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# Mali from the Empire of the Lion's King and Kings to the Hands of Fifty Four Diplomatic Colonial Agents in the Appellation of French Sudan, Federation 1235-1960

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Abstract Review Article

This paper focuses on the identification of different French colonial agents whom in their portfolios were able to show their strength and hegemony in one of the former greatest African Empire known as Mali Empire with outstanding Lion King Sundiata Keita and other Kings from 1235 until it's collapsed. The lucrative economic and commercial activities of the empire called for the attention of different actors in the later centuries at the time thereby making the history of the present day Mali very important to Africa. The French pre-colonial and colonial era dating from 1880 through the Berlin colonial conference of 1884-1885 to the granting of independence in 1960 opened the doors and mechanisms of neo-colonialism characterized with pre-crisis era which became serious challenges to that country till the 21<sup>st</sup> Century denunciations of French activities in that country. The scrutiny of specialized sources and other related scientific works enable the use of historical approach by bringing the highlights of the Mali Empire before identification of the main European agents. This study is very important because the young generation of historians can open other research activities concerning those specific colonial agents during their tenure of office and any colonial claims still waiting by Africans can be very important with concrete evidences.

**Keywords:** Lion, King, Mali, Empire, colonial agent, federation, independence.

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#### INTRODUCTION

Mali is a country in the Western part of the African continent. The country is landlocked and sits on the Saharan and Sahelian regions making it mainly arid. The country shares its border with Mauritania, Burkina Faso, Algeria, Guinea, Niger, Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire. The main relief features are plateaus and plains making the landscape flat and monotonous. The country occupies a total area of 482,077 square miles and is home to a population of 19,134,000 people who live mainly close to the banks of River Niger. Despite its arid climate, the country is endowed with a host of mineral resources which include gold, uranium, diamonds, copper, iron ore, precious stones, zinc, manganese, bauxite, lead, lithium, bitumen schist, marble, gypsum, kaolin, phosphate, lignite, diatomic, and rock salt. Mali is also home to a variety of wildlife which includes, black rhinos, African lions, Crocodiles, elephants, camels, leopards, giraffes, chimpanzees, ball pythons, and a variety of birds. (Mali | Extractive Industries Transparency Initiativehttps://eiti.org > mali). On Mineral resources, Mali is considered to have some of the largest gold deposits on the Continent. The nation is currently the third largest exporter of gold on the continent after the top leading countries of Ghana and South Africa. (Initiativehttps://eiti.org > mali). As a result of the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885, Mali fell under French colonial rule (G. Mann, 2005) where different diplomatic agents were appointed to prove French hegemony over the Africans in that part of West Africa.

During the 11<sup>th</sup> Century, the Empire of Mali becomes dominant force in the upper Niger basin, its period of greatness beginning under King Sundiata in

1235 and peaking under Mansa Musa who ruled between 1312 and 1337 and extended empire to the Atlantic. 14th-15th centuries - Decline of the Empire of Mali, which loses dominance of the gold trade to the Songhai Empire, which makes its base in Timbuktu historically important as a focal point of Islamic culture and a trading post on the trans-Saharan caravan route. Late 16th century - Moroccans defeat the Songhai, make Timbuktu their capital and rule until their decline in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. During the 19<sup>th</sup> Century the French colonial advancement was rampant coupled with Islamic religious wars which lead to creation of theocratic states. By 1898 France agents in the territory completed their conquest of Mali, then called it French Sudan until 1959 towards the wind of change in favour of self-determination, Mali and Senegal formed the Mali Federation, which collapsed in 1960 as both gained independence with Modibo Keita becoming the first president of Mali then instituted one-party socialist state (Mali profile - Timeline, 26 August 2020) marking the beginning of troubles with the Western neo-colonial actors in the making.

The Empire of Mali was one of the largest empires in West African History, and at its height, it spanned from the Atlantic Coast to central parts of the Sahara desert. The Empire was founded in 1235 CE by the legendary King Sundiata and lasted until the early 1600s CE. The Empire's most famous ruler was named Mansa Musa, and chroniclers of the times wrote that when he travelled to Mecca on a pilgrimage he distributed so much gold that he caused great inflation lasting a decade (Shuriye, Abdi O. et al., 2013). The Mali Empire arose with the consolidation of several small Malinké Kingdoms in Ghana around the areas of the upper Niger River Most of what is known about the Empire of Mali's early history was collected by Arabic scholars in the 1300s and 1400s. A King named Sumanguru Kanté ruled the Susu Kingdom, which had conquered the Malinké people in the early 13th century The King known as Sundiata (also spelt Sunjata) organised the Malinké resistance against the Susu Kingdom and Sundiata is believed by many historians, such as Conrad David and Innes Gordon, to have founded Mali when he defeated Sumanguru Kanté in 1235 (Levtzion, N. 1963). The period of 1360 - 1390 was a time of troubles for the Empire of Mali. The Empire suffered under several bad rulers with short reigns. The throne changed hands between several members of the ruling family and was at one point seized by a man named Mahmud, who was neither from Mali nor part of the ruling family. Eventually, Mansa Mari Djata II managed to regain the throne for the ruling dynasty, but his despotic rule ruined the state (Conrad, David C. 2009). As in previous years, it was a court official who brought the Empire back on track after a series of bad rulers. Mari Djarta, a 'wazir' (minister), took power and ruled, essentially acting as regent, through King Mansa Musa II. During the reign of Mari Djarta (also known as Mari Djarta III) the

Empire of Mali would restore some of the power that it had lost during the preceding 30 years of misrule and civil war. Mansa Musa II died in 1387 and was succeeded by his brother Mansa Magha II, who would also be the puppet of powerful court officials. After a year Mansa Musa II was killed, thus ending the line of kings which descended from Mansa Musa I. This triggered the decline of the Empire of Mali and in 1433 the city was conquered by Tuareg nomads. For the next 100 years the Empire would slowly give way to the Songhay conquerors from the east, and by the 1500s it had been reduced to only its Malinké core lands. During the 17th century Mali had broken into a number of minor independent chiefdoms and thus the Mali Empire was no longer the superpower it had been in its prime(David C. 2009). Some notably Imperial Kings of Mali includes, Musa Keita I (Mansa Musa), Souleyman Keita, Mari Djata Keita II, Musa Keita II, Maghan Keita II, Sandaki Keita, Maghan Keita III, Musa Keita III, Ouali Keita II, Mansa Mahmud Keita II, Mansa Mahmud Keita III and late imperial Mali with Mansa Mahmud Keita IV.

