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A CULTURAL, ECONOMIC, AND RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF THE BASSE CASAMANCE SINCE 1500

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PREFACE

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I. INTRODUCTION

This book is an historical inquiry about the peoples and cultures of the Lower Casamance region in southwestern Senegal; primarily, however, it is about the Diola. It is the product of ten years research, ten years of seeking to understand another culture. Such a project, half an Odyssey, is almost as much an exercise in self-discovery as an effort to learn about the Casamance. In this respect, the present work follows a long tradition of historical and ethnographic studies about Africa.

Undoubtedly, I have projected many of my own values on the Diola, and my understanding of their culture and its historical development is surely affected by my own cultural bias. But I have tried always to listen to and observe the Diola and their society, to hear the voice of my subject, and to allow the "other" to speak for himself. That speech, as I gradually learned over the past ten years, is not always verbal. It is as much the unspoken language of action — of religious rituals — and the mute but eloquent language of art, which the Diola use to give voice to their most deeply held concepts and feelings about the world and their place in it.

In writing this book I have often felt a tension, or at least a shift in my own position as observer. At times, simple observation and reporting of historical events, of religious practices, of dances, seemed sufficiently important and informative to preclude the need for additional formal analysis. At such times, as for example while I was listening to the old men in Thionk-Esél describe the time before the establishment of French colonial rule, my most important task was simply to record, in order to preserve an almost vanished memory. At other times, particularly when I was observing masked figures, the masks and the dances were like glyphs, elements of a non-verbal language begging to be interpreted, and promising insights into a different but compelling view of the world. Part of this study therefore takes the form of straight narrative, while other parts are more heavily interpretive. Sometimes these two tendencies merge, as in the description of nineteenth century Diola religion, and certainly the use of oral narratives always entails a degree of critical interpretation. Equally, however, to sift through European travel narratives with their strongly distorting view of "primitive" religion, also requires critical interpretation.

Students of African history and culture may find it difficult to categorize this book as "history" or "art history". If this should be the case, I will be pleased. This study is part economic history, part art history, and part history of religion. The common thread is the subject — the peoples of Basse Casamance and their cultures. Each of the above disciplines offers its own particular insights about Casamance society. Each also maintains a more or less distinctive methodology. At times, during the last decade, it seemed I was forced to devote more time to learning these methodologies than to studying the Diola and their neighbors. But there was, if the reader will excuse a pun, method to this madness.
By integrating several methodological approaches, I have been able to understand Casamance history and culture far better than if I had limited myself to any single discipline. Since the aim of this book is precisely to work towards such an understanding, and since "to know" another people means to appreciate them in all their diversity as human beings, the interdisciplinary approach is essential.

While integrating several methodological approaches, I begin by presenting the history of the Basse Casamance since 1500. This date approximately coincides with the earliest European written descriptions of the region. Although Badamkhando had mentioned the Casamance briefly in the 1450s, it was Valentin Fernandez's 1510 report which ushered in the era of more detailed Portuguese and, later, French and English reports about the Casamance and its inhabitants. From the sixteenth century, travellers' reports provide sufficient information to permit the historian to determine the broad outline of political and economic developments in the Bissau-Casamance-Gambia region.

Oral sources are also an important fund of historical information for the Casamance. As is often the case among stateless societies such as the Diola, however, none of the ethnic groups in the Basse Casamance maintains a formal body of oral traditions, nor a class of professional oral historians. Nevertheless, some individuals in each community are particularly interested in their history and are good sources of what might be termed "informal" oral traditions. Such recollections provide detailed information about trade, warfare, and religious practices for the period dating back to about 1860. For pre-nineteenth century history, however, oral sources are quite sketchy, recalling only such centrally important events as migrations and conquest. Since oral history tends to represent as sudden events, processes that may actually have occurred gradually over a long period, these traditions of early conquest have to be viewed with skepticism. Nevertheless, the memory of earlier population movements is, at least, preserved, and can sometimes be checked against early written accounts by Portuguese writers. For more recent history, it is often possible to correlate oral sources with written records, or to compare independent oral accounts of the same event. These methods permit some degree of control for the accuracy of traditions. Yet, even where oral accounts can be shown to present a dubious or clearly distorted version of particular events, they should not be dismissed as simple fabrication. For they preserve, if not our, the Diolas' own perception of their past. To the extent that we seek to understand the Diola, that perception is also important. For a peoples' conception of who they are and how they came to be is part of their reality, and is as relevant to their culture as any "objective" but foreign version of their history.

