W. Hoogbergen

Origins of the Suriname Kwinti Maroons

Narrative history of the Kwinti Maroons covering approximately 250 years. They had settled West of Paramaribo before 1750. Only in 1887, 24 years after the abolition of slavery, did the authorities acknowledge the Kwinti as free Maroons. Based on archival sources in Suriname and the Netherlands.

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INTRODUCTION

A lot has been written about the Suriname Maroons. The 1976 bibliography of Price already gives 1330 items. Since that time approximately 100 more scientific publications have been added. However, even within a richly documented field of study blank spots can be found. One of these blank spots is the history of the Kwinti Maroons. The anthropologist Dirk Van der Elst, who in the early 1970s conducted fieldwork in the Kwinti-settlements *Bitagron* and *Kaaimanston*, stated that his quest for oral traditions on the period of the marronage often resulted in rather conflicting stories (Van der Elst 1975:9 *et seq.*). A publication by De Beet and Sterman (1980) presents the same picture. In the oral traditions of the Kwinti three principal stories emerge: a marronage from the neighboring colony Berbice (often linked to the great slave revolt of 1763 in that colony); a marronage from the Para region led by *granman* (paramount chief) Kofi; and a family relationship between the legendary Suriname Maroon leader Boni¹ and this Kofi. Kofi was supposed to be Boni's elder brother. At one time they were slaves on the same plantation.²

The Kwinti Maroons are hardly mentioned in the contemporary literature. According to Hartsinck (1770:813) a *nest* of runaways had settled in the area between Paramaribo and the Saramacca River. This settlement, Hartsinck wrote, was supposed to have been in existence for some years, but as the inhabitants had established their villages in the virtually impenetrable mangrove forests and swamps, it had been impossible to threaten them with extinction. John Gabriel Stedman (1796) also refers to a Maroon village in the

MAP 1. PROBABLE SETTLEMENTS OF KWINTI MAROONS ADAPTED FROM HENEMAN'S MAP (1784)

same region.³ In his publication of 1796 on the war against the Boni Maroons, the colonial government clerk Charles Brouwn included a few facts that on close scrutiny do not concern the Boni Maroons but the Kwinti.⁴

In this article I would like to report on my search in the Dutch and the Suriname archives for data regarding the early history of the Kwinti Maroons.⁵ I have chosen a narrative form. This style seems to me most suitable for evoking the atmosphere surrounding the vicissitudes of a small group of Maroons.

THE EARLIEST HISTORY OF THE KWINTI, 1743-1760

The history of the Kwinti is relatively old, covering approximately 250 years. West of Paramaribo, in almost inaccessible swamps bearing the name of *Duivelsbroekzwamp* (Devil's Swamp), some runaway slaves settlements had already been established before 1750. The place these runaway slaves fled to was not propitious because Amerindians who had no intention of helping them or giving them refuge, were living there too. The first mention I found in the archives on these runaway communities dates from March 1743. The Suriname Governor, Mr. Jan Jacob Mauricius, wrote in his diary on March 6, 1743 that *de neeger Quassie*⁶ of plantation Nieuw-Timotibo had been to Saramacca, where he had discovered an abandoned village of runaway slaves, which consisted of thirty-three houses. Amerindians had shown him the way. These Amerindians told Governor Mauricius that the Maroons had moved on because they feared detection. From their remarks it became clear that the villages were situated not far from the plantation area, approximately sixty kilometers as the crow flies. The Amerindians went on to relate further that they had known for some considerable time that runaway slaves were living in that area. On account of the heavy rains they had not succeeded in finding the new camps of the Maroons. The Amerindians promised that they would point out the way to the new Maroon villages during the dry season. The inhabitants of this village must have had contact with slaves, as they possessed rifles, gun powder, and lead. According to the Amerindians, they could hear them shooting every day.⁷

The Amerindians seem to have actually mounted a new expedition in 1743. Quassie also appears to have been on a campaign again. He had been sent out in August to go and spy. On his return he told Governor Mauricius that he had not discovered any Maroon villages. However, he had seen traces of the Maroons: traps and snares for catching animals and baskets for fishing. One Indian was supposed to know of a village, at least he had said so

when he was drunk. The drunken Indian, called Abraham, was transported to Paramaribo, but once he was sober he denied having any knowledge of the location of the Maroon village. Governor Mauricius, however, considered that Abraham knew enough to be able to act as a guide. He decided to have a *burgherpatrouille* (burgher patrol), consisting of nine planters, complemented by thirty slaves, an unknown number of Amerindians, and Quassie and Abraham, search for the Maroon village. After approximately ten days the patrol came home empty-handed.⁸

For a number of years (1743-49) nothing important on the Kwinti is to be found in the archives. Quassie went on expeditions to Maroons a few more times and from time to time Amerindians came to hand in the right hands of runaway slaves who had been killed by them in the Saramacca area.⁹ In February 1750 the planters were more successful. By accident a runaway slave, named Kodjo, fell into their hands. After interrogations in the Suriname prison, the fortress of Zeelandia, he recounted that he had lived in a Maroon village between the Saramacca River and the Atlantic, of which a certain Bokkoe was the chief. He knew the path leading from Paramaribo to his village, and offered to show it. The Councillors of the *Hof van Politie en Crimineele Justitie* (Court of Policy and Criminal Justice)¹⁰ decided to send a patrol to the Maroons, consisting of fifty *burghers*, under the command of Ensign Hentschel, accompanied by 101 (negro) bearers, and equipped with provisions for a fortnight. Ensign Hentschel was successful. His patrol discovered four villages surrounded by "beautiful" gardens. Most Maroons were able to escape, but a child, a man, and two women, one of whom appeared to be the chieftain's wife, were captured. After the discovery of the settlements a military occupation force consisting of thirty soldiers and thirty slaves was left behind in one of the villages, so as not to give the escaped Maroons a chance to return and collect food from their provision grounds. A tactic constantly applied in the fight against the Maroons.¹¹

About a year later, in March 1751, a group of Amerindians of the Coppenname came to Paramaribo to complain that the Maroons of the Lower Saramacca River had killed one of their chieftains. They asked for weapons in order to be able to undertake a revenge expedition. In May they returned to the capital with twelve captured female Maroons and a few children. During the attack on the village they had killed ten more men, four women and some children, whose amputated right hands they handed in. Governor Mauricius immediately ordered drinks to treat the entire group of sixty *kaboegers*.¹² He had a fine red suit with silver decorations made for the chief. Evidently the Amerindians also got the 50 guilders bounty for each right hand delivered.¹³

The captured women were interrogated shortly afterwards in the fortress of Zeelandia. It became clear from their accounts that the Amerindians of the Coppename had behaved in a horrendous way. Children had been bashed to death against trees and the men who had survived the fight had been cut to pieces while still alive. The chieftain was among those supposed to have been killed by the Amerindian attackers. The prisoners did not think that many fellow-villagers had survived the massacre.

Nine of the twelve female prisoners were *Bosch Creoolen* (Bush Creoles), runaway slaves who had not been born on a plantation, but in the *bosch* (jungle). Only three women had at one time been slaves. Two of them declared that they had not run away, but that they had been kidnapped from their plantation by the Maroons. The other woman, born in Africa, confessed that she had run away with three other new slaves shortly after their arrival in Suriname. The Court of Policy decided not to punish the female Maroons. Usually runaway slaves were executed, especially if they had been living in a Maroon village for some years. However, *Bosch Creoolen* were not runaway slaves and the defense of the two runaway women that they had been kidnapped was accepted. The African-born slave went scot-free because she had run away so shortly after her arrival in the New World.¹⁴ Of course an acquittal did not mean that the twelve women were suddenly free people. The nine Bush Creoles were auctioned. The three slaves were "allowed" to return to their plantations, provided that the owners restituted the 50 guilders of premium that had been paid to the Amerindians.¹⁵

In the archives there is not a lot to be found on the Kwinti in the period between 1751 and 1756. In February 1756 the Amerindians apparently went on a runaway hunt once more. The government paid out a bounty for killing runaways in the Lower Saramacca region.¹⁶ Two years later Amerindians again destroyed a Maroon village in this area (Müller 1973:49). During the same period a Kwinti village must have been established in the Para region. This village was discovered in September 1758 as the result of the arrest of a Maroon. After his interrogation, which will not have been gentle, the prisoner, called December, agreed to take a patrol to his village. This turned out to be located at less than a day's walk from the plantations. When approaching the village, the patrol made such a lot of noise that the Maroons were warned and were able to escape. Only one man and an old Indian woman were captured. The village consisted of ten houses and a *Gado Huys* (shrine house). Surrounding it were gardens covering an area of ten acres.¹⁷ In the village the patrol found quite a lot of goods: cotton hammocks, cotton loincloths for men and women, axes, cutlasses, machetes, knives, and pipes.¹⁸ The most spectacular objects the soldiers found, were

three statues erected in the chieftain's house. "*Wanschapen maaksels met menselijke gedaante, doch de mens voorgesteld als een vogel, wonderlijk behangen met koralen en veren.*" (Misshapen creations having a human shape, however, of humans represented as a bird, curiously hung with coral and feathers.) According to a comment from this period these statues were fetishes, made by *Kormantijnen* (Coromantes).¹⁹

