtem, kaba Gado moe kibri den foe datti, disi habi hati foe bribi trafasi na ini den hati, leki fa wi ben poti datti, den moesoe sabi, den moe memre doro, taki nanga da prakseri foe den srefi den poti densrefi na kroektoe pasi meki da sipi foe da bribi foe den go broko, poeloe densrefi na ini kerki; so toe nanga densrefi foutoe den meki da strafoe, disi de foe datti, fadon wantem na den tapoe, sosrefi den soema, disi memre so na ini den hati, taki so nanga moffo efi srfi so efi meki wan marki foe sori datti na wanfasi na dorosei.

For that reason, after having presented our own prayers as well the prayers of the Church to God the Father, through His Son, in humiliation and fasting, so that He would guide and strengthen us through the power of the Holy Ghost, having asked everybody in God's Kingdom to help us and having sent our sighs to the Holy Ghost, who is there to help, asking for his help and He having thus put it in our hearts: we declare and pronounce and establish, to give honor to the Holy Trinity, to give lustre and splendour to the Holy Virgin, the Mother of God, to uplift the Catholic faith so that the Christian faith will be expanded, because our Lord Jesus Christ said so, because the Apostles Peter and Paul and we ourselves taught so, that the doctrine is true which says that God Himself has made it known to us, and all faithful people must believe this firmly, that the Holy Virgin Mary was without the stains of the sin of our first father Adam from the very moment she was born – the Almighty God has done this, in a great grace and a great privilege of Him alone, for the merit of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of all people – Therefore, if there are people who, but may God prevent them from it, dare to believe in their hearts otherwise than we have determined, they should know and they should remember from now on that with their own judgment they have put themselves on the wrong path so that the ship of their faith is wrecked and that they have placed themselves outside the church. Similarly, with these same errors they make the punishment which is appropriate for this fall upon them immediately, as well as those who think this way in their hearts and say it with their mouth or write it or make it known in any outward way.¹²⁹

129. Due to the idiosyncracies in the language used in this text, I based my translation both on the Sranan text and on the Dutch translation of the Latin original presented in Berns (1997: 16).

47. 'THE WRITING IN THE SKY': VISIONS FROM JOHANNES KING'S SKREKIBUKU (1882–1888)

Johannes King, occasionally referred to as the 'bushland prophet', was a Matawai Maroon and may be regarded as the first true native author in Sranan.¹³⁰ With a Ndyuka father and a Matawai mother – herself the daughter of a *granman* –, King (c1830–1899) was a Matawai according to the Maroon system of matrilineal descent. However, due to suspicions related to *wisi* 'witchcraft' his mother was not accepted by the Matawai community and she and her family led a roving life in the region between the Para and the lower Saramacca Rivers. This area was inhabited by Whites and their slaves as well as Saramaka and Ndyuka maroons, all of whom worked the many timber estates in that region. During this period, King may have learned to speak Sranan in addition to his native Matawai as well as, perhaps, some Saramaccan and/or Ndyuka. In 1852 the family found a more permanent residence in Maripaston, a small village along the lower Saramacca river (about 20 miles southwest of Paramaribo). Later on in his life, King made several missionary journeys to maroon communities in different parts of Suriname.

In late 1857, King reported himself in Paramaribo with Brother Van Calker, head of the Moravian Community in Surinam. He told Van Calker that having recovered from a serious illness he had been seeing visions urging him to adopt and propagate christianity. When he left Paramaribo, he was given a copy of an *ABC-boekoe*, a reading method-*cum*-catechism developed by the Moravian missionaries and used in their educational activities among the Blacks. Upon his return to Paramaribo in 1860, he had not only taught himself to read but he had also begun missionary work among his fellow Maroons, even though he was not baptized until a year later. Within a few years he must have learned to write as well, since his earliest writings date from 1864. This marked the beginning of a continuous flow of texts written between 1864 and 1895, covering a total of some 1,000 manuscript pages, all written in Sranan. This figure does not include the *Dresiboekoe* 'Book of medicine', a text that contains information on how to counteract the effects of *wisi*. Due to its secret character, King's descendants are reluctant to have outsiders see this item (but cf. Zamuel 1994, where some portions of it have been published).