The initial chapter on early Casamance history is followed by a chapter on Diola masking traditions. The art of the Casamance is an important source of information about local cultures, it is also a vital historical document. The distribution of artistic traditions, particularly those shared by two or more ethnic groups, is an important indication of historical contact among those peoples. For the Basse Casamance, where there exist few written records and only limited oral traditions for the period before about 1850, art can help to reconstruct social and cultural history. For the precolonial period, the diffusion of art forms reflects contact among the different peoples of the Gambia - Casamance - Bissau region. When correlated with written and oral historical sources, this can help to indicate historical migrations and patterns of cultural assimilation. In addition, the widespread appearance throughout the region of common masking traditions substantiates historical evidence of Diola involvement in precolonial long distance trade.

A peoples' art is, however, far more than an historical document. In their artistic creations, the Diola express ideas about themselves, their values, and about life, perhaps more eloquently than they or anyone else could in words. Since masks in the Casamance usually have a ritual function, these works also give voice to religious concepts that may not even be verbalized. Sadly, for the student of West African sculpture, the Diola do not - or no longer - carve any wooden masks. Their southern neighbors, the Manjaks, do carve anthropomorphic shrines, but most of the masks in the Casamance are made of vegetal fibres. Nevertheless, these works do give indication of the aesthetics of their creators. This is also important for anyone who wishes to understand the people, thought, and cultures of the Lower Casamance.

Analysis of works of art leads into the realm of interpretation of culture and ultimately to that culture's fundamental ideas about man's place in the universe and his relation to the transcendent. From art and ritual, one passes almost imperceptibly into a consideration of religion. The third discipline or methodology that I have turned to, then, is the historical study of religion.

Before the mid-nineteenth century, sources about religion in the Lower Casamance are almost non-existent. The few European accounts of local ritual tend to be distorted by a view of African religion as "primitive" and lacking in any recognizable metaphysical foundation. One can, therefore, draw only the most general outline of Casamance religion and ritual for this early period. For the colonial period, both written and oral sources are more abundant. Here, the problem is more one of interpretation. Given the absence of indigenous commentary or of religious texts written in Diola by the Diola, how does one "read" ritual so as to get at the underlying cosmological and ontological concepts?

It is here that I find myself alternately either hopelessly confused or with a sense of being especially close to the people I have chosen to study. If the Diola "speak" about their understanding of the world and of man's place in it, they speak not so much through words as through their rituals and their art. For art, together with the 'res gestae', forms a language for thinking about the inchoate and the transcendent. Through art and ritual, one can best approach an understanding of the religious thought of another, particularly a non-literate culture.

With this knowledge, one can at last proceed to look at religious change and try as well to assess continuities in that sphere. The second part of my investigation of Diola religion concerns the spread of Islam among the northern Diola, those Diola living in Fogny and Buluf, north of the Casamance River. Islamization in Basse Casamance was closely linked to social and economic changes which occurred between 1890 and World War Two and which were, to a large extent,
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direct or indirect products of colonialism. To detail these changes and show how they influenced the spread of the Muslim religion is the aim of the penultimate chapter.

In the concluding chapter, by building upon the earlier analysis of Diola religion, I look at the effects of Islamization on the ontological foundation of Diola culture. Islam has had a profound impact on the northern Diola, as is clear to anyone who has visited the non-Muslim zone south of the Casamance River and has then spent time in the Muslim communities of Buluf. But even such evident changes in religious orientation, in prayer ritual, and in social customs need not totally transform a culture.

By looking at specific ceremonies in contemporary Buluf -- a rain ceremony, an anti-witchcraft masked dance, and the men's initiation ceremony -- one can assess the impact of Islam on the Diola-Buluf sense of identity, on their understanding of their relation to the invisible world, and on the ceremonial center of their universe. The results suggest that, despite the often considerable changes brought about by Islam, the Diola of Buluf have retained, and perhaps even strengthened, their sense of distinctive identity, while preserving important elements of the ethical and metaphysical foundations of their universe.

The area covered by this study, the Basse Casamance, extends from the southern border of the Gambia south across the lower reaches of the Casamance River and to the northern limit of Guiné-Bissau. From the Atlantic in the west, the Lower Casamance extends eastward to the juncture of the Soungrougrou River and the north bank of the Casamance River. This marks the approximate limit of the meandering tidal waterways or marigots which are a characteristic topographic feature of the Lower Casamance.