A few months later, in February 1759, some Kwinti robbed a small plantation in the vicinity of Paramaribo. They kidnapped two female slaves and killed a male slave. According to the councillors of the Court of Policy the Maroons had in fact planned to kill the Jewish owner Raphael De Britto. Plantation slaves pursued the attackers. After some time they discovered a path that would probably lead them to the Maroon village. As they were afraid of walking into an ambush, they dared not follow the path. The Court of Policy decided to summon one of the chieftains of the Amerindians of the Coppename to Paramaribo for talks regarding a new attack on the Maroons. In September it became clear that the Amerindians showed little inclination to undertake a new bush patrol.²⁰

On February 24, 1761 marauding Maroons were discovered on plantations in the Para region. Some planters immediately formed a *burgher* patrol to pursue them. Near the Atlantic they discovered a small settlement, consisting of three houses, in which five Maroons who tried to escape were living. One of the men was killed, while the other two fell into the hands of the patrol. As it was raining constantly, which meant that the water level in the swamps was very high, the *burghers* did not succeed in capturing the two fugitives.²¹

KWINTI VILLAGES DISCOVERED AND DESTROYED, 1761-62

During the period from 1730 to 1760 almost all the attention of the planters had been directed towards the large Maroon groups, living south of the plantations. In the 1760s this was brought to an end. In October 1760 peace had been made with the Ndjuka Maroons. In 1762 the Saramaka would follow. In spite of this the planters had no wish to make peace with the Kwinti. A capricious whim of fate excluded the Kwinti from the peace treaties of the 1760s. The Suriname planters thought they would be able to defeat this small Maroon group, especially if the now pacified Maroons were called in. As a result of these developments the Kwinti were hunted by a new enemy. In the years to follow besides Amerindians, *burghers*, and soldiers, pacified Maroons were going to wage war against them.

In the period between 1760 and 1775, the Kwinti were living in two areas.

On the estuary of the Lower Saramacca River, in the *Duivelsbroekzwamp*, were situated four or five villages, often at a few days' walk from of each other. In this swamp sandy ridges rose above the water like islands and on top of those rises the Kwinti built their villages and laid out their provision grounds. The road to Paramaribo also ran via these ridges. Whenever the Kwinti went on their forays into the town, they travelled the ridges and the swamps eastwards for three or four days, to arrive on the land of Raphael De Britto already mentioned, a little to the west of Paramaribo. The second living area of the Kwinti was situated a bit more to the south, near Botterbalie Creek, between Para Creek and the Saramacca River. The Maroons from these villages mainly pillaged the plantations in the Para region, especially Altona, Osembo, and Onoribo.

In 1761 and 1762 a number of bush patrols discovered the location of the Kwinti villages in the *Duivelsbroekzwamp*. All the villages appeared to be surrounded by extensive provision grounds. From the reports of these patrols that have been preserved, it clearly emerges that the Kwinti were reasonably self-sufficient in that time. Sufficient food was grown on their provision grounds.²² The renewed pursuit of the Kwinti was the consequence of a robbery near Paramaribo. On December 2, 1761 some Maroons forced their way into the living quarters of the plantation house of the Widow Tuynman. There they looted as much as they could carry. A white man and a slave, who tried to prevent this, were killed. As soon as this became known in Paramaribo, Governor Wigbold Crommelin sent a military patrol after the Maroons. Six (now pacified) Ndjuka Maroons, who were in Paramaribo at the time, were added to the command. After two days the soldiers and the Ndjuka had already returned to Paramaribo. They had lost the track of the Maroons because of heavy rains.²³

Some days after the robbery at Widow Tuynman's plantation, Governor Crommelin issued orders for three patrols which were to march against the Kwinti from different directions. One of these patrols, consisting of thirteen soldiers and fourteen bearers, under the command of Lieutenant Klepper rapidly achieved success. On December 10, 1760 a track led the patrol to a camp where four to six Maroons had been sleeping. They had eaten tortoises and caimans there. The same day a felled tree, from which honey had been taken, was found. In the early evening the sounds of drums and singing were heard in the military camp. Lieutenant Klepper decided not to advance any further, but to ask for reinforcements from Paramaribo. Six days later the requested support, eleven extra soldiers, arrived. The next day the soldiers attacked the village. The Maroons quickly spotted the soldiers. As they started to shout warnings, most of them could get away in time. A few men shot arrows at the command. A Maroon fired a gun, but hit

nobody. The soldiers shot dead two men and a woman. The soldiers captured four children who had not been able to escape fast enough. The village consisted of twenty-five houses and two *Gado huysen* (shrine houses). One of the children said that the village was called *Makakondre* (thorn-village). *Makakondre* lived up to its name, as it was situated extremely strategically on a rise in the middle of swamps which were overgrown with thorny bushes. In the houses loincloths, plates, choppers, machetes, earthenware, and iron pots were found. The Klepper patrol stayed four days in *Makakondre*. All houses were set on fire and the crops (corn, sweet potatoes, plantains, peanuts, tayars, yams, and beans) were destroyed.²⁴

A second patrol, consisting of seven Amerindians, fifteen armed slaves, and fourteen *burghers*, under the command of Jacob Bogman, had little initial success. They marched from one swamp to the next. The coastal marshes proved to be a true paradise for all sorts of large crabs, with traces of snakes and tigers everywhere, but none of Maroons. Only after more than two weeks plodding through the quagmires, on December 21, 1761, did the command find the Maroon traces they had been looking for: cut-down trees and various tracks. Bogman followed those trails, and again found a clear sign. In an "enormously" high tree the Maroons had built scaffolding at a height of four to five meters, to rob the birds' nests. The path led the patrol past more trees, where eggs had also been eaten judging by the large quantity of empty eggshells. Some hours later the patrol arrived in a plantain field, next to which a small village was situated. Bogman had his men attack the village immediately in two ranks. The few Maroons who were present in the village escaped, however, leaving their cooking pots on the fire. Pursuit took the patrol to a second village which proved to be entirely abandoned. From the remains of food it could be assessed that the inhabitants had eaten that same morning in their hamlet. Beyond the village again there was a track, which led to a third hamlet, and another path took the men to yet a fourth village, beyond which large provision grounds were situated.²⁵

Of the four Kwinti villages discovered, the first one proved to be the largest. Jacob Bogman immediately gave it his own name: *Bogman's Glorie*. It consisted of twenty-six houses. The other villages were a bit smaller. All of them had large provision grounds, in which plantains, tayars, yams, and beans were growing. All the settlements looked very neat and clean. Also the crops on the fields were in a lush condition, their beds neatly maintained. Bogman returned to *Bogman's Glorie*, where he immediately had his men destroy the crops in the fields. He also ordered the plantains to be cut down. When all was finished, the village was burnt to the ground. The next morning the other three villages and their gardens were demolished. After that the patrol returned to Paramaribo.²⁶

Two days after his arrival in Paramaribo, Bogman received orders to mount a new expedition. This time his command consisted of 27 soldiers, 13 armed slaves, 50 bearers, and 4 free Negroes. By December 29, 1761 the men were already marching in the direction of the four villages that Bogman had discovered ten days before. In the vicinity of *Bogman's Glorie* there proved to be six other large provision grounds. Also these gardens were abundant with tayers, sugar cane, plantains, and corn. At the beginning of January 1762 a new Maroon path was found beyond *Bogman's Glorie*. After two hours the men who followed it found a large provision ground, half an hour later they located a second garden, and an hour later a third one.

The downpours that followed each other notwithstanding, the men moved on and found four more large gardens. Near the fields there were six or seven houses whose inhabitants had fled not long before. After an hour the patrol found another provision ground, "inimitably full" of plantain and corn. Three-quarters of an hour later a small abandoned village of fourteen houses was located. Beyond this hamlet extended an open space, not long before burnt down by the Maroons, and planted with young corn. The discoverers decided to name this village *Marchandtskondre*, after G.H. Marchandt, the co-leader of the command. From *Marchandtskondre* there were various paths leading through the swamps to the fishing places of the Maroons. The misery for the Maroons was not finished. The soldiers discovered another field with four new houses, in which fires were still burning. The village contained a large quantity of pots and pans, tools for weaving and spinning, caps, and men's loincloths. The houses also contained large quantities of food: corn, plantains, tobacco, and peanuts. The men also found the lid of the coffeepot of Lieutenant Klepper's expedition. This discovery led them to conclude that the provision grounds belonged to the Maroons who had been driven away from *Makakondre* by Klepper.

