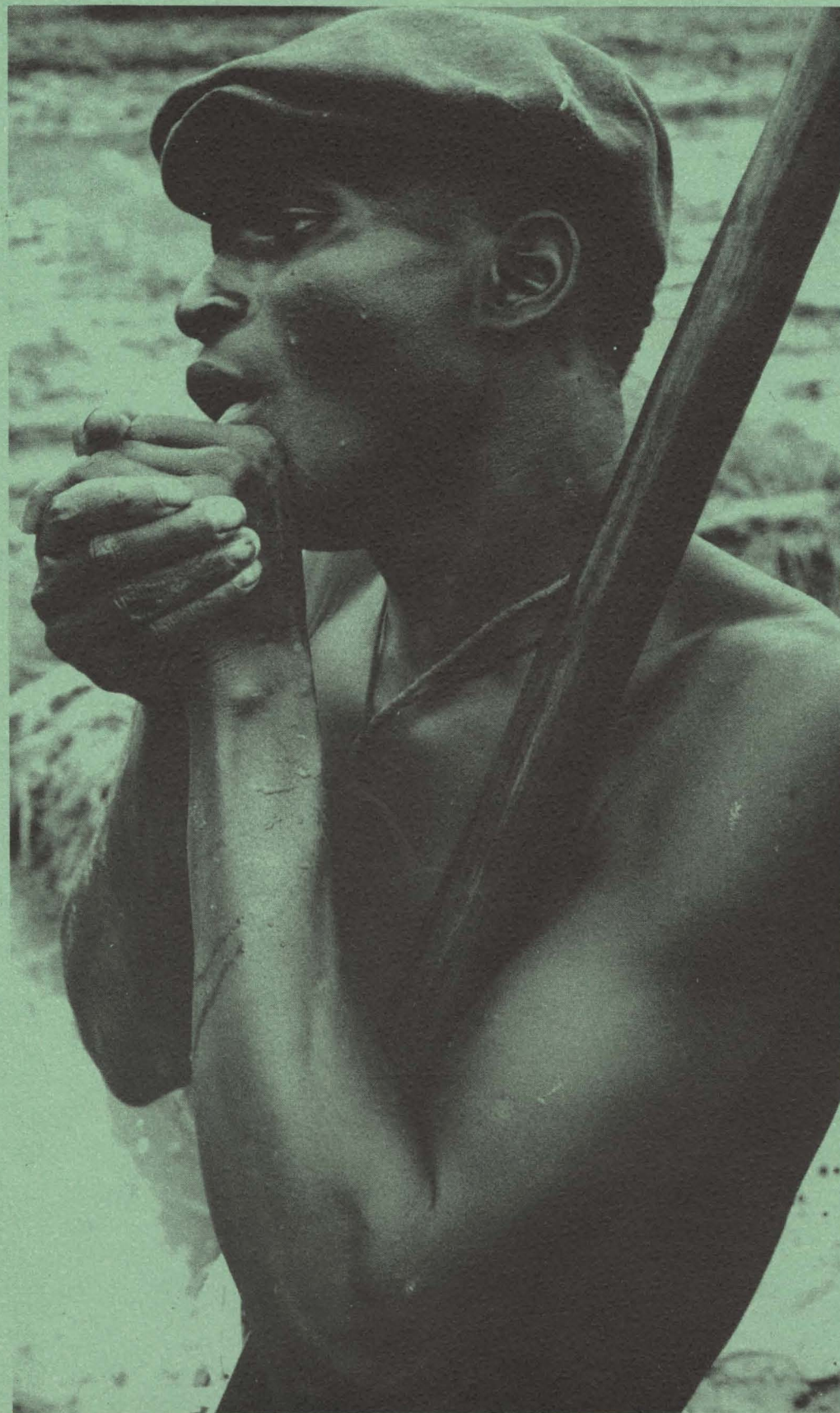


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# THE MUSIC OF THE DIOLA-FOGNY OF THE CASAMANCE, SENEGAL

RECORDED BY J. DAVID SAPIR



FOLKWAYS FE 4323

INDIVIDUAL "PRAISE-SINGING"  
CULTIVATING IN PEANUT FIELDS  
CULTIVATING IN RICE FIELDS  
"BUGUR" - MARRIAGE CELEBRATION  
a) singing  
b) drumming  
c) over-all crowd  
PRE-CIRCUMCISION DANCE CELEBRATION  
PARADE SINGING - CIRCUMCISION FETE (Bitibit)  
PARADE SINGING - AT CIRCUMCISION FETE (Tandiin)  
FUNERAL SINGING (Guimal)  
FUNERAL SINGING (Soutikin)  
FUNERAL SINGING (Nyankiit)

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

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# THE MUSIC OF THE DIOLA-FOGNY OF THE CASAMANCE, SENEGAL

# THE MUSIC OF THE DIOLA - FOGNY OF THE CASAMANCE, SENEGAL

Notes by J. David Sapir\*

## INTRODUCTION\*\*

The Basse-Casamance, an area of some 3,200 square miles, forms the southwestern section of the Republic of Senegal. Bisected from east to west by the Casamance River, it is bounded on the south by the Portuguese Guinea, on the west by the sea, and on the east by the Kalounayes forest and the branch-river of the Sangrougrou. To the north it is separated off from the rest of Senegal by the narrow wedge-shaped British colony of Gambia. To reach the Casamance from Dakar (the capital of Senegal, population 230,000) the Gambia must be crossed by a hazardous eighteen mile drive on the left side of a narrow tarred road that is interrupted in the middle by a fifteen minute ferry-boat ride.