These mangrove-lined marigots are ecologically vital for the inhabitants of the Lower Casamance. It is these tidal wetlands, reclaimed from the saltwater by systems of dikes, which provide the most fertile land for the cultivation of wet rice, the staple crop of the region. In central Buluf and in northern Combo and Fogny, these lowlands give way to low plateaux, about thirty meters in elevation. Formerly, the uplands were heavily forested and were a source of both palm oil and wild rubber. Between 1910 and 1930, however, the extension of groundnut cultivation caused the destruction of much of this forest. Today, these plateaux are covered by peanut fields, by second growth forests that are gradually reclaiming abandoned groundnut fields, and by scattered virgin woodlands. To the east, near the Soungrougrou, and in the north approaching the Gambian border, the land rises and the tidal streams grow fewer. The adjacent lands, particularly to the east in the Middle Casamance, are better suited to groundnut and millet farming than to rice. To the south however, in northern Bissau, the topography remains much the same as in Basse Casamance. The Lower Casamance, in fact, forms the northern limit of a geographical zone well-suited to rice farming, that extends far south along the Atlantic coast.

These ecological features are a determinant factor in the economy and agriculture of the peoples who inhabit the Lower Casamance and the adjacent areas of
coastal Bissau. The different groups all maintain similar agricultural techniques. In addition, at least since the eighteenth century, all of these societies, with the partial exception of the Manjak-Papel, have been stateless. In broad outline, the different groups have similar social and religious structures. Linguistically, too, there are similarities between the Diola language and that of their immediate neighbors to the south, the Manjaks. It is quite possible that the different peoples of this Casamance-Bissau cultural region have a common origin.

The Diola are the largest and the dominant ethnic group in the Basse Casamance. They number between 200,000 and 250,0001 plus a few thousand who live in northern Bissau. It should be stressed that the Diola are not related to the Ayula, or juula, Manding-speaking long distance traders of West Africa. The similarity in terms, although confusing, is fortuitous.

The Diola comprise several sub-groups, each of which has its own dialect and shows distinctive variations in rituals and in social organization. The different dialects are not all mutually comprehensible. In fact, the sense of Diola ethnic identity is a product of the colonial period. Only as a result of extensive contact with other peoples have the members of these sub-groups come to think of themselves as "the Diola".

The Diolas' distinctive version of wet rice agriculture was established before the sixteenth century and may date as far back as the first millennium A.D.2 Valentim Fernandes mentioned Diola rice farming techniques in 1510.3 Wet rice is grown on low-lying land, much of which has been reclaimed from the marigots that crisscross the region. Using a long-handled hoeing and digging tool with a slightly curved wooden blade tipped with iron, the kayendo, Diola men construct a series of earthen dikes around their fields. The newly cleared land lies fallow for several years while rain leeches salt from the soil, to be drained off through hollow logs that are placed transversely across the ditches. Once the new fields are ready for planting, the drains are closed. The dikes then keep the transplanted rice plants under water during the rainy season.4

Men and women share in the hard labor of rice farming. When the rains approach in June, the men prepare the fields by turning the soil. In August, after the fields have been inundated, women transplant the seedlings from the nurseries. Depending on the variety, rice matures in from ninety to 120 days, during which time the men weed the fields and care for the dikes. From late November until January the women then harvest the grain. The dry season is devoted to other activities such as fishing, hunting, building houses, or seeking seasonal employment in the cities. In recent decades the urban migration of almost all young people has cut into the labor force, since many youths now fail to return to Casamance for the planting season. This has significantly hurt Diola rice production.

Scattered among and now partially assimilated by the Diola, live the Bagnun (Bainunk, Banhun) who, until the nineteenth century, were more numerous than they are today. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries they played a vital commercial role throughout the Lower Casamance, as long distance traders.

Until the mid-nineteenth century, the people now known as "Diola" had no single word by which to identify themselves. From the late fifteenth century the term "Floup" or "Felupe" was applied by the Portuguese, primarily to the people south of the mouth of the Casamance River, but also in a generic sense to refer to all the Diola. "Felupe" may have derived from elup, the Diola word meaning "house".5 "Diola", apparently of Wolof origin, came into use during the middle third of the nineteenth century.6

Diola society is composed of shallow patrilineal groups. In precolonial society, all of the male members of this extended family, usually three generations, along with their wives and unmarried children inhabited a single compound or fank. The fank — fank in Kasa dialect — consisted of a series of dwellings, one for each adult male and his immediate family. In Kasa and Buluf, these dwellings were usually interconnected, so as to form a sort of protective fortification. In 1850, Bertrand-Bocandé described the physical layout of Thionk-Essil:

