

1. Description

1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family: Yalunka, **Dialonke** or **Jallonke**, which literally means "inhabitants of the Jallon (mountains)."

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yalunka_people

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): [ISO 639-3: yal](#)

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): Mali, Guinea, Senegal, Sierra Leone

<http://www.gowestafrica.org/peoplegroups/yalunka/>

West of Faranah, south toward Sierra Leone border, north to Passaya; Balaki Subprefecture, Senegal-Mali border. Also in Mali, Senegal, Sierra Leone.

(http://bblearn.missouri.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_group_id=21&url=%2Fwebapps%2Fblackboard%2Fexecute%2Flauncher%3Ftype%3DCourse%26id%3D7059_1%26url%3D)

1.4 Brief history: The Yalunka are a Mandingo people who were one of the original inhabitants of the Futa Jallon (or Fouta Djallon), a mountainous region in West Africa. It is the source of the headwaters of the Gambia, Niger, and Senegal Rivers. The Yalunka are also known as the Dialonke or Jallonke, which literally means "inhabitants of the Jallon (mountains)." In the eighteenth century, many of the Yalunka were dispersed from the Futa Jallon by the Fulani, another vast people group in the region. Today, the Yalunka are concentrated mostly in the country of Guinea. Some also live in Senegal, southwestern Mali, and northeastern Sierra Leone. Their language, also called Yalunka, belongs to the Mandingo branch of the Niger-Congo language family. Yalunka is easily understood by those who speak Soso, another Manding language. In fact, the Yalunka often refer to themselves as Soso, and some scholars see the two as one group. The Yalunka region has tall grass with a few trees and some bush areas. The country is hilly, and most of it is 1,000 to 2,000 feet above sea level.

(<http://www.joshuaproject.net/people-profile.php?peo3=15967&rog3=ML>)

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: In the more recent past the Limba have been increasingly influenced by northern Islamic groups, such as the Mandinka and the Fulani, and Christian missionaries (Ottenberg 1983, 1984). Today there is a prevalence of Mandinka names among Limba ruling families, and it has been suggested that many of the Limba settlements founded during the past 200 years were connected with the arrival of Mandinka settlers (Finnegan 1965, p. 15). Work by Christian missionaries did not begin until the 1940s and has concentrated in a few of the larger settlements. Despite these influences, Islam and Christianity have had comparatively little effect on Limba sociocultural practices.

(http://www.scribd.com/rubéng_35/d/45119817/39-Material-aspects-of-Limba-Yalunka-and-Kuranko-ethnicity) The Yalunka are a proud people who are fiercely holding their own against the Fulbe, a larger people group in their area. <http://www.gowestafrica.org/peoplegroups/yalunka/>

1.6 Ecology (natural environment): The Yalunka prefer to live in large settlements and villages as opposed to small ones. Many of the large settlements have remained in their current locations since the eighteenth century. The Yalunka society is basically patriarchal, which means that the family households are headed by the men. (<http://www.joshuaproject.net/people-profile.php?peo3=15967&rog3=ML>) The Yalunka region has tall grass with a few trees and some bush areas. The country is hilly, and most of it is 1,000 to 2,000 feet above sea level.

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density 55,500 in Guinea (2002 SIL).

Population total all countries:

104,500(http://bblearn.missouri.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=_2_1&url=%2Fwebapps%2Fblackboard%2Fexecute%2Flauncher%3Ftype%3DCourse%26id%3D_7059_1%26url%3D)

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): The Yalunka are primarily subsistence farmers, with rice and millet being their staple crops. Peanuts, sweet potatoes, maize, and beans are also grown.

(<http://www.joshuaproject.net/people-profile.php?peo3=15967&rog3=ML>)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: Chickens, herds of cattle, and flocks of sheep and goats are kept.