## 1. The Advent of a Prominent Pre-Colonial Lion King of Great African Empire of Mali

In this section we consider that the history of the great African Kingdoms and Empires during the pre-colonial era called for the attention of ETEWA in the Centuries that followed. To that effect, Sundiata Keita known as the "Lion of Mali" became our principal actor in this research because he was the founder of Mali Empire as the largest Kingdom in West Africa. Meaning in the studying of African History in general, the young generation of historians and other related field should be able to know and respect the fact that European envied the Continental civilizational organisations, natural wealth of specific localities and other human resources as main for manual labour before creating fictitious Empires in the name of intensive exploration, expropriation, exploitation and neo-colonialism which is presently facing serious challenges in the same countries they considered to have buried them citizenship and patriotic mentalities against continuous cheating in the name of military and economic protections or in skimpily fact security guarantee which are instead security uncertainties and espionage to the detriment of Africans.

## 1.1 The Strength of the Great Lion King Sundiata Keita

Pre-imperial Mali refers to the period of history before the establishment of the Mali Empire, an African empire located mostly in present-day Mali, in c. 1235. Sundiata's name means 'lion prince' or 'hungering lion', the big cat being the symbol of the Keita clan. ... In one version of the stories, Sundiata had other problems as he was exiled to the kingdom of Mema while a brother, Dankaran Tuman, took over as ruler of the Malinke. The story of Sundiata Keita is behind "The Lion King." Known as the Lion of Mali, Sundiata was

the founder of the Malian Empire, the largest kingdom in West Africa. He ruled his empire, (S. Canós-Donnay, 2019) which expanded from the Atlantic coast all the way to the Niger River, from 1235 to 1255. The Lion King was inspired by Hamlet, yes, but also by the Biblical stories of Joseph and Moses. Like so many Disney movies, it's an amalgamation of different mythologies. But Scar killing his brother Mufasa to become king is taken directly from Hamlet (https://www.refworld.org > docid). Sogolon is known as the 'buffalo woman' for the hump on her back, her stoop and disfigured complexion and ridiculed for it. Yet, she also holds within her the secret of Mali's potential future, as the mother of a prophesised king who can bring the twelve kingdoms of Mali together. In childhood, Sundiata faces two obstacles: first, because of the prophecy, the king's first wife Sassouma Bérété spreads vicious rumors about him and Sogolon in an effort to elevate her own son's stature; and second, he is crippled and does not walk until the age of 7 (Ki-Zerbo, Joseph, 1997). Ibn Battuta's impression of Mali was that it was a successful and achieving country. He was impressed by the courtesy and generosity of the Mali people with their gifts. Something that shocked him was at the ceremony where Mansa Sulayman gave him a gift. While Mali was a monarchy ruled by the Mansa or Master, much of the state power was in the hands of court officials. This meant that the Empire could survive several periods of instability and a series bad of rulers (Pre-imperial Mali Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org > wiki > Pre.).

Sundiata Keita founded the powerful Mali Empire. Known for its progressive values and their wealth, it followed the Ghana as the next great West African empire. The great wealth of Mali came from gold and salt mines. The capital city of the empire was Niani. Other important cities included Timbuktu, Gao, Djenne, and Walata. (Niane, Djibril Tamsir 2006). The Mali Empire controlled important trade routes across the Sahara Desert to Europe and the Middle East. They had started referring to him as the Lion King, because that's who he really was. His name Sundiata was derived from the words 'Sogolon' (from his mother) and 'Jata', which means lion. So by adding Mansa to his title, he became their Lion King. "By unifying the military force of 12 states, Sundiata becomes an emperor known as the Lion King of Mali, who controls tribes from the Niger River west to the Atlantic Ocean. Walt Disney Studios reprised the story of Sundiata in 1994 as an animated film, The Lion King, with animals substituting for the humans of Mali. Taghaza was a desolate place. "This is a village with nothing good about it," complained Ibn Battuta. "It is the most fly-ridden of places" (Niane, D. T. 1995).

#### 1.2 Natural Gifted Great Wealth of Mali

Rich gold deposits in the west and southwest constituted the principal resource in the economic life of early urban entrepôts and a succession