On entering the Casamance, the route becomes a wide dirt road which is, depending on the season, either a sea of mud or a strip of dusty wash-board. The fantastic baobab trees that mark the African savannah have gone and in their place appear the beginnings of thin dry woods. Continuing southward, the woods become thicker and higher taking on the aspect of a semi-tropical forest. The short and thick oil palms, the stately fan palm and the gigantic silk-cotton tree with its buttressed trunk are now the land-markers.

The principal inhabitants, numbering over 150,000, are referred to collectively as the Diola. They have similar customs, speak dialects of the same language, and are subdivided into ten groups of which the Fogny and the Bliss Karone to the north of the Casamance River, and the Diamat and the Floup to the south, are the most important.

Villages are isolated self-sufficient communities scattered along the marigots (inlets) of the river. Aside from the French administration, replaced recently by the Senegalese, there is no political organization more inclusive than a village. These villages are divided up into several quarters, each of which includes four to six compounds. A compound represents an "extended family", that is, an elderly man living with his wives, his unmarried daughters and his sons with their families. Often one or more of the elder's younger brothers will also reside, with their families, in the compound, though usually in a slightly separated section. When such an elder dies there is a rearrangement of the compound, as certain families move out to set up new households elsewhere, either separately or together.

A village, as does each quarter under it, has a chief. His duties, however, have to do more with collecting taxes than with regulating traditional life. Actually, most important issues are decided upon collectively by all the male elders of the community.

Rice cultivation is the traditional economic pursuit of the Diola, a pursuit that long antedates the first contacts, in the late fifteenth century, with the Portuguese. It is tied up closely with their religion, their social organization, and their ideas of wealth and a proper life. Some of the more remote communities grow rice to the near exclusion of everything else. However, through contacts with Islam and the West, new crops have been introduced. Of these, peanuts, the national

cash crop, is far and away the most important. Others include millet, manioc, bananas, beans, and to a small extent corn.

The Diola raise cows, pigs, goats, sheep and chickens. A wealthy man will own from ten to twenty head of cattle, and up to 15 goats and sheep if he is a Moslem, or as many pigs if he is not. None of these animals are ever killed for everyday consumption. They are a sign of wealth and are killed only when a social function demands it. At funerals, and especially at circumcisions, sometimes over three-fourths of the herd can be slaughtered at one time. Even the chickens are saved for small sacrifices or to give as gifts to important visitors.

As craftsmen the Diola are practical and very able. The women weave beautiful baskets and make good sturdy pottery of varied shapes. The men's specialty is house-building. In comparison to the small indifferent houses found amongst the other groups of Senegal the Diola houses are striking. The traditional houses are round, with thick mud walls topped by a well-constructed ceiling made of sticks woven together between heavy beams and insulated by mud. A conical or pyramidal thatched roof, constructed separately, is placed on the house in such a manner as to touch only on a few strategic places. The houses are large, having from four to five, and sometimes as many as fifteen, spacious rooms. Recently, square and rectangular houses, built with mud bricks, have become popular.

The Diola have a concept of one God which is associated with such natural phenomena as the sky and rain. The word emit translates as God, rain or sky depending on the context, though in some areas ata emit is used to specify God alone. Their God is remote and inaccessible, coming but seldom into their thoughts. However, there is a pantheon of supernatural spirits called ukiin (singular: boekin) involved in every aspect of a man's day to day life. For example, there are ukiin for the protection of the family, the compound, and the village; there are others for the welfare of the rice crops; another prevents conversion to Islam and Christianity, and still others control specific diseases. They are represented externally by sacred places, such as a special room, a well-swept corner of a courtyard, a tree, a section of a forest, or a small hut located apart from the quarter. They are also represented by fetishes, that is, ordinary objects like forked sticks, overturned pots, and chicken feathers that have been magically invested with power. All the ukiin "belong" to specific individuals or families and are controlled and propitiated through sacrifice and libations.

Due to Christianity, and even more to Islam, this traditional religion has, over the last forty years, been

\* The material presented on this record was collected while I was doing linguistic field-work among the Diola-Fogny in the period from October 1960 to December 1961. My work was supported by the West African Languages Survey and was sponsored, in Senegal, by the Institut Français d'Afrique Noire. I would like to thank these two institutions for their generous aid.

I would also like to express my thanks to Olga F. Linares for her valuable help in the writing up of these notes and in the selection of the tapes and photographs. Similarly I am indebted to Nicholas England for his advice on musical terminology and description.

\*\* All of the figures and much of the ethnographic information have been drawn from L-V Thomas' extensive study: Les Diola, Memoires de l'Institut Français d'Afrique Noire, No. 55, Dakar, 1958-9.

dying out. Although there are many isolated communities, especially south of the Casamance River, that have had only a few converts, there are groups like the Fogny that are today over 85% Moslem. The figures for religious distribution for the over-all population run approximately 50% Moslem, 30% Fetishist, and 20% Christian.