For ten days the men went on searching for other provision grounds, villages, and Maroons. Although Bogman and Marchandt discovered several other fields, they did not find any new villages. On January 11, 1762 they came across the village of *Makakondre*, burnt by Lieutenant Klepper. There they found the skeleton of a woman shot by his patrol and two graves of men who had been killed. There was no new fire-place in the village, nor did the command find recent footprints. It seemed correct to presume that the Maroons had left for another place after the destruction of *Makakondre*. Three days later Marchandt found an old and abandoned village. It had been a large one, about an hour's walk in length and a quarter of an hour in breadth. As evening fell, Marchandt discovered a new provision ground with six to seven houses in the vicinity of that old village. Marchandt

ordered an attack on it, but it proved to be deserted. From the gardens a path led to a village. When they arrived it proved to have been hastily abandoned by the Maroons. This village consisted of twenty-three huts. Judging from the sleeping places, each hut had been occupied by seven to eight people. Therefore the village must have had approximately 150 inhabitants. When they fled, the Maroons had been forced to leave their belongings and food behind. The fires were still burning and pots contained food ready to be eaten. In the meantime night had fallen, so the men stayed in the village. As Bogman and Marchandt were afraid the Maroons would use the darkness to try and recapture their village, everybody had to stay awake. That night, however, nothing happened. Nor was anything of importance detected on the following days. Therefore Bogman and Marchandt decided to return to Paramaribo.²⁷

It became clear from the interrogation of the children captured in *Makakondre* by Lieutenant Klepper that a reconciliation between the Kwinti and the Amerindians of the Coppename had taken place in the meantime. Several Amerindians were living in the Kwinti villages. Furthermore the children told that the Maroons had built hiding-places on the other side of the Saramacca River to which they could escape whenever bush patrols threatened their villages. The Maroons possessed few weapons. They only had the three rifles which had been seized during the raid on the plantation of Widow Tuynman. The captured children were auctioned in Paramaribo. The proceeds were divided between the participants in the patrols.²⁸

CAPTEIN JOO HUNTING THE MAROONS

It might surprise outsiders that there was a total lack of solidarity among the victims of Dutch "imperialism". Not only did planters and soldiers march against the Kwinti, so did slaves (often without white supervision), Amerindians, and other Maroons. In 1762 the Kwinti were attacked twice more. At the beginning of March a small patrol of Ndjuka Maroons went to the *Duivelsbroekzwamp*. They returned with two right hands of Maroons who had been shot to death. The second expedition was under the command of the slave Joo van Dandiran. Captein Joo regularly commanded small armies of slaves, which marched against the Maroons. The patrol of Captein Joo was very successful. It captured eight Maroons.²⁹

Patrols that were sent to the *Duivelsbroekzwamp* in the period between 1762 and 1765 found hardly anything worth mentioning. On February 2, 1765 Maroons tried to kidnap female slaves who were working on the fields of the Altona plantation. A fight ensued, after which the attackers left again

taking one female slave. Two weeks later Maroons charged Altona again. It was once more time for a patrol. The Court of Policy asked Jacob Bogman, Lieutenant Klepper, and Captein Joo for the location of the villages. The Court accepted a proposal by Captein Joo to have the bush patrol carried out by 24 trusted slaves, accompanied by 28 bearers under his command. Captein Joo left Paramaribo on March 8. After a march of five days the slave army spotted the Maroons. Joo decided not to fire on them, as he hoped to capture more Maroons by approaching the village unnoticed. The slaves continued in silence, but on their arrival it seemed that the Maroons had noticed their enemies, so that they had been able to escape in time. The village, consisting of thirty-four wooden houses, was completely deserted, but the escapees had been obliged to leave behind a large number of goods, including all their *gado* (sacral objects). There were a few large orange, lime, and lemon trees, which indicates that it was a relatively old village. Large provision grounds surrounded the village. A second village was found a day's walk away.³⁰

After this success Captein Joo and his slave army returned to Paramaribo. The Court asked them to go on the hunt again in order to finish the job. On April 8, 1765 Joo left a second time, this time reinforced by a few soldiers. After two days the small command discovered eight abundant provision grounds near the village Joo and his men had destroyed one month previously. Since its discovery, the village had been abandoned. On the following day the patrol marched to a second Maroon village, which was situated almost a day's march to the south. Between the two villages there were large swamps in which the water stood almost one meter high. The second village consisted of twenty-eight houses. It had three provision grounds, the largest of which was twenty *kettingen* (chains)³¹ long and two wide. From this second village patrols searched for other hamlets and gardens. They located three settlements consisting of four, thirteen, and seven houses respectively. All villages had extensive provision grounds. On April 19 the command of Captein Joo returned to Paramaribo.³²

In June 1765 Amerindians captured a runaway slave, who had been living with the Kwinti for over three years. The man stated that the Maroons had two more villages, in addition to those destroyed by Captein Joo. It proved impossible to form a patrol, as the large rainy season was at its height. The Court of Policy therefore decided to wait until September.³³

In the middle of September 1765, when the water in the swamps had dropped sufficiently, two patrols were sent to the Kwinti villages. The captured Maroon was sent along as a guide, but he was not very cooperative in parting with his information, so from time to time he was badly tortured. Six days after the trip had started, one of the patrols arrived in provision

grounds and a village of twenty-six houses, in which the fires were still burning. The Maroon guide confirmed that this was the village he came from. He could tell the names of all the people who had been living in the houses. He also pointed out the house of the *granman*. The Maroon guide thought the inhabitants had fled to the south, to a region which was known to them as *Aricarij*. The patrol decided to head for that region. After three days *Aricarij* was found: a weeded provision ground, eight houses, and two storehouses. After everything had been destroyed as far as was possible, the patrol left again in the direction of the Saramacca River. Close to that river the patrol discovered another Maroon settlement with the fires still burning. As many of the men were ill, the patrol decided to return to Paramaribo. Ten days later another patrol left Paramaribo for the villages of the Kwinti. This patrol discovered provision grounds and deserted villages, however, no trace of the Maroons was found.³⁴

Almost a year later, in October 1766, a few Maroons were roaming beyond the Osembo plantation in the Para region. The slaves of this plantation discovered them and shot two men. From one of the dying they learned that the marauders belonged to a group of thirteen. The next day the Maroons tried to kidnap a few female slaves, but they were unsuccessful. A month later the Kwinti Maroons raided the neighboring Onoribo plantation. They killed one slave, seriously wounded two others, set fire to all the slave houses, and took five slaves with them. Slaves who pursued them lost track because of the dry season. Thereupon a patrol was formed of five *burghers*, all of whom were plantation managers from the Para region, soldiers, and twenty-eight armed slaves. The patrol left on November 27. It spent the night near a swamp. The next morning the men discovered the trail of the Maroons, a dangerous path sown with pitfalls containing sharp spikes that were approximately twenty centimetres long. Around noon the men saw a provision ground with a village of sixteen houses; it proved to have been abandoned a few months previously. Three hours later they came to a new provision ground. Alongside the fields there was a neatly kept path, leading to a new village. F.A. Poll, the manager of Onoribo, ordered the *burghers* and the slaves to attack the village. Two Maroons were shot dead and a little girl of about three or four years old was captured. In the attack one of the slaves was also killed, probably by a member of the patrol. This caused a violent row. Nobody wanted to listen any longer to manager Poll. All decided to go home.³⁵

That same month another three patrols went to the vicinity of the Kwinti village, one and a half day's march northeast of Onoribo. One of the patrols returned with a woman who had been born in the forest and whose mother had been an Amerindian slave of the Bergendaal plantation.³⁶ The other

patrols were unsuccessful. A Saramaka Maroon, who had gone along as a guide, told them he had had contact with a man who had made it clear to him by a sign that his group consisted of more than eighty people who had dispersed themselves and kept hidden in the swamps during the day.³⁷

During the night of June 30 to July 1, 1767 a few Maroons forced open the storehouses of the Houttuyn plantation, on which occasion they seized saws, axes, and other tools. When they attempted to steal pieces of linen cloth from the bleaching fields they were discovered by a guard. He raised the alarm. From various huts slaves, who had woken up, came running. The Maroons then dropped the goods and fled. The next morning a small patrol of nine slaves went after them. Close to the Saramacca River they discovered an island in a tidal swamp on which were situated two provision grounds, each approximately four square chains. There were also four huts on the island, but the slaves did not find any people.³⁸

GRANMAN KOFI

For the reconstruction of the history of the Kwinti until the middle of the 1760s we have only journals of bush patrols. From the number of villages, houses, and provision grounds that these patrols destroyed it can be concluded that the number of Maroons can be estimated at approximately 400 persons. During this period hardly anything was known about the Maroons themselves. Around 1770, thanks to some reports of captured Maroons that have been preserved more light is shed on the internal structure of the Kwinti. In one report, dating from 1770, a Maroon said that a few years previously, shortly after the death of *granman* Bokkoe, a group of six Maroons led by Kofi had gone from the Maroon village to the plantation area. Close to Paramaribo they had crept up on the small plantation of planter Wolf. A white man, who had been captured at that occasion, was killed by Kofi. He had cut his head off, and had carried this in triumph to the village, where it had been placed on top of the grave of *granman* Bokkoe. To what extent this spectacular act was connected with Bokkoe's succession is unknown. It is, however, sure that "*eenen Neger genaamd Coffij zijnde een Bosch Creool*" (a Negro called Coffy being a Bush Creole) succeeded him as *granman*.³⁹