Apart from the *Dresiboekoe*, King's work, still largely unpublished, includes diaries, confessions, travel accounts, and an exposition of indigenous Maroon religion for the Moravian missionaries. Some of his work has been made available in printed form (De Ziel 1973; De Beet 1981, 1995; Zamuel 1994). Among these is the *Skrekibuku* 'Book of terrors', from which the excerpt below was taken. We should not be surprised that King wrote in Sranan rather than in his native Matawai. He had learned how to read and write from a reading method for Sranan, the only Surinamese creole used in writing at the time. Although he probably did not write with the aim of getting published, we may assume that he addressed his writings to the Moravian missionaries,

130. Most of the information below is based on De Beet (1995: 9–34).

most of whom did not know any of the other creole languages. This may also explain the 'church Sranan' features in his language, although at the same it also shows many characteristics of an oral style (Voorhoeve & Lichtveld 1975: 118). Johannes King is a most intriguing figure, who stood with one foot in the Christian world of the Moravian missionaries while the other was still firmly planted in the Maroon world of his kin-folk. In this respect he may be compared to Johannes Alabi, the first Saramaccan convert, whose 'cultural schizophrenia' has been evoked vividly in Price (1990). (For more biographical information on King, see 'De Ziel' 1973: 2–8.)

Besides King's descriptions of his dreams and visions, the *Skrekibuku* contains episodes from the history of his family and of maroon society in general. It also features an account of King's conflict with his half-brother, Noah Adrai, who was one of King's religious followers at first but later turned into one of his most bitter enemies. The quarrel had to do with the fact that Noah Adrai was appointed *granman* of the Matawai while later on it also took on religious and moral aspects.¹³¹ Some visions are supplemented by King's drawings representing the scenes he saw. Interestingly, some of his visual images are inspired by the world of plantation slavery: one drawing shows people wearing chains on their feet, their hands, and even their tongues, while in some of his visions of hell people are burned in sugar kettles.

Several of King's visions reveal his preoccupation with writing, such as those reproduced below. In the vision described in the first text fragment, he sees the whole firmament covered with letters and numbers, such as the sequence 'hkkh 5. C.' Their meaning remains hidden from him since 'God did not say what they meant.' In another vision, God writes letters up in the sky, but takes them away just when King tries to read them. In the third vision, God gives him a pen and has him write 'on the side of the firmament, just like people write on a slate'. While the latter example suggests that King saw his writing as inspired by God, the other cases suggest that the domain of writing and literacy was full of mystery for him.¹³²

The dating of King's writings is a notoriously difficult affair. When describing events that took place in a particular year, he would put that date above the entry, even if the actual writing took place decades later. In the case of the *Skrekibuku*, De Beet claims that the manuscript was probably written between 1882 and 1888, even though many of the visions took place in the 1860s and 1870s. The excerpts below are taken from De Beet's edition (1995), which is based on Ms EBGH H. R 15Lb N 35 20f 6–8.¹³³

131. Noah Adrai was *granman* from 1870 until 1893. When King was finally given the post in 1895, he abandoned it after several weeks.

132. The mystery presented by books (and writing in general) to illiterate African-Americans is well-known from other parts of Afro-America: cf., for example, Gates (1988, ch. 4) on the 'magic of writing' experienced by Blacks in the Plantation South.

133. Note that in De Beet's transcription spelling and punctuation of the original manuscript were adapted.

Den 22 december 1865, mi geest libi mi skin. Masra sori mi wan moi sani en wan verwondroe sani toe. Da heeli hemel tenti na tapoe foeloe nanga skrifi retre en nomroe. Da skrifi ben foeloe toemoesi- toemoesi, en wan vo den retre ben skrifi so: hkkh 5.C. Ma Masra no taki gi mi san dem retre nanga dem nomroe wani taki, Masra hooli dati vo hem srefi. A sori mi vo skrifi nomo. (source: De Beet 1995:175)

On the 22nd of December 1865 my spirit left my body. The Lord showed me something beautiful and wondrous too. The whole firmament of heaven above was full of letters and numbers. The writing was all over the place and one of the letters was written as follows: hkkh 5.C. But the Lord did not tell me what the letters and the numbers meant. The Lord kept it to himself. He only showed it to me to write it down.

[January 9, 1866, JA] *Wi tapoe na ondro wan deiki nanga wan sribi krosi. En da krosi wai pikinso komoto na mi tapoe, nomo mi si Masra skrifi letre na da hemel tenti na tapoe, an (wan?) hafoe lo. En di mi wani vo lesi da skrifi, nomo Masra poeroe da skrifi baka, en wan toe stari hoopo krin na tapoe.* (source: De Beet 1995:228)

We were covered with a blanket and a sleeping cloth. And the cloth was blown a little away from me; right then I saw that the Lord had written letters in the firmament of heaven above, half a row. And when I wanted to read the writing, right then the Lord pulled the writing away.