#### The Music

For the Diola, as for most Africans, music is very much a part of daily life. At every type of social gathering, from a wrestling match to a Fetishist funeral, there is appropriate singing and drumming. Communal work, such as the cultivation of peanuts and rice by the men and the harvesting of rice by the women, also calls for a song. And finally, for sheer amusement, a person may sing to himself as he works.

There are no restrictions on who may sing or compose. Anyone who wants to sing does so, and anyone with a good ear and imagination composes. In each region those who excel at making up songs are continually requested to put their talents to use. They oblige for a small fee, retiring to special places, usually associated with a particular fetish, for inspiration.

The musician on this record comes from the largest Diola group, the Fogny, who are located to the north of the Casamance River in the area surrounding the town of Bignona. Of all the Diola the Fogny have had the most contact with the outside world. They have been influenced by their northern neighbors, the Moslem Manding, who are an offshoot of the Malinke, and by the French. From the Manding the Fogny have received Islam and, in varying degrees, new social forms and methods of agriculture. In the western part of their region they have merely been converted to Islam, while in the interior the influence has been much more inclusive. Here the Diola are all bilingual, cultivate with the Manding hoe rather than with their traditional long handled shovel (see below), and have begun to tolerate such foreign types of social organization as cousin marriage. In some towns, peanuts and millet have become so important that rice growing has been relegated to the women.

Frequent contacts with the French and with French educated Africans have made the Fogny the most 'modern' of all the Diola. They are vitally interested in national politics, in education, and in social progress.

Fogny music has a strong foreign quality to it; a quality particularly sensed in harmonic and melodic patterns that show parallels to Malinke, Western and Arabic music. The Fogny also have a style of extemporaneous singing derived from Manding sources. This is a fine example of what anthropologists call acculturation: the development of a new form out of the interplay of two independent traditions.

One tradition is Diola singing. The other tradition is that of the praise-singer (called griot by the French), an institution of hereditary troubadours common amongst Islamized West Africans. The Manding, for one, have had praise-singers for centuries. These singers either attach themselves to particular men of influence, such as powerful Moslem "marabouts" (religious leaders) and wealthy merchants, or travel independently from town to town singing at marriages and other fetes. Those who travel spread news, gossip, and sing the praises of their many patrons throughout a wide area. Singing with the accompaniment of a twenty-stringed instrument called a kora, they perform compositions of their own, making up the words as they go along. They extemporize with ease, using a huge wealth of stock phrases and metaphors that are combined and recombined in an infinite number of ways.

The Fogny have not taken over the institution of praise-singers; that is, there are no families or individuals who make their living solely by singing for other people. Instead, it is the idea of extemporaneous singing that they have incorporated into their music. The people who sing, the occasion when they sing, and the subject matter of their songs remain true to Diola tradition.

#### SIDE 1, Band 1.

This "incidental music" shows very clearly the basic pattern of extemporaneous singing. One day Bakari Badji (cover and fig. 4) burst into my room singing what is recorded here. A delightful bon vivant, Bakari not only knew more folk-tales than anyone else in the quarter, but also was a great dancer, a wrestler and an excellent singer. As such men usually are, he was always penniless. A translation of the first few verses follows:

A certain man (who is) Dauda Badji Basen, call him.

(The Diola verb ewonk is translated as to call (The French translation was appeler). In these songs it has the meaning more of to bring to mind or to recall).

Mariyama Jeju Bure, call her, as they say "we (all) go". Good woman

(He refers to her as "one of us" and does so by using the first person plural inclusive: we all as opposed to we, but not you (exclusive)

#### Refrain:

God has given them Balinyam (a village)

(When sung with a group, as in peanut cultivation, this section is taken up by the chorus)

Mariyama Jeju Bure call her with Dauda the mediator (who is) the bull.

(A mediator is someone who settles quarrels and arranges marriages etc. and is thus someone who is respected. To call someone a bull is to imply that he is strong and brave.)

She (Mariyama) cooks leftovers at the bottom of the pot so they raise to the top. Then she serves.

(She makes left-over food taste as if it had been freshly cooked).

#### Refrain:

Call Afuru with Dauda. Call (with Dauda) Alasan Badji Basen, the mediator. Call him with Mariyama Jeju Bure. Good woman, etc.

There is a tremendous amount of repetition in the words. However, it is just this repetition that allows the singer to go on indefinitely, fitting in new people and compliments as they come to mind. As will be seen, the other forms of extemporaneous singing are much more complicated, especially the buyangsan (Side II, bands 4-6).

#### SIDE 1, Band 2.

A Diola usually works his peanut fields by himself or with the aid of a brother or son. But there are certain times when the men of a village quarter work in common cultivating the fields of an elder or earning, for the entire quarter, either money or cattle. Singing is always a part of such communal cultivation.

A field that has been cleared of trees and brush is prepared for final planting in two steps. For the first step, kawanjer (fig. 1), the grass and weeds that have grown on the ridges of a previous year's cultivation are turned over into the old furrows. For the second, eriip (figs. 2 and 3), what is then left of the old ridges is dug up, with the dirt being piled on top of the just turned-over grass. New ridges thus take the place of old furrows.