A short time after Kofi had arrived at his village with this head, a few Kwinti decided to go to Wolf's plantation once more, maybe to repeat their chief's action. However, they were not so successful. Two Maroons were captured, brought to Paramaribo, and interrogated in the fortress Zeelandia. In order to escape the death penalty, one of them offered the Court of

Policy to show a patrol the way to the Kwinti villages. The patrol left Paramaribo on November 6, 1767. After a march of five days across ridges and swamps, the Maroon concluded he had lost the way. The commander had a *Spaanse bok*⁴⁰ administered to him, after which the guide found the path again. At a distance of two hours from the village they halted. On Friday November 13, the patrol tried to surround the village before sunrise. Because of its strategic position this was not really possible. A guard discovered the advancing patrol and raised the alarm. Most of the inhabitants were able to escape, but four women and six children were less lucky. The attackers set fire to the village, which consisted of twenty houses, and they marched on in an attempt to try and catch up with the escapees. They discovered another village of six houses. As evening was falling, the patrol spent the night in that hamlet. Nothing of importance was found on the following days, so the patrol returned to Paramaribo with the prisoners.⁴¹

One of the captured women, Jaba of De Castilho, made a remarkable statement in Paramaribo. She said that Maroons had taken her approximately ten years before. These men had taken her to a settlement which was led by a certain Boko. During a raid on that village, Boko had been killed by whites. Before his death (or shortly afterwards, the record is not very clear on this), an enormous fight broke out between the twenty inhabitants of the village. They let fly at each other with clubs and spears, and many were killed. Jaba fled from the village. Since that time she had been living with Kofi's group.⁴²

In the early morning of September 7, 1769 a Ndjuka Maroon, two slaves, and a female slave left for Paramaribo with a *warimbo*⁴³ full of fish. They never got there, for on the way they were attacked by four Kwinti Maroons, including *granman* Kofi, who stabbed them to death and subsequently disembowelled them. The Court of Policy decided to send a patrol of freed Negroes to the villages in the *Duivelsbroekzwamp*, provided with provisions for a fortnight. On October 2, this command returned to Paramaribo from a successful hunt. The freed Negroes had shot dead two women from Kofi's village, and had captured five women and two children.⁴⁴ The success of this patrol made Governor Jean Nepveu decide to install a militia of *Vrije Neegers en Mulatten* (Freed Negroes and Mulattos). The militia was to consist of approximately 150 men. The men would only receive pay and provision when they were actually called up for a bush patrol. Two years later, in 1772, Nepveu established the *Neeger Vrijcorps* (Black Rangers). This corps consisted of 300 slaves, especially redeemed for this army. In the battle against the Maroons (against the Boni Maroons in particular) the *Neeger Vrijcorps* was to play an important role.⁴⁵

At the beginning of October 1769 a patrol of freed Negroes went to the

Kwinti villages yet again. They captured two women. In December Amerindians of the Coppename reported that they had conquered the village of *granman* Kofi, and that they had killed four Maroons, one of whom was Kofi himself. They showed Kofi's spear to the Councillors. A few captured Maroons confirmed that the weapon was that of their chief. However, the allegation that Kofi had been killed proved to be untrue.⁴⁶

A few months later the Maroons committed another murder. A little south of Paramaribo they beat a plantation owner to death. Again *granman* Kofi was one of the killers. The raiders took the gun and the sword of the murdered man. At the beginning of 1770 a number of Kwinti went on a foray to Paramaribo. One of the Maroons, Markies, who had been planning to persuade the young female slave Rosa to join the Maroons, was provided by his fellow tribesman, the *Bosch Creool* Apollo, with an *obia* (obeah) in order to make his wooing a success. The *obia* looked like a stick wrapped up in grass. It could make water drinkable, but it also served as an instrument to blind whites. As Markies was carrying the *obia* with him, the whites would not notice him. The talk with Rosa was not very productive for Markies. She did not want to join him immediately, but asked him to return during the night. While he was leaving Markies lost the *obia*. On his second visit during the night he was noticed and arrested.

Markies provided his interrogators with information about the life of the Kwinti Maroons. Markies did not know anything of the patrol of the Amerindians of the Coppename. However, a patrol of freed Negroes in 1769 had discovered and destroyed twice his village. He said that *granman* Kofi was still alive. His village had approximately fifty inhabitants. Markies provided the names of thirty-one men and five women. After the destruction of their provision grounds a number of years previously, the Maroons had laid out new provision grounds on the other side of the Saramacca River. They had lived near those provision grounds for some time, but by now all Kwinti had returned to their previous living area in the *Duivelsbroekzwamp*. Recently they had laid out two new provision grounds there, and planted manioc and mais.⁴⁷

THE REMARKABLE ROLE OF THE MATAWAI MAROONS

In 1762 the government had made peace with the Saramaka Maroons under *granman* Abini. Four years later two of Abini's captains, Beku and Musinga, who were dissatisfied with the presents they had received, raided four plantations in the Para region, on which occasion they stole more than 100 slaves.⁴⁸ Promising that the stolen slaves would be returned and that in

exchange for presents no more attacks on plantations would take place, Beku and Musinga agreed to a new peace treaty in April 1769. The relations with other Saramaka Maroons were to remain bad. After 1769 the administrators of Suriname treated the group of Beku and Musinga as a separate Maroon tribe: the Matawai.

In his efforts to show how reliable he had become, and in order to divert the attention from the 100 slaves who had been stolen in 1766 but had still not been returned, in September 1769 Musinga offered to attack a Kwinti village in the Para region, situated on Botterbalie Creek, no more than two hours' walk from the Osembo plantation. For this purpose he requested guns and gunpowder from the Court of Policy. After this it took another year before Musinga actually marched against the Kwinti. The action almost spelled disaster for the Matawai. At a certain moment they discovered they were surrounded by Kwinti, so that all their means of escape were cut off. Both groups started talking. The Kwinti asked for what purpose the Matawai had come to them. Had they come to fight, or did they want to make peace? Musinga stated his intentions were good. The Kwinti made Musinga swear he would live in harmony with them.⁴⁹ Two soldiers, who had been in the Maroon village with Musinga, stated later in Paramaribo that the village, in which approximately thirty men, fourteen women, and ten children were living had twenty solid houses plus one *Gado huys*. Extensive provision grounds surrounded the village.

After this event a delegation from Musinga went to Paramaribo and requested the Court of Policy to make peace with the Kwinti, just as the Court had done with them and the Ndjuka and Saramaka. Musinga offered to mediate in the conclusion of this peace treaty. After the peace treaty the Kwinti would join the Matawai under his command. The Court rejected this. Unlike his predecessor, Wigbold Crommelin, Governor Jean Nepveu was no advocate of peace treaties with runaway slaves. He believed that this would encourage the slaves to defect. Besides, the Matawai were not to be trusted. The Court ordered the Matawai to hunt the Maroons.⁵⁰

Some days afterwards supported by soldiers the Matawai marched against the Maroon village. The patrol came back to Paramaribo not more than three weeks later with twenty-two prisoners, ten of them ex-slaves of the Onoribo plantation. The other Maroons also came from plantations in the Para region. It was obvious that this group of Kwinti was responsible for the raid on the Onoribo plantation in November 1766. The captured Maroons were severely punished. Jupiter, originally from the Onoribo plantation, was broken on the wheel alive. Ten other men were flogged to death with ropes. The remaining seven men and four women had to work for the rest of their lives in "bandit chains" in the fortress Nieuw-Amsterdam.⁵¹

It is highly probable that after this initial war friendly relations between the Matawai and the Kwinti developed. As these relations were forbidden to the Matawai, being pacified Maroons, they were kept shrouded in secrecy.

In December 1772 a few Amerindians who had raided a Kwinti village arrived in Paramaribo. They had killed eleven people, whose right hands they showed. They had captured five women and six children. In order to destroy the rest of the village, the government sent a contingent of the Black Rangers to the *Duivelsbroekzwamp*, but this patrol returned without having been successful. Patrols sent in December 1773 and in February 1774 were also fruitless. A *burgher* patrol gained some success in May 1774. It found a village, a provision ground and a *gado*, but no Maroons. Early in January 1775 envoys from Musinga handed over four runaway slaves who had sought refuge in the village on Botterbalie Creek, which had been destroyed five years previously.⁵² The Kwinti were not paid a lot of attention in the period between 1770 and 1775. The actions of the Boni Maroons in the eastern part of the colony required all the planters' attention (Stedman 1796, Hoogbergen 1990).