of political states. Gold nuggets were the exclusive property of the *mansa* and were illegal to trade within his borders. All gold was immediately handed over to the imperial treasury in return for an equal value of gold dust. Gold dust had been weighed and bagged for use at least since the time of the Ghana Empire (Levtzion, Nehemia, 1973). Mali borrowed the practice to stem inflation of the substance, since it was so prominent in the region. The most common measure for gold within the realm was the ambiguous mithqal (4.5 grams of gold). This term was used interchangeably with dinar, though it is unclear if coined currency was used in the empire. Gold dust was used all over the empire, but was not valued equally in all regions. Copper was also a valued commodity in imperial Mali. According to the records of Ibn Battuta, copper which traded in bars was mined from Takedda in the north and traded in the south for gold. Contemporary sources claim 60 copper bars traded for 100 dinars of gold (Stride, G. T et al., 1971). The next great unit of exchange in the Mali Empire was salt. Salt was as valuable, if not more valuable, than gold in sub-Saharan Africa. It was cut into pieces and spent on goods with close to equal buying power throughout the empire. While it was as good as gold in the north, it was even better in the south. The people of the south needed salt for their diet, but it was extremely rare. The northern region on the other hand had no shortage of salt. Every year merchants entered Mali via Oualata with camel loads of salt to sell in Niani. According to Ibn Battuta who visited Mali in the mid-14th century, one camel load of salt sold at Walata for 8-10 mithgals of gold, but in Mali proper it realised 20–30 ducats and sometimes even 40. One particular source of salt in the Mali Empire was salt-mining sites located in Taghaza (Ly-Tall, M. 1984). Ibn Battuta had written that in Taghaza there were no trees and there is only sand and the salt mines. Nobody lived in the area except the Musafa servants who worked to dig the salts and lived on dates imported from Sijilmasa and the Dar'a valley, camel meat and millet imported from the Sudan. The buildings were constructed from slabs of salt and roofed with camel skins. The salt was dug from the ground and cut into thick slabs, two of which were loaded onto each camel where they would be taken south across the desert to Oualata and sold. The value of the salt was chiefly determined by the transport costs. Ibn Battuta mentions that the value of salt increased fourfold when transported between Oualata and the Malian capital (Gomez, Michael A. 2018).

An important trading centre, Djenné-Jeno, arose about 250 BCE in the inland delta of the Niger River and flourished until the 11th century CE. It then declined and eventually was eclipsed by Djenné, a trading centre founded by Muslim Soninke about the 13th century CE. Terra-cotta statues dating to as early as 800 CE have been found at Djenné-Jeno and other sites in Mali. (T. Oumar Hasseye, 2021) The export trade in gold and in slaves, ivory, civet, and gum arabic

moved over trans-Saharan caravan routes from the Niger River valley to North Africa for almost a thousand years. This trade was controlled by the Soninke kingdom of Ghana (4th–11th century), which was established between the headwaters of the Niger and Sénégal rivers. Ghana was effectively destroyed by the Almoravid invasion of 1076, and its hegemony was ultimately assumed by the Mandinka empire of Mali (13th-15th century), founded around the upper Niger. Under Mali the caravan routes moved east through Djenné and Timbuktu (founded about the 11th century CE). Mali's decline in the 15th century enabled the Songhai kingdom in the east to assert its independence. Under Songhai, Dienné and Timbuktu flourished as centres of both trade and Islamic scholarship. In 1591 a Moroccan army of 4,000 men armed with muskets succeeded in crossing the Sahara and easily defeated the Songhai, who did not have firearms. With the destruction of Songhai hegemony, political chaos ensued, resulting in a disruption of trade (T. Oumar Hasseye, 2021).

Eventually new trade routes in gold and slaves were established, but these were directed toward the coast, where Europeans were establishing trading posts. The Moroccans exiled or executed the Timbuktu scholars (because they represented a political threat) and dispersed most of their libraries of books and manuscripts. Moroccan military and political influence never extended beyond a short stretch of the Niger in the areas of GAO and Timbuktu, and eventually political ties between Morocco and the descendants of the Moroccan invaders lapsed. In 1737 the Moroccans were defeated by the Tuareg, who seized control of the Bend, and the west to kingdom of Macina defeated the Moroccans at Diré in 1833. West of Macina, the Bambara established a powerful kingdom at Ségou beginning in the early 17th century (Ramon Manent/Shutterstock.com).

Mansa Musa was the emperor of the Mali Empire during the 14th century. He became emperor around 1307 to 1312. The meaning of Mali is 'wealthy'. Mali is an Arabic name that also has roots in Welsh and German. Mali is usually seen as a feminine given name, but it is sometimes used as a surname. In Welsh, Mali means 'jasmine flower' and in German it means 'brave'. Although Mali is one of the largest countries in Africa, it has a relatively small population, which is largely centred along the Niger River. The Bambara (Bamana) ethnic group and language predominate, with several other groups-including the Fulani (Fulbe), Dogon, and Tuareg—also present in the population. The great wealth of Mali came from gold and salt mines. The capital city of the empire was Niani. (T. Oumar Hasseye, 2021). Other important cities included Timbuktu, Gao, Djenne, and Walata. The Mali Empire controlled important trade routes across the Sahara Desert to Europe and the Middle East. The Mali Empire was interesting because of its famousthe following facts

namely; Mali was part of the Three West-African Empire that controlled the Trans-Saharan Trade which enable the Kingdom to be used one of the World's richest nations and was home to Great Emperors and the Prime Meridian Marker (P.M.M) was located in Mali as the Djinguereber Mosque. In fact, seventy-nine languages are spoken in Mali, but the 2009 census only lists 15 languages. Bambara (also known as Bamanakan or Bamanan) is the first language for half the population, and the most widely spoken language in the country. The most famous ruler of that Century was Mansa Kankan Musa I from 1312 to 1337 (Anadolu Agency, 7 December 2020).

The surrounding Songhay Empire would conquer most of the Mali kingdom by the late 15th century, leaving little remaining of the once proud Mali Empire. By the 17th century, the Moroccan Empire occupied the area. After defeating the Soso at the Battle of Kirina, Sundiata marched on the Soso kingdom and took total control. He established the Mali Empire, conquering much of the Empire of Ghana as well. He took control of the gold and salt trade, helping Mali to become rich and powerful

## 2. The French Syndrome of Empire Buildings through Different Diplomatic Agents of Exploration, Expropriation and Exploitation (3Es) in the Former Great African Empire of Mali

This section brings out the highlights of French colonial embarrassment from the late 19<sup>th</sup> to mid-20<sup>th</sup> Centuries through the usages of 54 different principal colonial agents who did their best to show the anachronism of white against Africans and destruction of the honorific Kingdoms into colonial yokes and confusing sphere of influences for 70 years using a transitional pre-colonial period of 1880 to 1884 and colonial era from 1885 to 1960.