Chaque habitant batit sa demeure isolément pour lui et sa famille, au milieu de son champ, sur des terrains élevés au dessus des terrains cultivés en r premiere des marigots... Une habitation se compose de diverses cases en terre en forme de petites tourelles, sans fenêtre au dehors, plus ou moins nombreuses suivant la richesse et la famille qui l'habite: ces tourelles couvertes d'un toit de chaume sont réunies entrelles par des murs également en terre... Ces diverses constructions sont encore ceintes au moins en partie d'une palissade; elles paraissent à l'extérieur de petites forteresses avec leurs tours et leur courines.7

In Kasa, the housing compound often took the distinctive shape of an impluvium house.8 Whatever its physical shape, however, the fank constituted the basic unit of Diola social organization. It was the unit of agricultural production and, often, the smallest unit to be associated with a specific religious shrine.9

Within the fank, or extended family compound, patriarchal authority was strong. Hequard, in 1850 wrote of the Diola-Fogny that male offspring were

1 Pélissier 1966:645 estimates the Diola population at 200,000. Thomas 1958 had suggested a population of 156,000.
2 Linares 1971:43.
3 Fernandes 1951.
4 On Casamance wet rice agriculture see Lauer 1969.
5 One can readily imagine a scenario in which, in response to a Portuguese question, "Who lives here?" some local person would have gestured with his arm and replied "elup un-". "This is my house." A similar misunderstanding in the nineteenth century led one village to appear on French maps as "esuk ejak", literally "the good village".
6 Hequard 1852.
7 Archives Nationales du Sénégal (ANS) 1G 23, "Rapport de M. Bertrand Bocandé, résident de Carabane, sur un voyage au pays de Kion", 10 April 1850.
8 See Thomas, 1958:1 239ff. The impluvium house, as Thomas notes, was formerly widespread in Basse Casamance.
9 Ibid.
Surrounded on all sides except the east by mangrove swamp and tidal waterways, oral sources for the late nineteenth and twentieth century permit a more detailed study, in order better to explain the dynamics of cultural change in a limited area. In addition, the role of ritual leaders, invariably called “kings” by European observers, shows startling similarities. Among the Diola of Kasa and western Buluf, the ritual leader of the village rain shrine, the oeyi, was distinguished from the rest of the population by specific regalia. These insignia consisted of a red cap and a staff of office. Precisely the same implements were found among the Papels, in the seventeenth century. In 1696 the Portuguese priest D. Vitoriano Portuense noted that the recently deceased “king” of the Papels had maintained as symbols of office:

- o barrete vermelho na cabeça, uma têmê de ferro no ombro e outro instrumento de ferro como formão de carpinteiro na mão direita.

The study, while it covers the entire Lower Casamance, focuses on the northern Diola. For the colonial period the primary focus is narrower, upon the Diola of Buluf. This is because the more plentiful written documents and more complete oral sources for the late nineteenth and twentieth century permit a more detailed study of socioeconomic and cultural change in a limited area. In addition, the more general history of Islam and colonialism in the Casamance has been quite adequately covered by Frances Anne Leary and Christian Roche and there is need for a more restricted case study, in order better to explain the dynamics of cultural change and continuity.

Buluf, part of the Muslim zone, is located west of the former French administrative center of Bignona, north of the Casamance River, and east of the Diouloumarigot. To the north, Buluf is separated from Combo by the Baila estuary. Surrounded on all sides except the east by mangrove swamp and tidal waterways, Buluf, over the last 400 years, has developed elements of a distinctive culture. Yet its isolation was never total and it remained in almost continuous contact with surrounding areas, through trade and the immigration of Diola from south of the Casamance River.

The changes which Buluf society has experienced since the turn of the century are substantial. Today, over ninety percent of the population is Muslim and most of the indigenous religious shrines have either disappeared or "gone underground". Nevertheless, the visitor comes away with the profound impression that the people of Buluf have preserved their sense of self. They have not lost their centeredness, nor been swept into an homogenized, urban, postcolonial society — although increased urban migration, exacerbated by the continuing drought, threatens just such a change among members of the younger generation. Perhaps some of the reasons why the Diola have, to date, been successful in this respect will become clear from the concluding chapters of this study.

It remains to place the Diola in the broader perspective of their relation to neighboring peoples. Such comparison shows very strong cultural similarities. In general, both Maujjak and Bagnun shrines and ritual offerings resemble Diola shrines. In addition, the role of ritual leaders, invariably called “kings” by European observers, shows startling similarities.