The Diola cultivate with a long-handled shovel-like

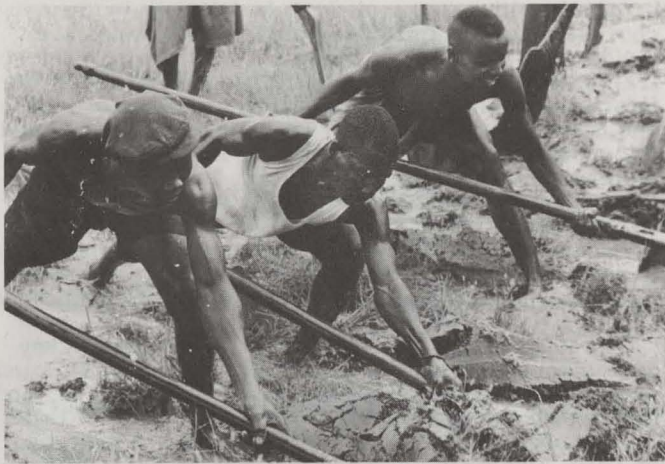


FIGURE 1

tool called a kajando. During the kawanjer, the kajando is held close to the body and almost parallel to the ground. It is pushed the length of the ridge, turning over the grass and weeds, first to the left, then to the right. The shovel end of the tool is never lifted off the ground. For the digging step, eriip, the kajando is held at a 30° angle. In order to facilitate lifting the dirt, and to allow one to work without bending over, the knee is used as a fulcrum.

There is no singing during the kawanjer. One works as quickly as possible, either by himself or in the company of one or two others. Sometimes several youths will race with each other to see who can clear a certain space of ground faster. When the whole field is prepared for digging all the men line-up in a row, sometimes as many as fifty together. It is at this time that the men sing, all together and in rhythm to the digging, interjecting shouts of encouragement and blasts from European-made whistles. The older men, because of their age, dig separately, usually in groups of three or four. They work steadily and in rhythm but do not sing.

While an elder's fields are being dug, the women of the quarter follow behind the cultivators to do the planting. With a stick or with their thumbs they plant the ridges, seed by seed (fig. 3). Clustered together they work, talking without cease.

At an opportune time several women return to their compound to fetch refreshments, a drink made of slightly fermented millet called bunkai, which has been prepared by the elder's sons under his direction. When the bunkai arrives all work stops and everyone, including assorted children, gather to drink from calabash cups and empty tin cans that are passed from mouth to mouth.

The women of the quarter do not accompany the men when they work for hire. The planting is done by the employer's women kin. Instead of bunkai the workers



FIGURE 3

receive from their host a sumptuous meal including quantities of mutton or goat meat killed especially for the occasion.

The singing is of the extemporaneous pattern and is almost identical to the 'incidental' singing of band 1. A few interesting verses are as follows:

1. In this verse both Balamang and Paam refer to a girl who had just married and moved far away to another village in order to join her husband. She was unhappy and left only reluctantly. Her family and friends were sad to see her go. Bakari Badji is the singer here:

Sing for me straight.  
Aisetu Juje Bure,  
call her.

(Sing the chorus for me clearly, i. e., he bids his comrades to sing well.)

Balamang, death kills  
her and leaves slaves.

(A stock phrase meaning that if anything happens to Balamang her friends will be 'slaves to their misery'.)

(Chorus: Sing the  
Laila for Aisetu  
Kombe.)

(The Laila are Moslem religious songs.)

Paam, small sister,  
her liver eats (her).

('The liver eats' is a very common expression meaning that a person is either angry or sad.)

She leaves by the  
back way.

(She leaves unhappily.)

2. Another verse sung by Bakari:

Someone else also  
(who is) the small  
sister; speak to me.

(He is probably referring to Paam).

The difficult one; his  
friends gossip about  
him without seeing  
him.

(His friends gossip behind his back).

(Chorus)  
Paam, the small  
man.

(Diola has no gender and thus such a comparison does not sound absurd. It implies that Paam is strong.)

The eyes (Paam's)  
are red (and) she  
sees like a fish.

(Red eyes refer to anger and to bravery. Someone who angers quickly would make a good warrior. There is a similar phrase that appears frequently in the buyangsan complimenting a person for having red eyes without drinking honey-wine, i. e. without being drunk. Fish have red eyes).



FIGURE 4

3. A third verse:

Jeju Bure, you run  
to Sueule.

(That is: Jeju Bure lives in  
the town of Sueule.)

We call Jombolang.  
We live (with him).  
He, the bull, steals.  
He finishes and says  
he is thin.

(Jombolang was a well-known  
cattle thief. We live with  
him because our herds would  
then be safe and we would  
also have lots of meat to eat.  
When Jombolang eats what  
he has stolen he is still thin  
and thus must steal some  
more.)

SIDE 1, Band 3.

The Diola never cultivate rice-fields communally for hire but only in order to fulfill kin obligations. This, and the fact that the work is much heavier and calls for tremendous strength are the only differences between communal rice and peanut farming. Otherwise the social context and the manner of work are identical.