In May 1775 a contingent of the Black Rangers discovered the rebuilt *Makamaka* consisting of forty solid houses. Upon their arrival all inhabitants fled. One man was overtaken and killed. The patrol captured two women, Amba and Amarantha, ex-slaves of Aron Jessurun. They said that the inhabitants of *Makamaka* had sufficient food, but that they had only three guns. They went regularly to Paramaribo in order to go stealing. In the middle of June a second patrol left for *Makamaka*. They wanted to investigate whether the Maroons had returned to their village in the meantime. After a march of seven days the group reached the deserted village of *Makamaka*. Surrounding it were well-planted provision grounds. However, as a result of the incessant rains the crops had mostly rotted.⁵³

In October 1775 a bush patrol found a small Maroon village beyond the Van Klijnhens plantation. The inhabitants fled after a short exchange of fire. In the same month two runaway slaves, who claimed to have lived for two years in a Maroon village, whose chief was a certain Avantuur van Belwaarde, were captured. The slaves denied ever having been in Kofi's village. The Court of Policy sentenced both Maroons to an interrogation by torture until death ensued.⁵⁴

In February 1776 two patrols, one consisting of twenty-five soldiers, the other of Freed Negroes, went searching for Maroons in the area west of Paramaribo. The soldiers did not find anything, but the Freed Negroes returned with a captured woman and two children. They had found two Maroon villages, one of which was Kofi's village. According to the captured

woman, the village was inhabited by eleven men, five women, and six children. In September 1776 soldiers went into battle once more against the Kwinti. On their way there, the patrol met Amerindians who told them that *granman* Kofi with a few fellow Maroons had crossed the Saramacca River in a pirogue a few days previously. The Amerindians had fired at them. Afterwards they had followed the tracks and found hidden pirogues, but they had not seen the Maroons themselves again. Having heard this, the patrol went in the direction pointed out to them by the Amerindians. A few large and small provision grounds, some houses, and places where the Maroons had fished and taken honey from the trees were discovered, but the Maroon villages could not be found.⁵⁵

THE KWINTI SETTLE BETWEEN THE SARACACCA AND COESEWIJNE RIVERS

After their villages in the *Duivelsbroekzwamp* and in the Para region had been discovered and destroyed again in 1775 and 1776, the Kwinti decided to cross the Saramacca River for the second time, and to settle between this river and the Coesewijne River. It was a final departure, for they never returned to the region of the *Duivelsbroekzwamp*. The Amerindians, who had seen *granman* Kofi cross the Saramacca River in his pirogue, had probably been witnessing the migration of the Kwinti to the southwest. In November 1776 a few Amerindian chiefs confirmed the Kwinti migration. They came to hand in the right hand of a Maroon they killed and stated on this occasion that Kofi's Maroons had laid out large provision grounds west of the Saramacca River.⁵⁶

In their new living area the Maroons tried to recover from their defeats. In the archives very little is to be found on the period from October 1776 to April 1779. Patrols in March and September 1778, and in February 1779 returned without having discovered anything.⁵⁷ It was the Amerindians of the Coppename who discovered Kofi's new villages near the Coesewijne River at the beginning of 1779. The hunt was renewed. In April the Amerindians attempted to take the Maroons by surprise. For a long time fighting took place in and around the Kwinti village. According to the Amerindians they killed eight Maroons, but they had stopped fighting, because people on their side had also been killed. The Maroons proved too strong. Immediately the Court of Policy sent soldiers to the Amerindians in order to make a joint march against the Maroons. In May the Amerindians, seven chiefs and eighty men, women, and children, arrived in triumph in Paramaribo to bring the smoked hands of two Maroons, who had been killed. Their chief,

Frans, declared that his warriors had taken and destroyed Kofi's village. In addition to the two whose right hands were shown, another six Maroons had supposedly been killed. However, most inhabitants had been able to flee. As the water level in the swamps had been too high, nothing had come of the pursuit. As soon as the water level started to drop, the Amerindians would march again against Kofi. This patrol, held in fact in August 1779, achieved nothing.

In November the Maroons took their revenge. They assaulted a few Amerindians who were fishing, killed two of them and took four rifles.⁵⁸ In November and December 1779, during an expedition which lasted for almost a month, a joint patrol of thirty-six Ndjuka Maroons and eighteen Amerindians of the Coppename searched for the Kwinti villages near the Coesewijne River. The men left Paramaribo on November 18. In one of the side creeks of the Saramacca River the Ndjuka-Amerindian patrol and the Kwinti got into a short fight. After the Kwinti had fired some shots at the combined patrol they disappeared between the trees. Following this event nothing of importance was found for almost a week. Around seven o'clock on the evening of December 1, the patrol heard drumming by the Kwinti coming from the east-southeast. However, it proved difficult to find their village. Only on December 9 the patrol found a track that first led them to a path and afterwards to a provision ground. As a proof they took eighty bunches of bananas. Two days later the command finally came to the Kwinti village. The path leading to it proved safeguarded by dangerous pitfalls. One of the Ndjuka Maroons fell into one of the traps, and was very badly wounded by the sharp stakes. The new Kwinti settlement consisted of nineteen houses. The next day the patrol located a second village of thirty-three houses. When the raiders attacked it in the early morning, only three Maroons were present. Two of them were killed, the third one escaped. Shortly afterwards the attackers found themselves surrounded by Maroons. A gunfight ensued, which lasted almost the entire morning. Only towards noon did the Ndjuka-Maroons and the Amerindians succeed in breaking through. The Kwinti fled leaving one dead person behind.⁵⁹

For three years nothing was heard of the Kwinti. In December 1782 a patrol of the Black Rangers discovered and destroyed two Kwinti villages between the Saramacca and the Coesewijne Rivers. One hamlet consisted of forty-two, the other of fifty-six houses. The new Kwinti villages were strategically situated in a swamp, and heavily fortified by a ring of palisades (round stakes), through which the patrol had to cut a way for itself. Guards kept watch on the paths leading to the villages. That way the villagers were warned well beforehand, so almost everybody could flee in time. Before the Maroons left their village, they set fire to it. However, the fire did not really

gain a hold, so the Black Rangers were able to extinguish it. Because of their hasty flight the Maroons had had to leave tools, goods, and a lot of food behind.⁶⁰

A year later the Kwinti took revenge for the destruction of their villages. On November 26, 1783 about twenty men, armed with spears, machetes, bows and arrows, raided the La Bonne Amitié plantation near Para Creek. In addition to approximately thirty slaves, manager Smagtenberg and white overseer Maas were also present. The raid started a little after sundown. First the Maroons sneaked to the slave houses, where they became embroiled. An enormous noise ensued. Manager Smagtenberg left the planter's house to see what was going on. On the way he met a female slave, who called out to him to flee as Maroons were attacking the plantation. However, Smagtenberg continued until he reached a group of slaves, carrying a wounded slave. He then returned to the house to get bandages. When he got there it seemed that almost all female slaves had fled into the planter's house, although an old carpenter slave called to them saying it was very unsafe as Maroons always attacked the planters' houses. Smagtenberg had hardly gotten inside when the Maroons surrounded the house. Doors and windows were broken down with axes. Maas and Smagtenberg fled into a side room. When the Maroons got into the room, Smagtenberg jumped outside through the window and was able to escape in the darkness. The white overseer Maas was so frightened that he remained standing stockstill. The Maroons beat him to death, cut his limbs to pieces, and extracted his heart which they took with them. They chopped off his head and threw it in the fire. The Kwinti totally looted the plantation house and took everything that could be moved. The main booty consisted of iron objects, rifles, ammunition, and a box with gold. When the ransacking was finished, the Kwinti set fire to all the plantation buildings, except the slave houses. The attackers took along twelve slaves, among them the *basya* (black overseer), and nine young women.⁶¹

The next day a patrol of the Black Rangers set off in pursuit. Along the escape route it saw many traces: pieces of cotton, gourds and salt, probably left behind by the stolen women. After three days the pursuers discovered Maroons in a pirogue. A little later a fight ensued which was so severe that the Rangers were forced to withdraw. They decided to wait for reinforcements. When these arrived after a number of days, the Rangers crossed the Saramacca River. On December 10 they discovered a Maroon village, a settlement of twenty houses and approximately ten fields of ripe provisions. However, the village had been abandoned a few days previously. One day later the patrol came to the inhabited village of Bienvenue⁶² consisting of forty-seven huts, surrounded by provision grounds. As soon as the inhabit-

ants saw the soldiers, they started firing at them. The fight was started in order to give the women and children a chance to escape. One Maroon was killed, another was captured. The day after the Black Rangers were patrolling around the village, hoping to find an escape route. One of the patrols got into a fight near the village of *granman* Kofi. In this fight three Maroons lost their lives.⁶³

After the seizure of their villages the Kwinti fled south towards the savannah area between the coastal marshes and the mountains. When they found Amerindians there, they decided to go back to the lower land. They built a new village and planted new crops on top of the destroyed provision grounds. They called the new village *Langagron* (Long ground).⁶⁴

In March 1785 the commander of the colonial forces, Jurriaan de Fride-rici, who later became Governor of Suriname, decided to send the Black Rangers once more against the Maroons of *granman* Kofi. On the 22 of that month the Rangers under the command of A. Vinsaque sailed up the Saramacca River to Tiger Creek, from where they went overland and marched southwestwards into the jungle. The march took them over ridges and through grass marshes. Towards the evening of the following day the Rangers discovered a Maroon path which led them close to *Langagron*. The men spent the night near the village. In the early morning Vinsaque tried to surround *Langagron*, but the Kwinti discovered the Rangers and could flee in great haste, leaving all their tools and many weapons behind. The Black Rangers went in pursuit, shot one Maroon dead, wounded a few, and captured three of the female slaves taken from La Bonne Amitié. The new village of *granman* Kofi was situated on a shell ridge, surrounded by thick marshes on the north and the south side. To the east and the west it was guarded by a wall of palisades. Sufficient food was available in *Langagron*. There was also poultry. In the huts the soldiers found a large quantity of good tools. From information obtained from the captured female slaves, it seemed that forty-nine people were living in the village: thirty-four men and fifteen women and children, including the stolen female slaves from La Bonne Amitié. These slaves did not want to go back to their plantations.⁶⁵