## **2.1. Identification of Essential Lucrative Natural Resources of Mali**

In the late 19th century, during the Scramble for Africa, France seized control of Mali, making it a part of French Sudan. Mali fell under French colonial rule in 1892. By 1893, the French appointed a civilian governor of the territory they called Soudan Français (French Sudan), but active resistance to French rule continued. All imperialist targets were for national prestige and search for raw materials for their home industries since the challenges of industrial revolution and financial crisis in Europe kept them restless and subsequently to the provocation of the Two World Wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century coupled with internal colonial resistances in different part of the African Continent. What did L Mali possesses natural in its Great Empire was a called for concern during the Post-Empire era for the French who set their colonial networks of 3Es agents.

The French, who established a fort at Médine in western Mali in 1855, viewed the Ségou Tukulor empire as the principal obstacle to their acquisition of the Niger River valley. Fearful of British designs on the same region, they engaged in a series of diplomatic overtures and military operations to push the limits of their control eastward. Between 1880 and 1881 the French succeeded in expanding their control from Médine 200 miles (320 km) east to Kita, primarily through the diplomatic efforts of Capt. Joseph-Simon Gallieni, who signed protectorate treaties with chiefs at Bafoulabé and Kita (P. Ali, 2018). In 1883 Gustave Borgnis-Desbordes launched a series of military campaigns against the Tukulor and the forces of Samory Touré, a Dyula Muslim leader who had founded a state to the south in the late 1860s. Borgnis-Desbordes captured Bamako during that year, giving the French a presence on the Niger. Between 1890 and 1893, Col. Louis Archinard launched a series of successful military operations that led to the final conquest of Ségou in 1893. Samory was driven into the Côte d'Ivoire colony and captured in 1898, the same year that the small Dyula kingdom of Kenedougou around Sikasso was conquered by French forces under Col. H.M. Audeod. Timbuktu was conquered in 1894 by the French officers Gaston Boiteaux, Eugène Bonnier, and Joseph-Jacques-Césaire Joffre, and the southern Sahara was finally brought under French control by méharistes (camel corps) by 1899.(Joseph-Simon Gallieni, et al.)

The mining of gold in the nation has probably been going on for at least a millennium. Some of the earliest mentions of gold in the nation date back to the reign of Emperor KanKou Moussa in 1324 when he made a pilgrimage to Mecca with an estimated 8 tons of gold. Despite knowledge about the nation's vast gold resources, exploration and mining have remained below potential. The nation has three major gold mines which include Sadiola, Morila, and Loula. Sadiola and Morila produce about 80% of the nation's gold while the relatively new Loula mine has the potential of producing 250,000 ounces of gold per year. Currently, gold exports provide the lion's share of the nation's revenues. Only a few major stakeholders and small scale artisanal miners are involved in mining and exploration leaving vast tracks of potentially gold-rich land un-utilized. Other reasons that hinder gold mining include political instability and poor infrastructure (Mali - Resources and power - Encyclopedia Britannica https://www.britannica.com > place). Only six of the 133 gold-rich areas have been mapped out meaning that the nation still has enormous gold production potential. Gold exploration activities in the country have mainly focused on the Kenieba valley and the Tabakoto-Baroya regions. The Kenieba valley region is close to the border with Senegal while the Tabakoto-Baroya region is to the south-southeast of Bamako. However, there are concerns that the nation chance of emerging as one of the largest gold exporters may not be realized as Sadiola mine (which has over 3.4 million ounces of gold reserves) will need an additional \$380 million to keep it operational. Unproductive government negotiations have previously stalled the investment. It is anticipated that the necessary investment will be poured in to prevent a shut down in the next ten years (Encyclopedia Britannica https://www.britannica.com > place).

Diamonds in Mali are found in the form of both alluvial deposits and from kimberlite pipes. The Kenieba region has some of the nation's well-known diamond deposits. Other regions that have reported discoveries include the Bagoe, the Niger River and the Doundi where diamonds have been recovered from gravels. Knowledge of diamond deposits in the Kenieba region was first noted in 1954 by accident when a police report in Kankan, Guinea indicated that there had been a reported sale of a 137.5-carat diamond from the region. The news led to numerous diamond exploration campaigns throughout the region by both the government and locals. (https://fortuneofafrica.com > mali) Each of the three government buyers in Bamako reported the sale of at least 900 carats per annum. However, it is possible that a significant portion of diamonds recovered remains unreported as collectors prefer selling their findings across the border in Guinea. Diamond mining in the nation is still considered underdeveloped. The Falea deposit is located 217 miles west of Bamako. It is known to have significant uranium deposits. The Falea deposit has an estimated 5,511 tons of the mineral. Other deposits in the country include the Kidal project that is found to the north of the country. The Kidal project sits on 1,695 square miles of land. The Samit deposit in the Goa region is estimated to have about 220 tons of Uranium. Interest in uranium mining, as well as other minerals in the nation, has spiked in recent years due to increased global demand for energy. (https://reliefweb.int > report > malia...). The demand has led buyers to consider more insecure and underdeveloped sources as opposed to sources in stable nations. Mali also has significant Bauxite deposits. The government is currently on the journey to exploit the resource. The government has paved the way for exploration of the mineral in various areas including the 115 square miles Falea concession near the border with Guinea and Senegal, the 463.32 square miles Sikasso North concession and, the 965 square miles Bamako West concession. Mali is known for the production of various semi-precious stones gemstones including, epidote, amethyst, garnet, quartz, and prehnite. Artisanal miners produce the gemstones. The government estimates that artisanal miners produce about 10,000 tons per year. Garnet is mainly exported to Germany, while prehnite in mainly exported to China. Phosphate is also significant resources are situated in the southeast of the nation. The main active mine is located in the Tilemsi Valley. The Tilemsi valley is estimated to have at least 11 million tons of 31.4% Phosphorus pentoxide (P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>). Small scale extraction of gypsum can be found at Kereit. However, large deposits have been identified in Taoudeni. Limestone and marble Mali has large limestone deposits which are used to drive the nation's construction industry. Extraction of limestone at Diamou is used to produce cement. The nation also has significant marble deposits. Other mineral resources includes the following: Calcarous rock deposits, Copper, Lead and zinc, Lithium, Bitumen schist, Lignite, Marble, Gypsum, Kaolin, Phosphate, Rock Salt, Diatomite and Oil (FAO, 6 September 2021).