Den 25 augustus 1867, Masra sori mi wan verwondroe sani. En aladi mi geest liebi mi skin. Masra meki da jeje vo hem tjari mi go tee na sei da hemel tenti na tapoe. Masra gi mi wan skrifi pen na mi leti hanoë, en Masra gi mi krin verstand so leki mi de nanga liebi-liebi hai dia. En dan Masra meki mi de skrifi letre na sei da hemel tenti so leki soema de skrifi na tapoe wan pan lei. Masra meki mi Johannes King hanoë srefi skrifi, ma Masra no wani mi sabi san da skrifi de taki. (source: De Beet 1995:208)

On the 25th of August 1867 the Lord showed me something wondrous. And while my spirit was leaving my body, the Lord made his spirit bring me to the side of the firmament. The Lord gave me a writing pen in my right hand and the Lord gave me a clear sense, just as I have living eyes here. And then the Lord made me write letters at the side of the firmament just like people write on a slate. The Lord made my own hand, that of Johannes King, write but the Lord did not want me to know what the writing said.

48. FOOD FOR CHRISTIAN SOULS: THE MAKZIEN FOE KRISTEN-SOEMA ZIELI (1902)

After the Moravian mission acquired a printing press (in 1831), it took another twenty years before their *Makzien foe Kristen-soema ziele* 'Magazine for the souls of Christians' saw its first issue in print. This monthly magazine, written entirely in Sranan, was published from 1852 until 1932 (with an intermission from December 1879 until January 1889). It contained edifying stories, songs, missionary news, and some political information (Voorhoeve & Donicie 1963: 100). The items reproduced below are from the 'Community news' section of the magazine.

Som njoesoe vo gemeente.

Na da 31 December 1901 wan njoe leriman, masra Fabricius, ben kom. We, wi de wensi en begi taki, Masra moe blesi hem nanga da wroko vo hem, disi a sa go doe na ini wi gemeente.

*Na da 2 Januari 1902 Masra Gado ben finni vo boen, vo kali wan vo dem pikin masra na ini winkri, Max Moritz Otto John, komopo na disi liebi kom na hem. A ben de wan soema, disi no ben bekenti da bribi vo hem nanga mofo wawan, ma disi ben zoekoe doronomo vo **doe**¹³⁴ Masra wani toe, en alwasi da wroko vo hem na ini winkri ben de wan dorosei-wroko nomo, tog a ben doe da wroko dati leki wan disciple vo Kristus. Vo dati hede ala soema, disi ben habi wroko nanga hem, ben lobbi hem, en wi fili sari reti reti, di wi lasi so wan boen en vertrouw wrokoman. Ma moro foeloe wi fili sari nanga hem tata nanga mama, disi ben lasi nanga hem da wan enkli manpikien vo dem. A ben ouroe 23 jari, en a ben wroko dia wan sebi moen nomo, ma vergiti, wi no sa vergiti hem so hesi.*

(source: Makzien foe Kristen-soema zieli 1902 (1), p. 8)

Some news from the community

On December 31, 1901, a new missionary, Mr Fabricius, arrived. We wish and pray that the Lord will bless him and his work he will be doing in our community.

On January 2, 1902, the Lord God decided to call one of the junior assistants in the shop, Max Moritz Otto John, away from this life onto him. He was someone who not only confessed his faith in words but who was constantly looking to **do** God's will as well. And even though his work in the shop was only 'external' work, he nevertheless did that work like a disciple of Christ. For that reason, everyone who had any dealings with him loved him, and we're truly sorry to have lost such a good and reliable worker. But we're even more sorry for his father and his mother who with him lost their only son. He was 23 years old and he had been working here for only seven months, but we will certainly not forget him that quickly.

49. AN INDIGENOUS SYLLABIC SCRIPT FOR NDYUKA: AFAKA (1917)

Somewhere around 1908, an illiterate Ndyuka man named Afaka started to develop a syllabic script for his native language.¹³⁵ A syllabic script is very well suited for Ndyuka because its syllable structure is overwhelmingly CV, as a result of which the total number of different syllables is relatively low. Afaka's script consists of only 56 characters, which is sufficient for the basic purposes for which it was designed. While it bears some striking similarities to a syllabary used for writing Vai, a Mande language spoken in Liberia and Sierra Leone, it is not at all clear how these similarities should be explained. Although Vai is spoken in a region that was a major recruitment area