(<http://www.joshuaproject.net/people-profile.php?peo3=15967&rog3=ML>)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?: Ronko- A traditional knee-length loose-fitting garment worn by chiefs, blacksmiths, warriors, and secret society officials in certain Sierra Leonean tribes, particularly the Limba, Koranko, and Yalunka. Worn by warriors in battle and said to protect them against both natural and supernatural weapons of war.

(<http://www.wordnik.com/words/ronko>)

2.4 Food storage: Heavy use of Ceramic pots for storage

2.5 Sexual division of production: Among the Yalunka, herding is done by the children. The women milk the cattle, churn the butter, and help the men in some of the agricultural work. Honey is another important commodity among the Yalunka. It is gathered by suspending large water tight baskets in trees. The bees use the baskets as hives. Every year, between four and six gallons of honey may be gathered in each basket. (<http://www.joshuaproject.net/people-profile.php?peo3=15967&rog3=ML>)

2.6 Land tenure: the traditional basis of communal tenure, and despite the apparent similarities with family tenure, communal tenure is still identifiable as a distinct form of tenure under which lands within any given community, as defined above, are claimed by the community as a whole, with some held by members as groups or individually, and with the ultimate title, and overall rights, or supervision and control being vested in the socio political head of the community. (http://books.google.com/books?id=RiIpW6vWVPoC&pg=PA151&lpg=PA151&dq=yalunka+land+tenure&source=bl&ots=d5oXGf2hmx&sig=FVPfMXu_w70GrxmA87LuMpN1QDA&hl=e)

n&sa=X&ei=veyeT5XoN4fWgQf19NmYDg&ved=0CB4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=yalunka%20land%20tenure&f=false

2.7 Ceramics: clay items mainly used for storage

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns: Not enough Information

2.9 Food taboos: Not enough Information

2.10 Canoes/watercraft? Bullom canoes

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f): M 5'5-6'2 F 5'0-5'10 <http://amber-guinea.blogspot.com/>

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f): M 100-112lbs F 80-100lbs <http://amber-guinea.blogspot.com/>

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f): 11

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): M 18, F, 16

4.3 Completed family size (m and f): No info found

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f): no info found

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f): 17

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: divorce is permitted, no proportion number found.

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: **Polygyny** (having multiple wives) is a common practice among the Yalunka.

<http://www.sierraleoneheritage.org/glossary/word.php?id=yalunka>

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?: Animals such as goats and cattle are also very important because they serve as bride-price payments. The animals are given to the girl's family before the marriage takes place. These animals are also valuable as a means of economic exchange, and are used for providing milk. <http://www.joshuaproject.net/people-profile.php?peo3=15967&rog3=ML>

4.9 Inheritance patterns: Inheriting from parents

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict: mothers usually take care of the children throughout the majority of the day. Fathers are called to "bring home the bacon"

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: Same-sex love and sexual intercourse are prosecuted. The death penalty consists for serious crimes such as (international) murder and treason.

http://web.ifarma.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=68&Itemid=48

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy): both can happen, usually its exogamy

4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these “other fathers” recognized? One man

4.14 What is the belief of the mother’s role in procreation exactly? (e.g., “receptacle in which fetus grows”) normal

4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)? no

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape: Not too much info found, but the Yalunka does not constitute rape.

4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin) The Susu and Yalunka both see no problems in cross cousin as a spouse. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/575692/Susu>

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms? No, But the husband can have up to four wives.

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring A household typically consists of a man, his wife or wives, and their unmarried children. The family is the major **social unit** for the Yalunka. Extended households, which consist of two or more married men and their families, may also adjoin the nuclear family, forming an extended family compound. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yalunka_people

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children? Usually the father, if father not there, then family of the children.

4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females 60/40

4.22 Evidence for couvades No

4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older) no info found

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect? Respect for the Susu, It was said that the Susu and the Yalunka were the same tribe at one time.

4.24 Joking relationships? No information found

4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations

4.26 Incest avoidance rules

Kasi. — As among the Yalunka, ritual prohibitions are known as kasi, which suggests (probably erroneously) that they are, or were, associated in the native mind with fines. It is significant that adjacent tribes of different stocks should have adopted this name ; it points to the fact that ritual prohibitions, like satka, are a complex embracing many different elements.