Among the Diola of Kasa and western Buluf, the ritual leader of the village rain shrine, the oeyi, was distinguished from the rest of the population by specific regalia. These insignia consisted of a red cap and a staff of office. Precisely the same implements were found among the Papels, in the seventeenth century. In 1696 the Portuguese priest D. Vitoriano Portuense noted that the recently deceased “king” of the Papels had maintained as symbols of office:

10 Archives Nationales, Section Colonies, Fonds Spécial 185 Mi (bobine 11) 61, rapport de M. Hecquard, 25 août 1850.

12 Some Buluf informants claim “Buluf” comes from the world “elief”, the handle of the keyendo. “Djougoutes” probably comes from Djougoutemano or Djigoudi, a small village in west central Buluf.
13 “A red bonet on his head, an iron staff on his shoulder, and another instrument of iron similar to woodwork, in his right hand.” Portuense, quoted in Teixeira da Mota 1977:25.
14 Alvares d’Almada wrote, “É cousa de antiquidade e como insignia do estado daquele imperio.” Already in 1616 it was made of iron, Teixeira da Mota 1977:60.
While no systematic linguistic comparison of Manjak and Diola has ever been undertaken, even a brief perusal points to significant ties between Diola and Manjak. Such central agricultural words as “rice”, “to farm”, and “hoe” are nearly identical. Shared words include the terms for “man”, “woman”, “mouth”, “husband”, and “parents”. In addition, there are obvious grammatical similarities, such as the use of identical noun class markers (a-/b-) for persons.

At the very least, these likenesses support the historical links between Manjaks and Diolas that are suggested by shared social and religious institutions. A detailed linguistic comparison would seem to be in order. According to Carreira, some Manjak lineages claim to be descended from the Diola. A study of the two languages might well be able to substantiate this claim of common origins.

I conclude this introduction with a word about the thematic organization of the study. The interweaving of three themes: socio-economic history, art, and religion, presents a difficult organizational problem. The aim was to organize these topics so as to convey some feeling for change over time, yet to avoid the disjointed treatment of each theme that a strictly chronological approach would have entailed. Accordingly, I have chosen, within a generally chronological format, to develop the artistic study in its entirety. Although this interrupts the historical narrative, the art historical material is itself vital to the reconstruction of the precolonial history of the Casamance. I hope that the reader will bear with me. I hope too that, by the concluding chapter, each of the three themes will have become clear, not only as a discrete topic, but also as part of the complex fabric of Basse Casamance history and society.

II. THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES

By the sixteenth century, the Lower Casamance was inhabited predominantly by peoples who can be identified with the present linguistic groups in the region. The Casamance was, however, the scene of continually shifting patterns of migration and of both regional and long distance trade along established networks. The specific areas inhabited by the Bagnuns and by the various Diola groups have changed substantially during the past four centuries. Written and oral sources further suggest that members of the different groups have frequently been assimilated into neighboring populations, so that the ancestry of present-day ethnic groups is quite mixed.

In addition to the cultural borrowings that resulted from commercial contact, more dramatic cultural transformations occurred as a result of conquest. This was particularly true during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a time of frequent warfare in the Casamance. The fighting disrupted trade networks; it also caused dramatic population shifts as, during the eighteenth century, the Diola and, shortly before 1840 the Mandinka supplanted the Bagnun inhabitants of Fogny and the region around the Soungougrou River.

The process of population change was not, however, confined to warfare and conquest. Cultural transformation in the Casamance has long been a far more complex process than simply successive waves of conquerors replacing earlier inhabitants. For as each succeeding group moved into an area and achieved a position of cultural dominance, it incorporated members of the earlier group by means of marriage, adoption, and assimilation.

The history of the Casamance before the nineteenth century can be written only in broad outline. From the few available published sources, together with oral histories, it is possible to delineate major population movements and to discern patterns of long-distance commerce. The closely associated questions of ethnic assimilation, cultural and linguistic change are, however, less accessible. Conclusions about these historical processes are necessarily more problematic. They are, nevertheless, essential to an understanding of the long and close connections among the different peoples of the Casamance — Cacheu region. The task of the Casamance historian is complicated by the necessity not only to discover which groups lived where and when, but also to establish criteria whereby these groups may be distinguished from one another, even at an early date when “ethnic groups” may not have existed in presently recognizable form.

1 In broad outline my view of precolonial Lower Casamance history accords with Halt’s assessment that the ethnolinguistic groups in the region have exhibited continuity for four or five hundred years. See Halt 1967:247.