## 2.2. Identification of French Diplomatic Agents of Hegemonic Command

French Sudan was a French colonial territory in the federation of French West Africa from around 1880 until 1960, when it became the independent state of Mali among the eight French colonial territories like French West Africa (French: Afrique-Occidentale française, AOF) was a federation of eight French colonial territories in Africa: Mauritania, Senegal, French Sudan (Mali), French Guinea (Guinea), Ivory Coast, Upper Volta (Burkina Faso), Dahomey Benin) and Niger. The French military action in Mali serves not only to keep the unstable African nation from falling under the yoke of Islamic extremist rule, but also to keep terrorists out of France and Europe's front yard, analysts say. By 1892, France took control of Mali, subsequently naming a civilian governor of what was then called the 'French Sudan' -- it took the cities of Timbuktu in 1894 and Gao in 1898, at which point the French military crushed any resistance to colonialism in the region. The present boundaries of Mali are the legacy of 70 years of French colonial rule, from 1890-1960. (Foltz, William J. 1965). During this period, a number of major changes were made to the country's borders. 1890-99 - Mali became known as Soudan Francais (French Soudan). With French colonial domination (1880/1890-1960), the centre of gravity moved towards the south and relegated the north of Mali to a position of secondary importance. By becoming a political periphery, the northern regions lost their influence and directly suffered the domination of a 'foreign' south. French rule had influenced Mali in

several aspects, such as the adoption of the French as the main language (https://www.refworld.org > docid). Due to this, France and Mali have a strong connection. Both are members of Organisation internationale de la Francophonie. There are over 120,000 Malians in France. Mali is famous for its salt mines. In the past, Mali was one of the richest countries, home to great emperors whose wealth came mainly from the region's position in the cross-Sahara trade routes between West Africa and the north. Timbuktu was an important centre of Islamic learning. Operation Serval) was a French military operation in Mali. The aim of the operation was to oust Islamic militants from the north of Mali, who had begun a push into the center of Mali. ... The operation is named after the serval, a medium-sized African wild cat. Paris has since deployed around 5,100 troops across the Sahel region, which includes Mali, helping to support local governments and their forces fight an ever-growing Islamist insurgency that has left thousands dead. French forces leave Mali's Timbuktu after nearly nine years. French army says 'will be present in a different way' as former colonial power draws down its military presence in Mali. The era of French Sudan was between 1892 and 1960 (H Gamble · 2009). African nations are still awaiting restitution of the French army's crimes and return of wealth looted from their lands as the co-ordination of 3Es were masterminded by the French appointed agents of colonialism in different ranks as seen on table No. 1 below. All the appallations Mali passed through were under the control and fully commanded by those 54 colonial agents in their portfolios.

## List of abbreviations used indicating different colonial portfolios

C.P: Commandant-Superior

A.C.P: Acting Commandant-Superior

G: Governor

A.G: Acting Governor

**D:** Delegate

Lt.G: Lieutenant-Governor

A.Lt.G: Acting Lieutenant-Governor

H.C: High Commissioner

Table-1: 54 Appointed Agents of Colonial Manipulators of Mali 1880-1960

No	Names of principal agents	Period in office	Portfolio
1	Charles Émile Boilève	27/02/ 1880 - 29 /07/ 1880	C.P
2	Gustave Borgnis Desbordes	6/09/1880- 3/09 /1883	C.P
3	Charles Émile Boilève,	3/09/1883-18/06/ 1884	C.P
4	Antoine Vincent Auguste Combes,	18/06/1884- <i>4 /09/ 1884</i>	A.C.P
5	Antoine Vincent Auguste Combes,	04/09/1884 -09/1885	C.P
6	Henri Nicolas Frey,	09/1885- 08/ 1886	C.P
7	Joseph Simon Galliéni,	08/1886- 10/09/1888	C.P
8	Louis Archinard,	10/09/1888- 18/08/1890	C.P
9	Louis Archinard,	<i>18/08/1890</i> - 1891	C.P
10	Pierre Maire Gustave Hubert	1891 - 27 /08/ 1892	C.P
11	Louis Archinard	27/08/1892-02/ 08/1893	C.P
12	Eugène Bonnier,	2/08/1893-26/12/1893	A.C.P