When incest has been committed, Imsh medicines are obtained, and the offenders are washed "to make kasi come out of their heads."

The terminology here, as in the case of sacrifice, suggests that an alien idea has been adopted, but not fully understood or assimilated.

http://www.archive.org/stream/cu31924092510167/cu31924092510167_djvu.txt

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? Yes, similar to a typical American wedding in the sense that the people who attend are people the groom and bride know, family, friends.

4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?
information not found

4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?) Within community

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)? Marriages are arranged According to [Islamic law](#), a man may have up to four wives. However, his first wife has authority over any subsequent wives. The husband has complete control over his wives and is responsible for feeding and clothing them. He also helps the wives' parents when necessary.

<http://www.sierraleoneheritage.org/glossary/word.php?id=yalunka>

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: no information found

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare: Not enough Information Now, In the past though it was around 25%

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death: no information found

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: no information found

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations): Islamic theocratic state in the northwest was established by the Fulas, who often attacked and enslaved nonbelievers among the Yalunka.

Read more: [Sierra Leonean Americans - History, Modern era, The first sierra leoneans in america](http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Pa-Sp/Sierra-Leonean-Americans.html#b#ixzz1tYOYsg9R)
<http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Pa-Sp/Sierra-Leonean-Americans.html#b#ixzz1tYOYsg9R>

4.18 Cannibalism? No

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: Most Yalunka settlements are located in the valleys between the hills. Since the 1950's, many Yalunka have migrated to cities such as Freetown to find wage-paying jobs. In recent times, many Fulani and Mandingo have moved into the Yalunka region, creating a multi-cultural environment.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/people-profile.php?rog3=ML&peo3=15967>

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): same place

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes): chiefs of villages.. Manga Sewa, was a great Yalunka chief in Northern Sierra Leone

5.4 Post marital residence: Usually build their own mud house next to females parents

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): had underground tunnels that would hide their village in case of war.

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex): men usually are with other men, children are usually with their mothers.

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: no info found

5.8 Village and house organization: Most Yalunka settlements are located in the valleys between the hills. Since the 1950's, many Yalunka have migrated to cities such as Freetown to find wage-paying jobs. In recent times, many Fulani and Mandingo have moved into the Yalunka region, creating a multi-cultural environment. <http://www.joshuaproject.net/people-profile.php?rog3=ML&peo3=15967>

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses): no info found

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere? The Yalunka live in round huts that have brick walls and cone-shaped, straw-thatched roofs. Within the village or settlement, the huts are

grouped in compounds around a courtyard and are surrounded by a fence.
<http://www.joshuaproject.net/people-profile.php?peo3=15967&rog3=ML>

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc: No Info found

5.12 Trade: not too much info found, but back in the 1700's they were definitely not fond of the slave trade and they had a high cattle tax

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies? None

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6.0 Time allocation to RCR: yes, 99% of the Yalunka are Islamic and practice it.

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): The Yalunka also believe that witches have the power to change into animals and cause harm to the villagers. Some put curses on victims' houses to ruin their crops. Special rituals are performed by diviners or sorcerers to keep the witches and evil N'iena away from farms and households. <http://www.joshuaproject.net/people-profile.php?peo3=15967&rog3=ML>

6.2 Stimulants: no info found

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): animal sacrifices

6.4 Other rituals: Material aspects of ritual behaviour such as shrines, rock paintings and burial practices can be important indicators of ethnicity. Only a limited amount of information on these practices was collected, but enough is available to indicate their significance, and the data are surveyed here. A variety of devices are used by the Limba, Yalunka and Kuranko to intercede in supernatural events. These may take the form of individual shrines, talismans worn on the body and ritual offerings hung above doorways or, occasionally, buried under the floor.