A month later a new command headed for *Langagron*, this time guided by an ex-inhabitant of that village. In November 1783 when the Kwinti were on their way to La Bonne Amitié in order to raid that plantation, they discovered a small camp in the Para region, in which were living two run-aways: April and Apollo. Both men joined them. During the attack Apollo captured a female slave, who became his wife. In *Langagron* the Kwinti treated the two men more or less as their slaves. When one of the Kwinti took Apollo's wife, he decided to leave the village. On his way back to his former plantation, Apollo was captured near the Saramacca River and sent

to Paramaribo. During his interrogation in the fortress of Zeelandia (history repeats itself) he offered to point out the village of *granman* Kofi. The Court of Policy went along with his proposal, so Apollo was added to a new bush patrol of the Black Rangers as a guide. This command left on April 26, 1785. It followed the route of the previous month. On April 30 the Rangers discovered a small settlement on a little rise with tracks no older than four or five days. For a day and a half they followed these tracks in south-southeasterly direction. On the morning of May 3 the Rangers approached the new settlement of *granman* Kofi. When they stormed the village, they killed three Maroons and captured another three inhabitants. The others escaped.⁶⁶

The three prisoners were interrogated in Paramaribo. Pomba did not reveal much. Only that Kofi had kidnapped her a number of years previously. At one time she had been injured in a raid by Amerindians. She showed the scars. The other prisoner, Akoba, had been born in the bush. She had been taken prisoner once before by Amerindians during a raid on Kofi's village. The Amerindians had sold her to a certain Gomperts in Paramaribo, who had her work in his garden. Then Kofi had collected her again. Back in the village Akoba had married the Maroon Musinga. They had one child: Agosu. The third prisoner, Frans, had run away some fifteen years before from the Beekhuysen plantation. The first months he had lived in the jungle beyond the plantation. There he was discovered by Kofi who took him to his village. Frans van Beekhuysen gave the names of thirty-one men and seventeen women living in Kofi's village. Eight men and two women were Bush Creoles, Kofi and his brother Apollo included. The others had fled from their plantations. Frans also provided a list of names of thirteen Maroons who had been killed or captured by the bush patrols during the years before. In addition he stated that all the men had been present at the raid on La Bonne Amitié. After the Black Rangers had destroyed their new village *Langagron* in March 1785, the Maroons had decided to look for a new living area. *Granman* Kofi had sent his brother, Apollo, and six men to the Coesewijne River in order to fell trees. Therefore Apollo was not present when the second patrol of Vinsaque attacked the Kwinti Maroons again in May 1785 and arrested Frans van Beekhuysen.⁶⁷

Frans van Beekhuysen was found guilty of desertion and murder. The Court of Criminal Justice sentenced him to

be put on a wheel or cross, and be broken on the wheel alive, starting with the legs, until death follows, then his head will be cut off and this will be put on a stake on the gallows-field until it is consumed by the air and the birds, and his body will be buried under the gallows.

Apollo, who had led the Black Rangers to the new village of Kofi, did not derive much benefit from this. After the patrol was finished he became more or less a free man awaiting a possible draft for the Black Rangers. While slaves were holding a big dance on a plantation, he had been celebrating exuberantly with them and he had drunk too much rum. As a result of his drunkenness he deserted his military post. When he was captured five days later, he was sent to Paramaribo. There, in May 1785 he received the same punishment as Frans van Beekhuysen.⁶⁸

In December 1786 the Black Rangers discovered a new village of Kofi, situated on a side creek of the Coesewijne River. Before the black soldiers attacked the village, the Maroons discovered them, and they were able to save themselves by fleeing. They had to leave many tools and a large stock of corn and manioc behind. The provision grounds surrounding this village were approximately fifty acres. A few months later the commander of the troops reported that some Kwinti Maroons had been paddling in the direction of Paramaribo in pirogues stolen from the Amerindians. A group of Amerindians and Black Rangers had discovered and gone after them. A little to the west of Paramaribo they had overtaken the Kwinti, whereupon one Maroon had been killed during the fight. In May 1787 Black Rangers destroyed gardens of the Kwinti near the Coesewijne River. Several soldiers were killed at this occasion as the result of falling into pitfalls. In December 1787 the Black Rangers again destroyed a Kwinti village. This village consisted of thirty-six houses surrounded by extensive provision grounds. Again the Maroons were successful in escaping in time. A few days after the discovery of the village, Amerindians captured and shot dead two escaped Maroons.⁶⁹

A patrol which had been sent to the Kwinti in September 1789 found traces, but no villages or any provision grounds. Two months later a new patrol was more successful. Again extensive provision grounds of the Kwinti and a village of thirty-eight houses was destroyed. At that occasion one Maroon fell into the hands of the Black Rangers. The Court of Policy gave the Maroons no rest. In January 1790 it sent the Black Rangers once more to the Coesewijne River. However, nothing was found this time. The Court of Policy suspected that the Maroons no longer lived in large villages, but had split themselves up into small groups between the Saramacca and the Coesewijne Rivers. In order to investigate whether this suspicion was well founded, several small patrols were sent to the region in the first half of 1790. During these actions, in which Amerindians also participated, three Maroons were killed. However, in November 1790 it became obvious that there was still a large Kwinti village in the area. At the approach of the Black Rangers the Maroons fled. One man was killed. The new Governor, Jurriaan de Friderici, declared at a meeting of the Court of Policy that the

number of Kwinti Maroons had decreased dramatically during the previous years. He expected that they would flee across the Coesewijne River, now that their settlement had been discovered and destroyed again. Therefore the Governor had charged the chiefs of the Amerindians of the Coppename to watch them from that side.⁷⁰

SUMMARY AND EPILOGUE

As this article demonstrates, the history of the Kwinti is relatively old, spanning approximately 250 years in fact. The oldest mention of these Maroons that I found in the archives dates from March 1743. Runaway slaves were then living in the area west of Paramaribo in the *Duivelsbroekzwamp*. The place to which the runaway slaves who formed the Kwinti group fled was not felicitous because Amerindians were living there too. Those Indians had no intention of helping the Kwinti or giving them refuge. My research has made clear that Amerindians and Kwinti were at one another's throats. From 1743 to 1761 nothing important on the Kwinti is to be found in the archives, except for bush patrols in 1750, 1756, and 1758.

In 1761 three bush patrols were sent to the Kwinti. Two of these patrols managed to find several villages bordered by extensive provision grounds. The most important village was *Makakondre*. In 1762 the Kwinti were attacked twice more. The achievement of these expeditions clearly showed that a severe blow had been inflicted on the Kwinti at the end of 1761, and in the early part of 1762. Not many Maroons had been captured, but probably a large part of their provisions had been lost. Patrols sent to the *Duivelsbroekzwamp* in the period between 1762 and 1765 found hardly anything worth mentioning. In September 1769 chief Musinga of the pacified Matawai Maroons secretly informed the Governor that several Kwinti were staying with him, and that he had planned to attack their village. By the end of December 1770 Musinga delivered twenty-two Kwinti Maroons to Paramaribo. The captive Maroons were severely punished.

For the reconstruction of the history of the Kwinti Maroons up to the middle of the 1760s, we have to rely on the journals of bush patrols. From the number of villages, houses, and provision grounds that were destroyed by these patrols, the number of Maroons can be estimated at approximately 400 persons. In that period hardly anything was identified about the Maroons themselves. Nor is it known precisely who their chief was in these early times. Around 1770, thanks to some reports of captured Maroons, more is revealed about the leadership among the Kwinti. After the death of *granman* Bokkoe, Kofi succeeded him as chief. For many years Kofi would

remain *granman* of these Maroons. He died in 1827. Because of Kofi, these Maroons are called in the archives Kofimaka Negroes, a designation that stayed in use until the beginning of the twentieth century. Nowadays the Maroons call themselves Kwinti.

During 1775 and 1776 military patrols located three additional Kwinti villages. Then the Kwinti decided to cross the Saramacca River and settle between this river and the Coesewijne River. It was only in December 1782 that a number of soldiers discovered and destroyed two new villages consisting of forty-three and fifty-six houses respectively. The villages were heavily defended as the Maroons had constructed a ring of palisades to fend off the soldiers. One year later the Kwinti took their revenge and attacked the La Bonne Amitié plantation in the Para region. In early December 1783 a military patrol crossed the Saramacca River in search of the raiders. It found and destroyed three Kwinti villages. In 1785 again a new village of the Kwinti – called *Langagron* – was discovered.