The songs, however, are different. Instead of extemporaneous singing the workers group into two antiphonal choruses to sing songs with set words. A song is repeated over and over again until someone



FIGURE 5

breaks in with a new melody to be taken up by the two choruses (see the third example). Their songs are divided into a verse and a non-verbal refrain. The refrain consists of two phrases or, as in the case of the first song on the band, of a phrase and a 'shout'. If one notes the sections are r (refrain and v (verse) and the choruses as A and B the result is the following pattern which does not vary: I: Av / II: Br Ar (or, Br A-shout) / III: Bv / IV: Ar Br (or, Ar B-shout) / I: Av / etc.

Occasionally a worker like Bakari Badji stops digging to whistle through his hands (cover and fig. 4). When this happens others immediately join in with exuberant shouts.

The songs of rice cultivation are called eling. They are performed, instead of the buyangsan (Side II, bands 4-6), at Fetishist funerals in many Fogny villages, and are likewise sung at wrestling matches. One of these latter songs has the refrain cha cha cha; a sure sign of Latin American influence fostered by Radio Dakar!

A translation of the three songs recorded here is as follows:

1. People say that Bose takes it easy. If he takes it easy and sends cultivators, they won't cultivate. (Only a rich man or an elder can 'send the cultivators', i. e., have someone work his fields. Bose, a young married man, was in no such position.)
2. People say that a (dead) child is here (buried here). I do not know if he was killed by death or by a curse. (According to the Diola, a man can die naturally or by witchcraft. It can be assumed that the child died of a curse, for it is only the old who die naturally.)
3. The strong European. (This refers to me?)

SIDE 1, Band 4.

The bugur is a dance of celebration performed at almost any festivity, be it a marriage, a baptism, a confirmation (for Catholic Diola), an odd moment during a circumcision fete, or simply a time when young people wish to amuse themselves. Men and women dance in a circle marked off by a row of men who sing and by a semi-circle of women who clap with wooden blocks. The drums are always on the men's side. The dance is energetic, involving complicated foot-work that varies with changes in the drum rhythm. With his arms extended out on either side the dancer bends slightly forward at the waist (fig. 5 and 6). A person will dance either alone or with one or more friends at his side or facing him. As someone comes forward and starts to dance, the clapping changes from a steady beat to a fast syncopated rhythm.

Throughout the dance there is a continual exchange of kerchiefs, handkerchiefs and hats between young



FIGURE 6



FIGURE 7

men and women. If a girl admires a young man, she will throw her kerchief at his feet. While he is dancing he will pick it up and either return it immediately if he is not interested, or wait until the girl herself is dancing and in turn throw it at her feet. If he wants to make a rendez-vous with her at a later time, he will keep the kerchief.

The bugur lasts anywhere from an hour or so in the evening to several days. During the dry season when there is little farming to do and there is a marriage to be celebrated, a full moon, and plenty of meat, the dance can go on day and night for two or more days.

In these respects the bugur follows the general pattern of dance celebrations among other ethnic groups in the Senegambia region. However, it is a distinctive enough dance to be immediately recognizable. The outstanding feature is that the battery of three drums is played by one man. He beats with bare hands, never with a stick, striking the edge of the drumskin with the underside of his fingers and the center with his palms. To emphasize the major contours of the rhythm he wears iron rattles on his wrists.

Next to the drums stand the singers: one of several soloists plus a crowd of men for a chorus. They sing the same kinds of extemporaneous songs that are performed while cultivating peanuts or while singing for amusement (bands 1 and 2). At these dances the soloist usually announces who is present, where he is from, and very often just which girl he seems to be paying attention to.

This particular recording was made in Dakar where the Fogny have enclaves of young people seeking their fortunes while escaping parental authority and arduous farm work. The occasion was a marriage and the dance took place on Saturday and Sunday between about three in the afternoon and midnight. Jinkoly Sane, the drummer, played without relief and with only occasional breaks for lemonade and an hour's stop for dinner. He is considered the best drummer of the bugur.

The microphone was first placed with the singers, then with the drums, and finally held, from a balcony, above the crowd. I have given a long excerpt of drumming in order to demonstrate the subtle interweaving of different rhythms. Sane actually uses four drums, instead of the normal three. In the recording this fourth, bass, drum, though initially neglected, becomes increasingly important as Sane elaborates his rhythmical texture.

SIDE 2, Bands 1-3.

Every 15 to 20 years a village celebrates the futamp, a circumcision festival, at which time all eligible boys ranging from 4 to 18 years of age enter into a sacred forest for two or three weeks to undergo, besides circumcision, instruction in manly behavior.

Such a grand festival can be given only in a good year and after much preparation. There has to be food to feed in excess the initiates (kambaja), their kin, and the

thousand-odd guests who come from neighboring villages to stay for the entire celebration. Herds are built up slowly over the years for just this occasion, and when the time comes as many as a hundred head are slaughtered in a matter of a few days. Extra fields of rice and millet are planted in the preceding rainy season. The rice is to serve as the staple food and the millet is to be made into bunkai (a fermented millet drink). Women spend their spare time in the months before the futamp pounding this extra grain. Money, also, is set aside from the sale of several years' peanut crops to buy peanut oil and tomato paste for the meat sauce and to buy sugar with which to sweeten the bunkai.

Besides food, gunpowder, smuggled in from Gambia, is purchased to fire off the home-made muzzle loaders. In addition, the rites of circumcision require palm-wine libations, so Fetishist Diola must be hired to climb and tap the trees. Since nearly all the men in the Fogny region capable of doing this work are Moslems, and hence must have nothing to do with alcohol, all the palm-cultivators are brought in from the south at considerable expense.