13	Louis Albert Grodet,	26/12/1893-16/06/1895	G
14	Louis Edgard de Trentinian	16/06/1895- 1898	G
15	Marie Michel Alexandre René Audéoud,	1898- 17/ 10/1899	A.G
16	William Merlaud-Ponty,	17/10/1899- 10/10/1902	D
17	William Merlaud-Ponty,	10/10/1902 -18/10/1904	D
18	William Merlaud-Ponty,	<i>18/10/1904</i> - 20/10/1904	D
19	William Merlaud-Ponty,	20/10/1904-18/02/1908	Lt. G
20	François Joseph Clozel,	18/02/1908-16/06/1915	Lt. G
21	Philippe Henry,	16/06/1915- 01 /07/ 1915	A.Lt. G
22	Louis Digue	1/07/1915- 28/07/ 1916	A.Lt. G
23	Raphaël Antonetti,	28/07/ 1916-20/04/1917	A.Lt. G
24	Albert Nebout,	20/04/1917-21/05/1917	A.Lt. G
25	Louis Periquet,	21/05/1917-20/02/1918	A.Lt. G
26	Auguste Brunet	20/02/1918-16/05/ 1919	Lt. G
27	Marcel Achille Olivier,	16/05/1919-0 4/12/1920	Lt. G
28	Marcel Achille Olivier	04/12/1920 -21/08/ 1921	A.G
29	Jean Henri Terrasson de Fougères,	21/08/1921- 26/02/1924	A.G
30	Jean Henri Terrasson de Fougères	26/02/1924 -31/12/1930	G
31	Joseph Urbain Court	31/12/1930-04/04/1931	A.G
32	Gabriel Omar Descemet	40/04/1931-11/06/1931	A.G
33	Louis Jacques Eugène Fousset,	11/06/1931-31/03/ 1933	A.G
34	René Desjardins	31/03/1933-22/05/ 1933	A.G
35	Léon Solomiac	22/05/1933-30/11/ 1933	A.G
36	Louis Jacques Eugène Fousset,	30/11/1933-19/02/1935	G
37	Félix Sylvestre Adolphe Éboué,	19/02/1935-22 /11/1935	A.G
38	Matteo-Mathieu-Maurice Alfassa,	22/11/1935-9/11/1936	G
39	Ferdinand Jacques Louis Rougier,	9/11/1936-04/12/ 1936	A.G
40	Ferdinand Jacques Louis Rougier	0412/1936 -28/03/ 1938	G
41	Jean Desanti	28/03/1938- <i>15 /11/1940</i>	A.G
42	Jean Desanti	<i>15/11/1940</i> -17/04/ 1942	G
43	Auguste Calvel,	04/1942- 29/12/ 1942	A.G
44	Auguste Calvel,	29/12/1942 -15/05/ 1946	G
45	Edmond Louveau	15/05/1946- 27/10/ 1946	G
46	Edmond Louveau,	27/10/1946 -04/1952	G
47	Camille Victor Bailly	04/1952 -10/07/1952	G
48	Salvador Jean Etchéber	10/07/1952-23/02/1953	A.G
49	Albert Jean Mouragues,	23/02/1953-02/12/1953	G
50	Lucien Eugène Geay	2/12/1953- 10/02/ 1954	A.G
51	Lucien Eugène Geay	10/02/1954 -3/11/1956	G
52	Henri Victor Gipoulon,	3/11/1956-24/11/ 1958	H.C
53	Jean Charles Sicurani	24/11/1958-0 4/04/ 1959	H.C
54	Jean Charles Sicurani	04/1959 -20 /06/1960	H.C
	20 June 1960	Independence as Mali Federation	

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In 1893, the French appointed a civilian governor of the territory they called *Soudan Français* (French Sudan), but active resistance to French rule continued (G Martin · 1985). By 1905, most of the area was under firm French control. French Sudan was administered as part of the Federation of French West Africa and supplied labor to France's

colonies on the coast of West Africa. In 1958 the renamed Sudanese Republic obtained complete internal autonomy and joined the French Community. In early 1959, the Sudanese Republic and Senegal formed the Federation of Mali (*Foltz, William J. 1965*). On March 31, 1960, France agreed to the Federation of Mali becoming fully independent. On June 20, 1960, the

Federation of Mali became an independent country and Modibo Keïta became its first President with precrisis phase beginning the same year which was a dangerous mark of European 3Es in that part of the African Continent.

The Mali Federation was a federation in West Africa linking the French colonies of Senegal and the Sudanese Republic (or French Sudan) for two months in 1960. It was founded on 4 April 1959 as a self-rule territory within the French with Community and became independent after negotiations with France on 20 June 1960. Two months later, on 19 August 1960, the Sudanese Republic leaders in the Mali Federation mobilized the army, and Senegal leaders in federation retaliated the bv mobilizing the gendarmerie (national police); this resulted in a tense stand-off, and led to the withdrawal from the federation by Senegal the next day. The Sudanese Republic officials resisted this dissolution, cut off diplomatic relations with Senegal, and defiantly changed the name of their country to Mali. For the brief existence of the Mali Federation, the premier was Modibo Keïta, who would later become the first President of Mali, and its government was based in Dakar, the eventual capital of Senegal. (D Gardinier, 1993). After World War II, the colonies of French West Africa began pushing significantly for increased self-determination and to redefine their colonial relationships with France. Following the May 1958 crisis, the colonies of French West Africa were given the chance to vote for immediate independence or to join a reorganized French Community as an arrangement which would grant the colonies some selfdetermination while maintaining ties to France. Only Guinea voted for full independence and the other colonies of French West Africa voted to join the French Community (D Gardinier 1993). In the 1958 election to decide the issue of independence, two major parties split the countries of West Africa: the African Democratic Rally, commonly known as the RDA and the African Regroupment Party known as the PRA. The two regional groupings of parties struggled against one another on the issue of independence and the extent of ties with France. The RDA was the governing party in the Ivory Coast colony, the French Sudan colony, and Guinea while the PRA was a major governing party in Senegal and had sizable majorities in many countries. The two parties also were part of coalition governments in French Upper Volta, Niger, and French Dahomey. Both two parties struggled with each other to shape the political future of the region; Mauritania often became a neutral party that would break any deadlocks. The vote of 1958 revealed a number of divisions within the parties [4]. The RDA held a congress on 15 November 1958 to discuss the recent election results and the division became clear with Modibo Keïta from French Sudan and Doudou Gueye from Senegal arguing for primary federation, which would include France and the colonies in a unified system, and Félix HouphouëtBoigny of the Ivory Coast dismissing that idea. The resulting deadlock was so severe that the meeting was officially said to have never taken place (*Hodgkin*, *Thomas*; et al. 1964).