2 On early Bagnun trade networks see Brooks 1980a and 1980b.

3 The terms “Mandinka” and “Manding” are used here to refer to the westernmost members of the extensive and varied Manding linguistic and cultural grouping.
The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries

Cadamosto in about 1456 briefly mentioned the Casamance, but it was Valentin Fernandes, in 1510, whose published account provided the earliest detailed information about the peoples of the region. Fernandes described the Manding king, “Casa Mansa”, from whose title derives the word Casamance. This Mansa ruled over a mixture of Manding to the east. Falupas or Falup os — that is, Diola — and, along the Soungrougrou River, Balantes. The region carried on a substantial trade with the Portuguese.

Fernandes mentions rice farming and cattle, both of which were already important to the local economy. South of the Casamance River lived more Diola:

a people called Falupos. This land is very rich in all provisions, like that of the Balantes and they dress, pray, and eat like them.  

Fernandes does not describe “Falup” customs in great detail, probably because he viewed the Diola, who were far less involved in trade than were the Bagnuns, with a combination of respect and wariness:

The Falupos are great warriors and are very much feared by all of their neighbors. They possess very large pirogues, made entirely of a single piece of wood, so large that 50 to 60 men can row in them.²

Using similar war canoes, the Diola of Thionk-Essil in Buluf would maintain their reputation as fearsome pirates until the 1860s.

Further south, in the vicinity of the Rio Cacheu, also known as San Domingos, lived Bagnuns. From Fernandes’ description, they clearly occupied a much larger area and were undoubtedly more numerous than they are today. Their gradual displacement by the Diola and Manding north of the Casamance River, and by the Balantes south of the river, is well-documented in later European sources.

The Bagnuns were traders, whom Fernandes found to be:

very friendly and truly talented at sales in the fairs [markets], and they travel to many areas where fairs are held and, in like manner, people come to this region and its fairs, from other areas.³

Besides importing cotton from the Portuguese in exchange for finished pagnes, the Bagnuns held large markets every eight days, which attracted thousands of people from as far as fifteen leagues away. They also travelled to other periodic markets throughout the Cacheu-Casamance region. Thus, there existed a network of regional markets in which the Bagnun played an important role.⁴

Fernandes, who pays scant attention to the Diola except to expatiate on the cruelty of the “Mansa Falup”, ignores their religious practices. He does, however, describe Bagnun shrines and sacrifices. It is interesting to compare this passage with the image that emerges in later years of Diola rituals. While not identical, the two forms of ritual sacrifice show strong similarities that must, even in the sixteenth century, have characterized the different peoples in the Casamance-Bissau region.

Fernandes writes:

The Bagnuns venerate a piece of wood which they call hatichira, and they consecrate the wood in this manner: they take a forked stick which must be cut with a new axe, even the head of which must be new, and they dig a trench in the earth and there they have a calabash of palm wine which contains three or four ‘canadas’ and also another of oil in about the same quantity, and in a basket about a ‘quarta’ of rice to pound. They bring there a live dog and then they pour the wine, the oil, and the rice into the hole; and with this new axe they kill the dog; they lay off its head and allow all the blood to run into the hole, on the wine, oil, and rice. Finally they throw in the axe and set up the forked stick atop all of this, covering it with earth and, from the fork of the stick which rises out of the hole, they hang herbs from the forest, and to carry out this ceremony they call together the most respected elders in the region, and they prepare the said dog with great care and they eat it and from this moment on they begin to venerate this piece of wood and it is so feared that no one will take or touch anything that is placed by it, for fear of dying.⁵

The ceremony described here is, of course, more than a simple ritual sacrifice. It is the establishment or consecration of a new shrine. Yet there are numerous similarities to recent and even contemporary Diola ritual offerings. First, the name of the shrine, hatichira has a root, chir, which is close to the root -chin or kin common in Diola vocabularies, for “shrine”. It is even closer to the Bayotte term. This is not surprising, as the Bayotte, during the sixteenth century, lived somewhat south of their present location on the south bank of the Casamance, and were therefore right in the midst of the Bagnun whose ritual Fernandes described.⁶

By the late seventeenth century, the root -chin had become the generic term

⁷ Fernandes, p. 70. Os Banhuns adoram em huî pao a ã chamã hatichira ho qual pao cõsãgra desta maneyra. Tomã hũu pao forcado ho qual ha de ser cortado cõ machado nouo e o cabo delle tãbe na de ser nouo e cõ nenhu destes aja serujo em algãu coua e emtã fazõ hũu coua no chão e tem ali hũu hũu de vinho de palma ã leuara tres ou quatro canadas. E assi tem outro de azove ã leuara outro dito e tem hũu de vinho e ã leuara outro dito e tem hũu de vinho e deu outra no o arroz dentro desta coua e manã ha cam cõ aquelle machadinho nouo. A fende o pao e leixe cõ terra e em cyma daquella foraça do pao ã assi asae por cima da coua pendurã hũas herras do mato e pera fazer esta ceremonia com chamados os melhores velhos de toda a terra e entã apareiha o dito cam cõ grade festa e o comõ este pao entã adora e tã temão ã qualquer homõ ã poucer algãu coua jũto cõ ella nenhu hũu deu na tomã nouo põr em que se pode faze morer.