About a month before the actual day of entrance into the sacred forest, various quarters in neighboring villages that have kin ties (usually through the mother) with the initiates give a feast in their honor. At such times one or more cows and several goats are killed and the dance of the initiates begins (band 1).

The spectators and dancers form a circle similar to that of the bugur, with the men and the drums off to one side and the women on the other. But this dance of the kambaja is mainly for the men and the initiates and it is a brave girl who will step into the circle and dance to show off in front of her friends. The initiates wear a grass shirt and an imposing straw head-dress crowned with bull's horns and decorated with mirrors and a variety of kerchiefs, feathers and colored ribbons (fig. 7). Their dance is fast and violent. First they run around the inside of the circle at top speed and then they dance in front of the drums. While they dance they shake iron rattles.

The battery consists of a slit-drum, two ordinary drums, and an iron clapper. Each of these instruments is played by one man.

After these dances in neighboring villages, and a short festival at home, the main part of the futamp is celebrated. It starts off a few days before the initiates enter into the forest and ends at the time of entrance itself. Now the huge crowds from throughout the region, and from as far away as Dakar, gather to assist at the ceremonies and to eat quantities of good food. Restraints on "proper" behavior are relaxed during these festive days. Men and women, unmarried or otherwise, enjoy flirting with casual acquaintances. Such flirting, called basang, can lead to marriage or to divorce. It is said that a jealous husband, afraid of losing his wife, will either forbid her to attend the futamp, or will keep a close watch on her if she does. I was emphatically told that if a woman manages during the fete to run away with another man without getting caught, she can take him as her husband.

Parades are the main ceremonial events of the final days (bands 2 and 3). The initiates of each quarter circulate throughout the village together with their friends, male kin, and guests, and followed by their sisters (any girl with the same family name living in the village) and other women.

As the paraders move along they sing songs especially composed for the occasion. One man, often the composer himself, sings the verses while the whole crowd takes up the chorus. The girls mark the rhythm with iron clappers and rattles. The men, exuberant as they move along, dance, shout, blow whistles, sound antelope horns,\* and brandish old Arab swords or any other mean-looking weapon they possess. About a dozen of the men carry their muzzle loaders which, filled with a

\* These horns are blown either transversely or vertically. In both cases the tone is produced by blowing across the embouchure, as with a European flute. The second part of band 2 gives a good example of the transverse position.



FIGURE 8

generous handful of powder packed in with leaves, are fired off one after another with great flourish. The noise is incredible, and the few shots included in this recording can hardly reproduce the effect (fig. 8).

In contrast to the men, the sisters, and often the older women, are downcast, sad and perplexed (figs. 9 and 10). There are tears in their eyes as they sob for their brothers. It was explained to me that they fear for their brothers' welfare, not knowing what is to become of them on entering the forest. To express their grief the girls wear a special costume for several months before the futamp. It consists of a simple cloth worn as a skirt and strings of colored beads slung over either shoulder. (fig. 9).

Groups of paraders will often meet at a predetermined spot to dance, to perform a traditional rite, or to enjoy a mock battle. On the day of entrance all the parade groups meet at a specially prepared path that leads into the sacred forest. This is the climax point of the whole futamp. It is announced throughout the entire region by continual volleys of gun-fire that can be heard in a radius of 10 to 15 miles. One by one the parade groups enter the forest, leaving at the head of the path all women, children, strangers and non-circumcised Diola.



FIGURE 9

After the kambaja have been taken into the forest the visitors slowly disperse to their homes. The village is quiet for the next two or three weeks. Occasionally, gun-fire and drumming are heard from the forest and almost everyday a cow or several goats are slaughtered to feed the initiates and their tutors. The women are apprehensive as they gossip; everyone waits for the coming out (the kapuren).

The final day is announced by volleys of gun-fire and a welcoming feast gets underway for the returning initiates. As they return to their respective quarters they are joyfully greeted by their kin and most especially by their sisters. These closing festivals are short-lived, coming as an anti-climax to the day of entrance. The food supplies are low and the rains are due.

\* \* \* \* \*

Band 2 was recorded in the town of Bitibit and band 3 at the town of Tandiin. Tandiin is in much closer contact with the outside and this is evident in their singing which shows, in its melody and 3/4 rhythm the influence

of Western music. In contrast, the Bitibit singing is more intense and reflects better the proper spirit of the futamp.

A translation of the songs is:

SIDE 2, Band 2.

Ibu Coly has no sisters who will cry for him. <sup>1</sup>

1. To have no sisters is to be in a bad way, for they are your most important kin.

(Chorus). Hit and we will push. <sup>2</sup>

2. Probably: hit the clappers and we will continue on our way.

(Chorus). Coly Cunda is thinking. (Chorus). The sisters people are coming. (Chorus). Catch the orphan and sell him. <sup>3</sup> (Chorus). etc.

3. An orphan who has no kin to protect him is lost. In the old days such people were actually sold into slavery.

SIDE 2, Band 3.