In late November 1958, French Sudan, Senegal, Upper Volta and Dahomey all declared the intention to join the French Community and form a federation linking the four colonies together. French Sudan and Senegal, despite longstanding divisions between their main political parties, were the most enthusiastic pushers for the federation, but Dahomey and Upper Volta were more hesitant in their desire to join the federation. French Sudan called for representatives of each of the four countries (and Mauritania as an observer) to Bamako on 28 to 30 December to discuss the formation of the federation (Hodgkin, Thomas; et al., 1964). French Sudan and Senegal were the leaders at the congress with Modibo Keïta named the president of the meeting and Léopold Sédar Senghor of Senegal being the key leader on many including developing issues, the name Mali Federation for the proposed union. Although Upper Volta and Dahomey declared formal support for the federation, and Upper Volta even approved the Mali Federation Constitution on 28 January 1959, political pressure from France and the Ivory Coast, both of which opposed the federation although for very different reasons, resulted in neither ratifying a constitution that would include them within the federation. (Welch Jr., et al., 1966). The result is that only the colonies of French Sudan (now called the Sudanese Republic) and Senegal were engaged in the discussions of the formation of the federation by 1959. Elections in March 1959 in both French Sudan and Senegal cemented the power of the major parties pushing for the formation of a federation. Keïta's Union Soudanaise-Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (US-RDA) won 76% of the votes in French Sudan and all of the seats in the territorial assembly. Senghor's Union Progressiste Sénégalaise (UPS) won 81% of the vote and all of the seats in Senegal's territorial assembly. Although Senghor won the elections by a large margin, some conservative Islamist marabouts supported the candidacy of Cheikh Tidjane Sy. That challenge to Senghor's party showed some of the weakness in Senghor's domestic political base and required a complex system of alliances with various domestic constituencies, both of which would become important as the federation progressed. Sy was arrested on Election Day because of some rioting, which was blamed on his party (Welch Jr., et al., 1966).

After the elections, the assemblies of Senegal and French Sudan approved the federation and began the process of constructing a political system to unite the two colonies. That involved three different political projects with the principle of *parity* (even representation from both colonies) enshrined in each' a federal government, united social movements (a labour

and youth movement) and a shared political party for both countries. (Pedler, Frederick (1979). The federal government would have a federal assembly composed of 20 members from each of the colonies (40 in total), a President (set to be elected in August 1960) and six federal ministers (with 3 from each colony). Until a president was elected, the premier of the Mali Federation was to be Keïta and the vice-premier (and the person in charge of the armed forces) was to be Mamadou Dia from Senegal. Furthermore, as part of the parity principle, any legislative initiatives required a signature by the premier then later the president and the minister responsible for that issue. The colonies were to share the import and export taxes raised in the port of Dakar between them to the advantage of French Sudan. which had almost a third of its 1959 budget provided by that tax income. At the same time, the Mali federation sought to create unified social organisations to facilitate the union between the countries. That involved creating labour movements and youth movements to operate at both the federal and national levels and a unified political party [12]. The political party was the major project as the ruling parties in both colonies combined to form the Parti de la Fédération Africaine (PFA). It was organised separately from the federal government but with many of the same members and leaders. Senghor was the party president and Keïta was the secretary general. In addition, to have a regional influence, Djibo Bakary of Niger and Emile Zinsou of Dahomey were named the vice-presidents of the party [15]. As articulated at the first PFA congress in July 1959 by Senghor, it would be the single political party in the country and aim to unite across the different ethnic groups in the territory (Vengroff Richard, 1993).

In December 1959, France and the Mali Federation began negotiations regarding independence and sovereignty of the federation. The negotiations were formally started when French President Charles de Gaulle visited Bamako on 13 December 1959, and lasted until March 1960. Although the French had resisted the Mali Federation, but after the two countries showed willingness to remain within the French Community and the franc zone and to keep the French military bases within its territory, the French supported the formation of the federation. The negotiations agreed upon 20 June 1960 for the formal independence day of the Mali Federation. Tensions quickly arose within the Mali Federation as planning for the implementation of the federation began in 1959 and early 1960 (Foltz, William J. 1965). Unlike some other areas of French West Africa, French Sudan and Senegal did not have significant amounts of migration or intercultural movement during the colonial period (although they were linked together in French economic policy and linked by a key railway). More serious than ethnic or linguistic differences, however, were some of the results of the design of the federation. While the parity principle allowed both countries to join together without fears of losing their sovereignty, it also resulted

in political spillover, as political disputes moved from one arena to another. Similarly, the PFA tried to combine two political parties, which were in very different situations with the French Sudan political party, having achieved political dominance, but the Senegal party needed an elaborate and complex arrangement of alliances to maintain authority. In addition, some of the aspects left vague in the first discussions became key issues of debate between the political leaders of Senegal and French Sudan as their articulation became more important, including armed forces, development of an indigenous bureaucracy, the strength of the federal government and the precise relationship with France (*Imperato*, *Pascal Jame 1989*).