After 1790 only a little about the Kwinti can be found in the archives. Probably the Maroons of Kofi had moved quite a long way in a westerly direction, to the area between the Coppename and the Corantijn Rivers, which at that time was uninhabited and where the British colony Berbice started. A side creek of the Nickerie River still bears the name of Kofimaka Creek. In 1792 the Matawai handed over a man who had probably been born into the Kwinti tribe. The Maroon, who said his name was Ogi, had never seen a white man before he was handed over. He stated that the Kwinti were living in seven villages.⁷¹ In the period of time between 1792 and 1802 the documents reveal nothing at all about the Kwinti. In May 1802 Amerindians of the Coppename came to report in Paramaribo that one of their villages had been attacked by Maroons. In the fight eight Amerindians, among whom chief Abraham, had been killed.⁷² The reaction to this message is not known. In any case nothing with regard to military actions is to be found in the archives. Only at the turn of the year 1807 to 1808, was a patrol sent to the area between the Saramacca and the Coesewijne Rivers. For two weeks the soldiers looked for Maroons in the area, without finding the slightest traces.⁷³ In September 1808 the Matawai handed over a runaway slave who had been living with the Kwinti for a number of years. The man said that a few weeks after his flight from the plantation on the Coppename River, he had met a few Kwinti, on their way to raid Amerindians. When after a few days the Maroons returned from their unsuccessful trip – the Amerindians had spotted them in time – he had gone with them. After approximately nine months he had fled from the Kwinti, because they suspected him of *wisi* (black magic).⁷⁴ Probably the Kwinti had come to live closer to the colony again, possibly on a side creek of the Coppename River, the Corantijn Creek (Bakhuis 1902:31).

The data regarding the Kwinti remain scarce. In the nineteenth century military patrols were no longer sent after them. Although not officially pacified, they gradually were given that status. A status quo evolved between them and the planters. The Kwinti no longer interfered with the plantation colony and the planters left them alone. It was 1824 before something more was heard about them. In that year the Matawai handed over four runaway slaves they had received from the Kwinti. This emphasizes how settled the Kwinti had already become by that period. First of all they no longer seemed to have any interest in newcomers. It becomes clear from the fact that they handed over these men to the Matawai, that they had regular contact with these pacified Maroons. The runaway slaves were definitely given for a reason. There were agreements on the division of the bounty the authorities gave for handing over runaway slaves. From the fact that the slaves so handed-over were hardly interrogated with regard to their stay with the Kwinti it becomes obvious that the authorities had little interest in the Kwinti. About forty years previously the authorities would have shown a vivid interest in the location of their villages, the numbers of Maroons, and their weapons. In addition to this, they would have used the slaves thus handed-over as guides in bush patrols.⁷⁵

However, the authorities were not entirely uninterested in the Kwinti. In 1829 a civil servant, who had frequent contacts with the Matawai, was made responsible for investigating who the *Coffy Macca Neegers* were. He did not find out a lot on the subject. The only thing he was able to report was that these Maroons were named after their previous chief Kofi, who had died about two years previously.⁷⁶

In the middle of the nineteenth century the Kwinti moved to the Saracca River, where they went to live near the Matawai villages. Some of the Kwinti are still living there in two villages. After a few fights the others went back again in the direction of their previous living area led by their *granman* Noah Andrai. After a period of wandering they settled along the Coppename River. In 1887, twenty-four years after abolition, the Kwinti were finally acknowledged by the authorities as *vrije boschneegers* (free Maroons).⁷⁷

NOTES

1. For more details on Boni see my book *The Boni Maroon wars in Suriname* (1990b).
2. The oral tradition that they were brothers and came from the same plantation seems untenable. In the archives both Kofi and Boni are designated *Bosch Creoolen* (Bush Creoles), which was the name for runaway slaves who were not born on a plantation but in the *bosch* (jungle). Neither Kofi nor Boni were slaves at any time in their lives.

3. "Another settlement of the Rebels was well known to exist in a Corner of the Colony known by the name of the Lee shore [...] but here the Situation by Ma[r]shes, Quagmires, mud and water is such that it fortifies them, from any attempts of Europeans whatever, nay they are even Indiscoverable by negroes, except by their own, So thick and impenetrable is the forest on that Spot, and overchoaked with thorns-briers, and underwood of every Species. From under these Covers nevertheless these Sable Gentry Sally forth in small parties during the night to rob the Gardens and fields surrounding Parramaribo and carry off[f] the young Women they chance to meet with" (Stedman 1988:84).

4. Charles Brouwn's *Historie der oorlogen met de Marrons of Surinaamsche boschnegers* has been reprinted in De Beet 1984:43-74. The passages that concern the Kwinti Maroons can be found on page 51 (the passage: "Wijders is op ... Visch"), page 56 (the entire page except for the last four lines), and page 64 (the paragraph: "Een detachement ... nagespeurt").

5. The *Algemeen Rijksarchief* (General State Archives, abbreviated in the notes to ARA) in The Hague, the Netherlands, contains most archives with data on the Kwinti-Maroons. Data for this article come in particular from the *Archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname* (code 1.05.03, Archives of the Society of Suriname, abbreviated in the notes: SvS), and from the *Oud-Archief Suriname, Raad van Politie en Crimineele Justitie* (code 1.05.10.02, Old Archives of Suriname, Court of Policy and Criminal Justice, abbreviated in the notes: OAS/RvP).

6. In 1743 the slave Quassie, born at the coast of Guinea around 1690, already was the colony's leading *dresiman* (curer), and *lukuman* (diviner). As an ethnic therapist and expert on healing herbs, he had vast influence not only among blacks and Amerindians, but also among the European colonists (Lichtveld & Voorhoeve 1958:169). For the whites he made himself especially useful in the hunt for Maroons. One year later Governor Johan Mauricius bought Quassie. The most influential black person in Suriname became the teacher of Mauricius' son in *Sranan Tongo*, the English-based Creole language of the slaves, and that of the Caribs and Arowaks. Later on Mauricius manumitted Quassie, who died in 1787. For more information on Quassie see also Price 1979.

7. ARA-SvS 199, Journal of Governor Mauricius March 6, 1743. Interesting is the role of the Amerindians in the hunting down of runaway slaves. Since their revolt of 1678-84 the Amerindians of Suriname had accepted the dominion of the Dutch over Suriname. A peace treaty agreed upon in 1684 dealt with the mutual relations. Among other things it was agreed that neither Caribs nor Arawaks would ever again be used as slaves by the Dutch. As a consequence of this Amerindian revolt many slaves left their plantations and revolted as well. Seven-hundred of them gathered in fortified villages in the Para area. In 1681 they were beaten. The remaining rebellious slaves regrouped themselves under chief Jermes and went to the Coppename River. Three years later Governor Van Aerssen van Sommelsdijck made peace with them, and ever since these *Boschnegers van de Coppename* were recognized as free people with a status equal that of the Amerindians (Hartsinck 1770:649). In the course of history these Maroons mixed with Caribs who were also living in the Coppename region, and thus an ethnic group originated that is described in the archives sometimes as *Indianen van de Coppename*, and other times as *Boschnegers van de Coppename*, and occasionally as *Karboegers van de Coppename*. (A *karboeger* is a person of mixed African-Amerindian origin.) In this article I call this group the "Amerindians of the Coppename".

8. ARA-SvS 199, folio 315-342, Journal of Governor Mauricius October 3, 4, 20, and November 2, 1743.

9. ARA-SvS 199, folio 462, Journal of Governor Mauricius April 25, 1744, and ARA-SvS 200, folio 72, Journal of Governor Mauricius May 7, 1745. In Suriname taxes were levied on the property of slaves, the so-called *Cassa tegen de Wegloopers* (Cash against the Runaways). From the proceeds of these taxes the war against the Maroons was financed. For turning in a

runaway slave a reward of 50 guilders was paid, an amount approximately equal to one-tenth of the price of a new slave. If a slave had hidden himself in a Maroon village, or resisted arrest by using a weapon, such a slave could be killed. Handing in a cut-off right hand was then enough to receive the bounty.

10. The *Hof van Politie en Crimineele Justitie* (Court of Policy and Criminal Justice) formed the governing body of the colony. It was composed of the Governor and (usually) fourteen planters. The Governor was appointed by the Dutch authorities, the planters were elected.

11. ARA-SvS 142, Minutes Court of Policy February 3 and 25, 1750, and SvS 202, Journal of Governor Mauricius February 18, 1750. Kodjo was rewarded for his services by getting his freedom. His former owner, Jacques Boin, was recompensed for half of his taxation value. The new *vrijneger* (freed negro) got a job in the coffee weighhouse against wages of eight *schellingen* a week.

12. See note 7.

13. ARA-SvS 201, Journal of Governor Mauricius March 13 and 16, May 3 and 4, 1751. Also ARA-SvS 143, Minutes Court of Policy May 4, 1751.

14. In Suriname it was assumed that Africans had to first adjust to the colony. During this adjustment period, running away was not yet considered to be a crime.