134. Bold represents italics in the original.

135. These introductory remarks are based on Dubelaar & Pakosie (1999: 7–39).

for Surinamese slaves (see Chapter 3), it is hard to imagine how Afaka's script could have been invented on the basis of the Vai syllabary it being almost one hundred years after the end of slave importation. One cannot, of course, exclude the possibility that it was introduced to Suriname earlier, in the time when many Africans from Liberia and Sierra Leone were brought to Suriname (1750–1800), and that it was preserved secretly for more than a century. Whatever may be the case, the result is that Ndyuka is the only creole language known to exist that has its own script. Although Afaka's syllabary met with some success at first, it never became very wide-spread among the Ndyuka; recently, however, efforts have begun to be made to breathe some new life into it. The most comprehensive publication about the script, containing many texts both in Afaka and in alphabetic script plus their translations into Dutch, is Dubelaar, Pakosie and Hoogbergen (1999). Discussions in English can be found in Dubelaar (1995), Dubelaar & Pakosie (1988, 1993), Gonggryp (1960), and Huttar (1987, 1992). The text below is excerpted from a letter written by Afaka, in which he explains how the script was given to him by God in a dream. It is interesting to see how for him, as for Johannes King, the use of writing is connected with the supernatural (cf. no.47 above).

(source: Dubelaar & Pakosie 1999:50–56)

...Wi konde wi kali Afilika. Da Gadu ben du so aga en wani, aga en koni, aga en ligeli: a ben puu afu den Afilika na ini a konde fu den Afilika tyali kon na Salana. Te a ten di a wani, a ben puu afu na ini Salana baka tyali go poti na busi. A kali den Ndyuka. A taki: Na ya un mu tan. A gi den libi. Da a tan wan bun pisi langa. Da a kali den pilisitisi. Den piki. A taki: Den Afilika di de na busi, den mu kon santa na ini a bilibi di yu abi. Aga pamisi fu Masa Gadu yu mu gi den leli aga lafu aga nyan aga diligi aga losutu....Da Masa Gadu lafu. A sede wan yeye go na de Afilika, en nen Usa. A meke a siibi dipi. A go, a kali en: Usa! A piki. A taki: Mi sa gi yu wan ebi fi yu tyali. Te yu go na Gadukonde, yu sa fede yu paima na Gadu Konde. A teke wan pisi papila, a gi Usa, sonde eki, sonde tiki. Usa taki: Mi Masa, fa fu mi du aga a papila. A yeye kon, a taki: I sa fede ala sa di de fanoudu. Da a opo wan sitali aga faya. Masa Gadu soli wan maliki. A taki: Ai sa si, yesi sa yee. Da a gi Okanisi nenge papila. A opo wan bigi feti. Na a mun fu a sitali a papila opo...A sabi taki a mu gi lowenenge papila fu wi libi. A bun gi lowenenge...Okanisi kisi papila. Den sa kisi leli. Den sa kisi koni. Den sa kisi sabi. Wi sa libi na sata libi. Na kilifasi sa kon. Te na leti dei sa kon, wi ala sa de na a wan pasi e go na a leti konde, aga lafu, aga singi, aga pilisili. Na so amakiti Tata taki. Wi mu libi aga leli....

(source: Dubelaar & Pakosie 1999:51–57)

Our land is called Africa. Then God did thus with his will, with his wisdom, with his guidance: he brought half of the Africans from the land of the Africans to Suriname. The moment he wanted to, he took half of them from Suriname again and put them in the bush. He called them 'Ndyuka'. He said: here you must stay. He gave them life. Then he waited for quite some time. Then he called the priests. They answered. He said: The Africans who are in the bush, they must become holy in the faith that you have. With

the permission of God you must teach them, with laughter, with food, with drink and with rest... Then the Lord God laughed. He sent a spirit to the African, called Usa.¹³⁶ He put him in a deep sleep. He went and called him: Usa! He answered. He said: I will give you a load for you to carry. If you go to the land of God, you will find your reward in the land of God. He took a piece of paper, he gave it to Usa, without ink, without a pen. Usa said: My Lord, what should I do with the paper? The spirit came, saying: You will find everything that is needed. Then he put up a star with fire.¹³⁷ The Lord God showed a sign. He said: Eyes will see, ears will hear. Then he gave the paper to the Okanisi Negroes. He started a big fight. The paper appeared in the month of the star... He knew he had to give us the paper in order to live. It is good for the Maroons... The Okanisi¹³⁸ got the paper. They will get teaching. They will get wisdom. They will get knowledge. We will live the holy life. The enlightenment will come. When the right day will come, we will all be on the one road, going to the right land, with laughter, with song, with pleasure. Thus spoke the Father Almighty. We must live with teaching.

136. 'Usa' is Afaka's 'book name', the alternative name adopted by so-called *buku man* 'book men', i.e. people who use the Afaka script.

137. This refers to the appearance of Halley's comet in 1910, which formed the impetus for Afaka to make his script more widely known.

138. *Okanisi* 'people from Auka' (cf. Chapter 2) is an alternative name for the Ndyuka Maroons.