⁸ Fernandes, p. 70.

⁹ Fernandes, p. 72.
for "shrine" throughout the Casamance and as far south as the Bissagos Islands.\(^{10}\) "China" also became the Creole word for "shrine." Quite likely, Creole was the vehicle whereby the word spread through the region,\(^{11}\) although it is conceivable that the existence of this common term, central to religious ritual among the different peoples of the area, reflects much earlier historical ties or even common origins.

It seems likely that these related terms originated in the language of the Falupos. In Diola today, there exists a plausible etymological derivation. The verb stem -\textit{chin} or -\textit{chin} means "to dwell" or "to live in a place", which is precisely what the spiritual force of the \textit{bekin} was presumed to do; it took up its abode in the shrine.

The Bagnun ritual, as described by Fernandes, contains several elements common to Diola rituals. First, the general structure of the offering — wine libations and animal sacrifice — found throughout West Africa, is also typical of traditional Diola offerings. So, too, is the hierarchical order of offering, first to the shrine, then to the elders who actually participate in the ritual and who consume the remaining sacrificial items as a communal repast. The practice of hanging herbs on the shrine, herbs which contain or symbolize protective forces, is also common even today among the Diola.

Most important, however, is the form of the central element of the shrine itself. Among the Diola, too, a forked stake is often the heart of the \textit{bekin}. This stick is the ceremonial center; it is the focus for all rituals directed towards the spiritual force embodied in, or conceived as temporarily residing in the shrine. The forked stake is an appropriate focus, for its shape recalls the seat of woman's sexuality, the source from which new life springs.

Before the full impact of Islam and Christianity in the present century, each Diola community housed a large number of shrines. Some of these shrines took the form of a forked stick set upright in the ground, occasionally covered by a small thatched roof. Through their simple form, with its reference to fertility and generation, these shrines expressed the notions of reproduction, procreation, and growth, ideas which were central to the shrine's meaning to the community.

\section*{THE LATE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES}

Information about Casamance societies in the early sixteenth century is very limited. Only at the end of the 1500s does this situation improve slightly. Two late sixteenth century sources, Alvarès d'Almada's account of a visit to Casamance in about 1570,\(^{12}\) and Andre Donelha's 1625 report, which is based on three trips he made between 1570 and 1585,\(^{13}\) afford at least a glimpse of Diola society. Together, these sources provide the earliest picture of Diola response to the European slave trade and the first information about specific sub-groups of Diola.

Almada mentions several different groups who inhabited the Lower Casamance. Most of these can be identified with peoples still found in the region today. South of the Casamance River were the Bagnuns of Istiguehor (Ziguinchor). Like Fernandes, Almada emphasizes that the Bagnuns were traders. Also south of the river lived the Buramos, "who are also called the Papels."\(^{14}\) These, of course, were members of the Brame-Papel-Manjak group, who even then lived in about the same area where they are found today.

North of the river, to the east were the Manding and, to their west, apparently along the Soungrougrou River, lived the Cassangas. Donelha writes that these Cassangas had recently conquered the Bagnuns and that this fighting had caused trade along the Soungrougrou to come to a halt, as the Portuguese \textit{tangomitos} left the region.\(^{15}\) In fact, the Cassangas and the Bagnuns spoke the same language and essentially comprised a single ethnic group.\(^{16}\) The Bagnun-Cassanga conflict, rather than inter-ethnic warfare, was therefore probably a struggle between competing lineages or factions, perhaps to control trade along the Soungrougrou. By the seventeenth century, the Soungrougrou trade route was again functioning and was once more under Bagnun control.

The Bagnun presence along this important trade route, the primary commercial route between Cacheu, the Casamance, and the Lower Gambia, had been overlooked by Fernandes. Yet this Bagnun network, part of a larger Bagnun trading diaspora,\(^{17}\) had clearly been established long before Almada or Donelha visited the area. Donelha speaks of the formerly flourishing trade in a manner that suggests the commerce had existed for a long time. He writes, "Formerly, two or three ships arrived here each year, to purchase slaves."\(^{18}\)

According to Almada, the Bagnuns had traded slaves and ivory north from Cacheu to Geregia — "um rio chamado Herges." Geregia, located on Vintain Creek, was the gateway to the Lower Gambia. The village of Geregia and the north-south trade route along the Soungrougrou were to remain the most important commercial channel to Cacheu until the nineteenth century.