15. ARA-SvS 202, Journal of Governor Mauricius May 8, 1751, and SvS 143, Minutes Court of Policy May 27, 1751.

16. ARA-SvS 203, folio 326, Journal of Governor Wigbold Crommelin February 6, 1756.

17. An acre is 4047 m².

18. ARA-SvS 150, Minutes Court of Policy September 9, 1758.

19. Gemeente Archief Amsterdam: Archives Marquette PA 231 no. 298. Annotation (by Jean Nepveu) of Herlein 1718. *Koromantijnen* (Coromantes) were slaves, named after the Fante town, Koromantijn, on the Goldcoast, a port from which many Africans were exported to the New World. The slaves bought in Koromantijn were generally of the Akan-speaking group; most of them war captives.

20. ARA-SvS 151, Minutes Court of Policy February 23, July 2 and 9, and September 6, 1759.

21. ARA-SvS 153, Minutes Court of Policy March 5, 1761.

22. The agricultural system of the Maroons was the same as that of the Amerindians and the slaves on the plantations. It is known as shifting cultivation. A piece of forest was cut down, the larger trees were left. Cutting down the forest normally started at the beginning of the long dry season, in July and August. The chopped wood was usually left untouched for a while and when it was reasonably dry – which was usually in the course of October – it was set on fire. The fire burnt the leaves and the twigs, while the large trunks which had not been cut down remained scorched on the provision grounds. The ground was then ready to receive crops. Some crops were planted directly after the fire. Other crops, however, had to wait until the rainy season had begun.

23. ARA-SvS 153, Minutes Court of Policy December 3 and 4, 1761.

24. ARA-SvS 153, Minutes Court of Policy December 24, 1761.

25. ARA-SvS 153, Minutes Court of Policy December 3, 4 and 24, 1761.

26. ARA-SvS 153, Minutes Court of Policy December 24, 1761.

27. ARA-SvS 154, Minutes Court of Policy February 2, 1762.

28. ARA-SvS 154, Minutes Court of Policy February 2 and 10, 1762.

29. ARA-SvS 154, Minutes Court of Policy February 25, March 10, July 29, August 10, and September 30, 1762.
30. ARA-SvS 157, Minutes Court of Policy February 4, 5, 13, 17, and 18, and April 9, 1765.
31. *Ketting* (chain): 66 Rhineland feet (20.72 meters).
32. ARA-SvS 157, Minutes Court of Policy May 17, 1765.
33. ARA-SvS 157, Minutes Court of Policy June 12, 1765.
34. ARA-SvS 157, Minutes Court of Policy October 2 and November 1, 1765.
35. ARA-SvS 158, Minutes Court of Policy October 18, December 1 and 3, 1766.
36. Apart from the black slaves, the workforce of the Surinamese plantations could include in the eighteenth century "red slaves"; mostly "wild" Amerindians who had been transported to Paramaribo by the Carib and Arawak to be sold as slaves. However, their numbers were relatively small. To get an idea: from 1730 until 1742 a number of 492 "wild" Amerindians were sold as slaves in Paramaribo (ARA-SvS 271, folio 227).
37. ARA-SvS 158, Minutes Court of Policy December 15, 17, and 19, 1766.
38. ARA-SvS 159, Minutes Court of Policy July 15, 1767.
39. ARA-OAS/RvP 817, Court of Criminal Justice 1770: folio 234 *et seq.* Because of Kofi, after 1780 these Maroons are called in the archives *Kofimaka-Neegers*, a designation that was current until the beginning of the twentieth century. Nowadays the Maroons call themselves Kwinti, a corruption of 'Corantijn' Creek, the name of a side creek of the Coppename River, where they used to live for some considerable time in the nineteenth century (Bakhuis 1902:31).
40. The punishment of *Spaanse bok* consisted of binding the prisoner's hands together while his arms encircled his raised knees, after which a stick was thrust between the hollow of the knees and the tied arms. This stick was firmly secured to the ground, whereupon the slave, lying on his side, was beaten with tamarind rods.
41. There three of the captured Maroons were restored to the plantations where they had come from. One woman, a *Bosch Creool*, and five children were auctioned. A total of 860 guilders was raised for them. ARA-SvS 159, Minutes Court of Policy December 14, 1767, and January 16, 1768. ARA-SvS 160, Minutes Court of Policy February 2, 1768.
42. ARA-OAS/*Gouvernementssecretarie* (code 1.05.10.01), inv. no 9: December 21, 1767.
43. A rectangular box of wickerwork of the warimbo plant (*Ischnosiphon gracile*).
44. Each of them received f 25,- as a reward and an encouragement. ARA-SvS 161, Minutes Court of Policy September 7, and October 2, 1769.
45. See Hoogbergen 1990:244.
46. ARA-SvS 161, Minutes Court of Policy October 4, and December 6, 1769.
47. ARA-OAS/RvP 817, Court of Criminal Justice 1770, folio 234 *et seq.*
48. *Granman* Abini, afraid that because of this raid peace would be violated, decided to attack Beku and Musinga. He was not very successful, however. He was killed at the beginning of the fight (Price 1990:79-85).
49. ARA-SvS 161, Minutes Court of Policy December 11, 1769, and ARA-SvS 162, Minutes Court of Policy December 5, 1770.
50. ARA-SvS 162, Minutes Court of Policy November 24, December 5 and 12, 1770.

51. The surveyor Christoph van Henemann was sent to the captured Kwinti village in order to map it. This map has been preserved and has been printed among other places, in Price 1990:114. ARA-SvS 163, Minutes Court of Policy December 28, 1770, January 16, and February 18, 1771.
52. ARA-SvS 164, Minutes Court of Policy December 10, 1772; ARA-SvS 165, Minutes Court of Policy March 30, and December 16, 1773; ARA-SvS 166, Minutes Court of Policy February 28, and May 16, 1774, and ARA-SvS 167, Minutes Court of Policy January 4, 1775.
53. ARA-SvS 167, Minutes Court of Policy March 20, 1775.
54. ARA-SvS 167, Minutes Court of Policy October 16, 1775.
55. Brouwn 1796:100-7; ARA-SvS 168, Minutes Court of Policy March 27, 1776.
56. ARA-SvS 168, Minutes Court of Policy November 16, 1776.
57. ARA-SvS 170, Minutes Court of Policy March 23, and September 28, 1778; ARA-SvS 171, Minutes Court of Policy February 18-24, 1779.
58. ARA-SvS 171, Minutes Court of Policy April 22, May 12, August 23, and November 12, 1779.
59. ARA-SvS 172, Minutes Court of Policy: December 27, 1779.
60. ARA-SvS 377, Letter from Governor Bernard Texier to Amsterdam: December 24, 1782.
61. ARA-SvS 175, Minutes Court of Policy November 27, 1783.
62. Bienvenue was one of Kofi's deputy-chiefs. He went along on the expedition to La Bonne Amitié. More information on him and his village can be found in ARA-OAS/RvP 844, Court of Criminal Justice 1784, folio 17.
63. ARA-SvS 379, Letters of Governor Bernard Texier to Amsterdam: November 27 and 30, December 2 and 22, 1783; ARA-OAS/RvP 846, Court of Criminal Justice April 10, 1785.
64. ARA-OAS/RvP 846, Court of Criminal Justice April 10 and 12, May 15, 1785.
65. ARA-SvS 382: Commander De Friderici's report of April 3, 1785.
66. ARA-OAS/RvP 846, Court of Criminal Justice May 21, 1785; ARA-SvS 382, A. Vinsaque's report of May 10, 1785.
67. ARA-OAS/RvP 846, Court of Criminal Justice May 15 and 27, 1785.
68. ARA-OAS/RvP 846, Court of Criminal Justice May 21 and 27, 1785.
69. ARA-SvS 178, Minutes Court of Policy December 11, 1786, March 5, July 11, December 24, 1787.
70. ARA-SvS 180, Minutes Court of Policy February 22, and May 28, 1790; ARA-SvS 184, Minutes Court of Policy November 4 and December 15, 1790; ARA-SvS 394, Journals of A. Katzman of September 18, November 26, 1789, and January 22, 1790.
71. ARA-SvS 399: Letters of Governor Jurriaan de Friderici to Amsterdam, 1792, folio 693. Unfortunately the report is very confused and hardly readable.
72. ARA-OAS/RvP 182, *Defensie Notulen* Court of Policy May 3, 1802.
73. ARA-OAS/RvP 189, *Defensie Notulen* Court of Policy January 8, 1808.
74. ARA-OAS/RvP 190, *Defensie Notulen* Court of Policy September 30, 1808.
75. ARA-OAS/RvP 913, Court of Criminal Justice July 26, 1824.

76. ARA-Suriname na 1828; *Commissariaat voor de Inlandsche Bevolking* 4: October 27, 1829. In this archive another name for Kofi is also mentioned: Krispijn.
77. ARA-Koloniën 1850-1899, *Gouverneursjournaal Suriname*, March 7, 1887 no. 1307.

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WIM S.M. HOOGBERGEN
Center for Caribbean and Latin American Studies
Utrecht University
3508 TC Utrecht, the Netherlands