Finally, different visions for the colony between Senghor and Keïta proved very difficult to mediate: Keïta, after the dissolution of the federation, claimed that he pursued socialism, but Senghor pushed a bourgeoisie agenda. The disagreements remained manageable until April 1960 after negotiations with France for recognition of independence had finished. French Sudan began to push for a single executive in the federation with significant independent authority (Kurtz, Donn M. 1970). Senegal preferred to maintain the parity principle as it had been developed in 1959 and to restrain the power of any president. When a PFA congress to decide the issue ended in a deadlock, its members from outside the federation were called in to mediate and they recommended the creation of a single executive to be appointed by an equal number of representatives from Senegal and French Sudan but also that the taxation would no longer be widely shared between the two colonies (a key position). Although that issue was resolved to the agreement of both parties, a series of misunderstandings quickly followed. When French Sudan attempted to remove a single military base within its territories, it was interpreted as an attempt to eject the French from the entire territory, which was viewed with suspicion by both Senegal and France (Pedler, Frederick 1979).

Tensions hit their high point in August 1960 in preparation for the election of the President of the Mali Federation. Cheikh Tidjane Sy, who had been released from prison and became a member of Senghor's political party, approached Senghor and said that he had been approached by representatives from Sudan who had expressed a preference for a Muslim president of the Mali Federation (like Sy) rather than a Catholic president (like Senghor). An investigation by Senghor's political allies found evidence that French Sudan emissaries had visited Sy's uncle, who was a Muslim political leader. About the same time, Keïta, as Premier of the Mali Federation, began meeting formally with many of the Muslim political leaders of Senegal although there is no evidence of any discussion of undermining Senghor's leadership. On 15 August, Senghor, Dia, and other political leaders of Senegal

began to work on how to get Senegal out of the federation. Mamadou Dia, as the vice-premier and person in charge of national defense, began surveying the readiness of various military units in case the political situations were to become hostile (Vengroff Richard, 1993). Those questions to the various military units resulted in panic by Keïta and the French Sudanese politicians. On 19 August, with reports of Senegalese peasants arming in Dakar, Keïta dismissed Dia as the defense minister, declared a state of emergency, and mobilized the armed forces. Senghor and Dia were able to get a political ally in the military to demobilize the military and then had the national gendarmerie which surrounded Keïta's house and the government offices (Zolberg, Aristide R. 1966). Senegal declared independence from the Mali Federation at a midnight session on 20 August. There was little violence and the French Sudan officials were sent on a sealed train back to Bamako on 22 August. The federation may have been salvageable in spite of the crisis but by sending Keïta and the others back on a hot, sealed train during August, rather than a plane, led Keïta to declare that the railroad be destroyed at the border after the trip. Independent nations of Senegal and the Republic of Mali were recognized by most countries by mid-September and accepted into the United Nations in late September 1960(Imperato, Pascal Jame 1989).

Although the Mali Federation existed in name only in Bamako for another month, France and most other nations recognized the two colonies as separate independent countries on 12 September 1960. The Sudanese Union -African Democratic Rally party in French Sudan adopted the slogan "Le Mali Continue" and at a meeting on 22 September the party decided to rename the country Mali and to sever ties with the French Community (Kurtz, Donn M. 1970). The admission to the United Nations for both countries was delayed until late September as a result of the Mali Federation dispute. Senghor and Keïta both ruled their countries at the time of the split from the Mali Federation and for a number of years. French Sudan was administered as part of the Federation of French West Africa and supplied labour France's colonies on the coast Africa.(https://academic.oup.com > ahr > ).

## **CONCLUSION**

French Sudan (then known as the Sudanese Republic) joined with Senegal in 1959, achieving independence in 1960 as the Mali Federation. In early 1959, the Sudanese Republic and Senegal formed the Federation of Mali. On 31 March 1960 France agreed to the Federation of Mali becoming fully independent (Foltz, William J. 1965). On 20 June 1960 the Federation of Mali became an independent country and Modibo Keïta became its first President. Following the withdrawal of Senegal from the federation in August

1960, the former Sudanese Republic became the Republic of Mali, with Modibo Keïta president. Keïta, whose Sudanese Union-African Democratic Rally (US/RDA) party had dominated preindependence politics as a member of the African Democratic Rally, declared a single-party state, and pursued a socialist policy based extensive nationalization. Keïta withdrew from the French Community and also had close ties to the Eastern bloc. If there has been a rival equal to the British Empire, it was the French as well as they formed the largest colonial empire ever in recorded history of colonialism with different colonial agents appointed for the usages of 3Es. Both gained substantially from the scramble for Africa and had a privileged place among other colonial actors. However, like all empires, they also met their demise during the second half of the 20th Century. The Malian postindependence challenges owes its background to the ways the French colonial agents managed the territory and a country rich in terms of natural resources and popular in her Empire suffers from malnutrition issues, lack of education and conflict are the main causes of poverty in Mali. The average wage in Mali is \$1.25 per day, and more than half of the population currently lives below the international poverty line. This contributes to Mali being one of the least developed countries in the World. Throughout the colonial period, the French viewed the colony as markedly less important economically and politically than its neighbours, Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire. Peasant production was emphasized. Forced labour, conscription, and taxation elicited several local revolts, but none was widespread or notably disrupted production and trade. The Tijani (Tijāniyyah) brotherhood dominated among Muslims generally cooperated with the colonial administration, which sent several key religious figures on the hajj (pilgrimage) to Mecca. Unfortunately, Mali is often in the state of political instabilities with continuous French military intervention through the mechanisms of neo-colonialsm. On the other fronts, the Malian have so far been hesitant to continuous French domination in the territory and the challenges of the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century and those of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century are the only ways in which Africans can denounce whatever is known as post-independent accord of cooperation in different domains. This paper saves as the bridge of the colonial past and bringing in the principal French colonial agents who were appointed to show the French strength and hegemony in that part of West Africa.

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