6.5 Myths (Creation): The Yalunka are nearly all Muslim. Although they follow most of the religious teachings of Islam and observe its rituals and ceremonies, some of their pre-Islamic beliefs still persist. For instance, they continue to believe in N'iena, or "nature spirits," and sacrifices are regularly made to them. Some of the N'iena are said to be good spirits, helping with rice production and fertility in women; others are believed to be evil, living in the bush and stealing children from their parents. <http://www.joshuaproject.net/people-profile.php?peo3=15967&rog3=ML>

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): Checkers, chess, music, drums.

6.7 Sex differences in RCR: no

6.8 Missionary effect: 99% muslim, Christianity hasn't quite reached their culture

6.9 RCR revival: no

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs: Evil human beings or deceased persons who were not correctly helped to "cross over" may return as harmful spirits. Villagers must also contend with a large variety of nature spirits and other "devils." Sierra Leonean American immigrants retain these beliefs to varying degrees. Of the major tribes, the Temnes, the Fulas, and the Susus are largely Muslim. Most Krio are Christians, mainly Anglican or Methodist.

Read more: [Sierra Leonean Americans - History, Modern era, The first sierra leoneans in america](http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Pa-Sp/Sierra-Leonean-Americans.html#b#ixzz1tgmZiLZ4)
<http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Pa-Sp/Sierra-Leonean-Americans.html#b#ixzz1tgmZiLZ4>

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people? no

6.12 Is there teknonymy? no

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.) The Yalunka also believe that witches have the power to change into animals and cause harm to the villagers. Some put curses on victims' houses to ruin their crops. Special rituals are performed by diviners or sorcerers to keep the witches and evil N'iena away from farms and households. (<http://www.joshuaproject.net/people-profile.php?peo3=15967&rog3=ML>)

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint: No

7.2 Piercings: Usually Ears are pierced

7.3 Haircut: short hair (thought this to be interesting)

7.4 Scarification: No information found

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.): necklaces, feathers, women wrap their hair with cloth.

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment: Dress in normal clothes
<http://yalunkaministries.com/yalunkagallery.htm>

7.7 Sex differences in adornment: men typically don't have piercings and have short hair

7.8 Missionary effect: less than 1% are Christians, mainly Islamic culture

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment: no

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system: no info found

8.2 Sororate, levirate: no

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.):

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

<http://yalunkaministries.com/yalunkagallery.htm>

Numbered references

1. (<http://www.joshuaproject.net/people-profile.php?peo3=15967&rog3=ML>)
2. <http://yalunkaministries.com/yalunkagallery.htm>
3. Sierra Leonean Americans - History, Modern era, The first sierra leoneans in america
<http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Pa-Sp/Sierra-Leonean-Americans.html#b#ixzz1tgmZiLZ4>
4. <http://www.sierraleoneheritage.org/glossary/word.php?id=yalunka>
5. http://www.archive.org/stream/cu31924092510167/cu31924092510167_djvu.txt
6. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yalunka_people
7. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/575692/Susu>
8. http://web.ifarma.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=68&Itemid=48
9. <http://amber-guinea.blogspot.com/>
10. http://books.google.com/books?id=RiIpW6vWVPoC&pg=PA151&lpg=PA151&dq=yalunka+land+tenure&source=bl&ots=d5oXGf2hmx&sig=FVPfMXu_w70GrxmA87LuMpN1QDA&hl=en&sa=X&ei=veyeT5XoN4fWgQf19NmYDg&ved=0CB4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=yalunka%20land%20tenure&f=false
11. <http://www.wordnik.com/words/ronko>
12. (http://bblearn.missouri.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=2_1&url=%2Fwebapps%2Fblackboard%2Fexecute%2Flauncher%3Ftype%3DCourse%26id%3D_7059_1%26url%3D)
13. http://www.scribd.com/rubéng_35/d/45119817/39-Material-aspects-of-Limba-Yalunka-and-Kuranko-ethnicity)
14. <http://www.gowestafrika.org/peoplegroups/yalunka/>