The girl who has no brother, she cries for what reason? (Chorus). Osuman, who has no sisters, takes up the rear (Chorus). You hear the villagers whisper that this year Tandiin is going to circumcise.

(To take up the rear: to be out of luck, to be disregarded).

SIDE 2, Bands 4-6.

When an old Fetishier dies, guns are fired-off and the women who have been attending his last illness begin to cry and wail. Messengers are immediately sent to notify his brothers and his mother's people. From the moment the old man dies to the time of his burial on the next day, kin, on both his mother's and his father's side, as well as "in-laws", and friends, make their way to his compound in order to pay their last respects and to assist at the burial.

Right after death the body is washed, oiled, and dressed by close male relatives of the deceased. It is then placed sitting up on a platform especially constructed for the occasion under the large shade tree where the men sit each day to gossip and relax. The dead man is attended by old women, usually his widows and his sisters, who, dressed in old mourning skirts, distractly brush away the flies. A few yards from the platform the women dance and sing a dirge, called the windikin, accompanying themselves with three drums. All the women, whether related to the deceased or not,





join in the dancing. Some of them, especially the old, get so carried away with grief that they have to be restrained.

Meanwhile the men start preparing the grave underneath the "old man's hut" located in the courtyard. Here, in the middle of the compound, the old man has spent his last years surveying the activity of his family, chatting with visitors, drinking palm-wine with his pals, and guarding the livestock that is tethered nightly to the side of the hut.

The hut has a low roof and no walls. To one side is a bed made of planks, in the center is a fire, and off into one corner are stored the old man's personal and family fetishes. In the space above the ceiling he keeps his personal supply of rice.

An L-shaped grave, a meter and a half deep, is prepared under the eaves of the hut. The shaft, wide at the top, narrows towards the bottom where the section in which the body will be placed is dug at right angles. To assure that the grave is the right size, a grave digger slips inside to try it out.

While messengers are notifying the kin of the death, someone engages the singers of the Buyangsan, non-professionals who have learned the proper technique and who enjoy singing for the reward of a good meal. They come immediately for an all night sing. Two choruses, each with three or four soloists, walk slowly around the old man's hut as they sing. The soloists take turns extemporizing long complicated verses that cover two basic topics. One is the naming of illustrious individuals or groups, and the other is assertions as to whether the death in question was natural or the result of a curse. A singer may just mention a person's name. More likely, however, he elaborates by praising or insulting him with either a few adjectives or a lengthy description of something particular that this man has done. The assertions about death are more stylized, being drawn from a large catalogue of stock metaphors. Singers vary in what they stress. Some will emphasize praises, some insults, and others death. Each one tries to outdo the other, especially in humorous insulting. The chorus, as well as the by-standers, encourage and enjoy this competition.

The singers continue until morning, when they rest and butcher the goats which they eat as payment for their efforts. At the same time the women stop dancing. The body is taken down from its stand, wrapped in a large cloth, and placed on a stretcher to be carried by two men to the mother's village. When the stretcher bearers and the accompanying crowd arrive at this village, they stop before each home and tip the stretcher; the deceased has come to say goodbye for the last time. After a cow, killed by the mother's kin, is distributed among the escorts, the body is brought home to the platform next to the women.

By this time a large crowd has gathered to await the burial. For a Westerner, the atmosphere, a mixture of festivity and of grief, is very strange. The immediate kin are bereaved, with their thoughts on the death and the proper functioning of the funeral. In contrast, the distant kin and the non-relatives enjoy visiting, gossiping, and eating the meat that has been killed for the occasion. They join in, or stand on the side watching, the buyangsan and the windikin.

In the early afternoon, after a rest of several hours, the dead man is once again put on the stretcher, this time to be taken around his village. As he is carried off, the women start their dirge and the singers re-assemble to continue the buyangsan. Soon thereafter, the party with the corpse bursts into the courtyard running past the singers who are walking around the hut. After circling around the yard several times, they place the corpse, amidst shouts and gun-fire, beside the grave. The body is taken off the stretcher and the large cloth covering it is removed.

The actual burial now starts to the beat of a special drum rhythm. The buyangsan changes to a slower and sadder tempo and, at a distance, the women's windikin continues. As the drums begin, two of the grave diggers, with the aid of a crowd of kibitzers, slide the body

feet first into the grave. A shield, made from the wood of a silk-cotton tree, seals the shaft so that no dirt will fall on the dead man's face. Once sealed, there is nothing more to do than to fill in the dirt and burn the stretcher.

\* \* \* \* \*

Band 4 was recorded at Guimal during the burial of a famous singer called Asangator.

Band 5 was recorded in the town of Soutikin. The singing was performed for a famous old cattle thief named Tyityiya. Because Tyityiya was extremely old, some said over ninety, and because he died quite suddenly, the funeral celebration was held a week after his death. It was a real festival; everyone, including the nearest kin, had a good time. Around the hut walked the singers, to one side and under a silk-cotton tree danced the women, and in between, a battery of war drums\* played intermittently. One of Tyityiya's son's wives, dressed up in the clothes of the old robber himself, spent her whole time going through the crowd begging for money and tobacco.

The verse excerpted here was sung by a well-known singer named Aka Jeme. His voice is intense as he boasts of Tyityiya's prowess. The old thief shook himself as does the water buffalo, he was too strong to be killed by anyone save the elephant, his day ended at dawn when the cock crowed, and his wife cooked nothing that had no meat in it!

