

To your eminence JR, the guider of a Prodigal People, holder of the Six Territories, Keeper of the Knowledge and the Watcher of Butterflies.

From his majesty Mansa Sino'otollo, the Shark-Binder, Voice of the Navigators, High King of the Three Fleets, Ruler of the Four Seas, Lord of the Eight Islands, the Starblessed, Good Buddy, Binder of Men, Cleaner of Latrines, First Sword of the Surf, Brine-bound and Iron Willed. May the salt-sea bring his words to you this day, so that you may hear them and tremble.

I thank you for the promptness of your letter, though it saddens me that you show your barbarism and the prodigal nature of your people in every word of your ignorant response. You claim we own slaves - we do not. Would you call a child a slave to his parents? An apprentice a slave to his tutor? A sailor a slave to his captain? No. The mind-bound serve with honour, and earn their way to adulthood and citizenship. My own service as a mind-bound is long behind me, but it taught me the value of good sanitation and to respect my betters - two traits I suggest you acquire with all speed.

We will not alter our ways for you, but we are not faithless or prodigal - we would not practice our magics on honoured ambassadors, nor would we strike down those who have accepted guest-rights. We will continue to send our traders and their *complete* entourages to you, and you may send yours to us. We hope friendship can still bloom between us - tell me of your culture, and your ways. Tell me of these six kingdoms, and of the peoples that reside in your realm. Why have we encountered so few of you? What goods are most desired in your ports? Perhaps if we know more of each other, we can avoid any further insults on either side. But I must repeat that any further attempts to cheat us or insult my people will be treated most harshly.

In salt, moon and stars are my words bound

*Mansa Sino'otollo*

May he rule in glory, until he is replaced by someone better.