Band 6 was recorded in the town of Nyankiit, at the funeral of Weinga, one of two brothers who had died within a few hours of the other. This selection, sung during the actual burial, includes the special drumming.

N.B. The buyangsan is sung only in the Fogny region that has been most strongly influenced by the Manding. The Manding, however, do not sing at funerals. According to one elder the buyangsan is an invention of the last forty years. Before then, these Fogny followed the more general pattern of either singing the eling (Side I, band 3), or performing war songs or dances.

Here are three selected texts from the buyangsan:

Example 1: Praise of Osuman Badji (first verse of the second section of band 4)

The central section of this verse refers to a famous quarrel between Osuman Badji, then a chief, and a very powerful man called Jalamang Jeju from the neighboring region of Kalounay. They both had wanted the same position in the local colonial administration. According to this text, Jalamang tried to prevent Badji from appearing at the local court in Bignona for a hearing before the 'commandant de cercle' (district commissioner). He hired a marabout (a Moslem magician and religious leader) to put a hex on Osuman. Although the marabout prepared some drugged Kus-kus (a meal made from millet and the basic Manding food) in the hopes that Osuman would eat it, Badji, as though nothing was wrong, simply greeted the magician, did not eat, and continued on his way to Bignona. On arriving in town, his friends, without fear for his welfare, inquired as to how things were going at home.

The singer makes the comment that to try and drug Osuman was foolish, for it was the people of Kalounay who were the big eaters. Osuman, known as a light eater, had no need for extra food.

The force of Osuman's fearlessness is expressed in his simple response of "hullo" to the magician and his friends' inquiries into the health of his family. According to the Diola, when danger is imminent, the ability to go through the daily formalities of greeting and salutation is a sign of an honest and brave man: a man who has no shame.

My master Malan Sanel<sup>1</sup>.

1. He refers here to the previous singer, an older man, whom he calls "my master" as a sign of respect.

\* The war rhythms are seldom played these days and only at funerals. The battery is the same as that for the initiates' dance: one slit-drum and two regular drums.

Don't shame me by speaking as if you were afraid<sup>2</sup>.

If you are afraid, forgive me please, and take up the chorus<sup>3</sup>.

Tomorrow I'll give you 5 francs worth of honey<sup>4</sup>.

Papa Osuman, the magic gun of Sindian; you will find him (to this day) at Sindian. One day Jalamang, the king<sup>5</sup>, said:

"I want the same thing as Osuman." He (Jalamang) went to a Manding<sup>6</sup> and said:

"Work on Osuman"<sup>7</sup>, (so that) the day after tomorrow he won't be able to go to Bignona for the judgement". He (the Manding) got up and cooked kus-kus in the morning. They served it in a big calabash. As you know, the people of Kalounay who are big eaters are in Bignona eating breakfast. (Osuman said): "So I go." Osuman arrived (at Bignona) in the afternoon. They (Osuman's friends) said: "Old man, Badji Basen (Osuman's family name), how goes it at home?"

Example 2: Insulting the deceased's mother's people (sung at Nyankiit but not included on this record).

The second part of this verse insults the women kin of the deceased's mother who were inadequately represented at the funeral. The burial took place in the middle of the rainy season, but the singer says that when the women arrive the dust will rise as they dance; i. e., it will be long after the rains have ceased.

2. Don't be afraid of what I am going to say.

3. If you are afraid, take up the chorus with the others, i. e., step aside and follow, not lead.

4. A humorous insult.

5. He was not a king, but the term (a Manding word) is often used to indicate a powerful person.

6. He refers here to a marabout. Most such people in the region are Manding and not Diola.

7. That is, put a hex on Osuman.

To fail to attend the funeral of close kin is considered very bad form.

My master<sup>1</sup>, what you say is good. It is the buyangan sung by old men that I look for. That is why you help me.

1. He refers to an old man who had just sung a verse.

We cry for Weinga for the last time. When the good man's (Weinga's) mothers, who have gone to live with the Manding, arrive in order to bury and then to dance, the dust (will rise) in the morning. The vulture sees (this) and smiles.

Example 3: (the second verse of band 6).

This verse is sung by the old man referred to in example 2. The text is extremely obscure and defies explanation. It can be said, however, that the singer makes many terse and unrelated references to past events, people, and places. He uses stock phrases which appear repeatedly in all of the verses he sings. These are marked with an asterisk (\*).

Good man, what you said about cutting the fulanjong bird pleases me<sup>1</sup>. One time you will get up in the night to sing. I will hear and you will return and keep quiet. You eat fish. I say to him: "Good man, do not dance". I go, we (all) return to Kujuku (a village) at the home of Weiyo.

1. He is referring to the remarks of the previous singer.

The liver<sup>2</sup> is not good at Batendeng, Kunnage, and Jilebiro (three villages). Elegnen (a village), they listen to the news.

2. The people of these villages are angry (or sad). He is probably referring to recent deaths.

The lover walks fast in the morning<sup>3</sup>\*. You take his knife, you sheath yourself\*. You stop on the road. The knife dances as do children\*. That is why the spirit is not always content\*.

3. In order not to get caught by his girl's people.



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