How long the Bagnun-dominated Soungrougrou trade route had been in existence cannot be determined. In 1510 Fernandes did mention an extensive commerce between the Portuguese and the kingdom of the Casa Mansa. This Manding kingdom was situated slightly to the east, but it included Falupos and Balantas and

\begin{enumerate}
\item[10] Santos Lima 1947:8 states that \textit{china} was the generic word for "shrine" as far south as Sierra Leone.
\end{enumerate}
must have abutted on the Soungrougrou. Fernandes writes that the court of the Casa Mansa included “many permanently settled Portuguese Christian merchants who trade with the blacks”. It seems safe to assume that these Luso-African traders were linked to the north — south trade axis that centered on the Soungrougrou. This would explain why Donelha, at the end of the sixteenth century, could speak of that commerce as being of long duration.

Although slaves were an important item of commerce at Geregia, most of the Diola in the Basse Casamance were evidently spared from slave raids. Already in Fernandes’ time the Falupos had been respected and feared as warriors and this reputation seems to have served them well by keeping slave traders away. Almada writes of the Falupos and the “Ariatos”, another group who inhabited the mouth of the Casamance River, that they were:

“two nations of Blacks that are quite brutish, and who have so far refused to be civilized; . . . and as our people refuse to trade with them, there exists no commerce in slaves in their lands; a few are sold, that is, those who fall captive to the Manding.”

Almada’s image of an uncivilized and warlike people not only accords with the common stereotype of Africans who refused to trade with Europeans, it also implies that the Diola were not yet actively involved in the slave trade. The “brutish” and “uncivilized” Diola had perhaps not yet had sufficient contact with the Europeans to appreciate the benefits to be derived from such commerce.

ETHNIC LABELS

A problem which arises from the study of early European sources is the identification of groups which are mentioned in the literature, yet cannot readily be associated with present inhabitants of the Casamance. It is difficult to determine whether these were the direct ancestors of people living there today, simply identified by a no-longer used or an incorrect name, or whether they constituted a distinctive population that has since been either assimilated or wiped out. A prime example of this terminological confusion is the “Jabundos”, who are mentioned in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as the inhabitants of Buluf. Identification of the “Jabundos” is the key to reconstructing the early history of Buluf.

The earliest documented example of ethnic change in a specific region of the Basse Casamance may have occurred in western Buluf during the late sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century. Suggested in both written sources and oral traditions, this was the arrival of Diola-speaking settlers and their gradual domination over and assimilation of the earlier Bagnun inhabitants.

19 Fernandes 1951:59.
20 Almada 1964:288.
21 On images of Senegambians and their religions see Peter Mark 1980.
The gradual incorporation of the Bagnun by an intrusive Diola population seems to be reflected in Portuguese sources. In 1594 Alvares d’Almada wrote that, north of the embouchure of the Casamance River:

extends the country of the Blacks called Jabundos who speak the Bagnun language, and whose language is mutually comprehensible with that of the Casangas.\textsuperscript{22}

For several centuries, the term “Jabundos” or “Chabons” was used to refer to the people of Buluf, “Chabon”, referring explicitly to Diola-speaking peoples, appears in the literature at least as late as 1888, when the Governor of the Gambia wrote of “the Chabon Diolas”.\textsuperscript{23} The earliest reference to the Jabundos, however, by Almada, clearly distinguishes them from the Jafunco or Falupos, and identifies them as Bagnuns.

In 1669, also writing about Buluf, Lemos Coelho described the inhabitants not as Bagnuns but as Diolas. He wrote:

toda a costa (from Fogny, or ‘Jame’ to Cachou) são Falupos ... da banda do norte pouco distante da agua as aldeias de Bosól, Usól, e Jafâncó, aldeias as mais grandiosas que tem estas paragens ... são muito fertos de arros, e muitos negros que vendem, os homens são muito guerreiros.\textsuperscript{24}

The description of these territories, with their extensive rice fields situated on the north bank, but at some distance from the river, fits Buluf, or Jougoutes. Coelho’s “Jafuncó” is “Jabundo”. “Usol” then, most probably refers to Thionk-Essil, which has long been the largest community in western Buluf,\textsuperscript{25} is surrounded by the greatest expanse of rice fields in the northern Basse Casamance, and whose men were involved in the slave trade at an early date.

The discrepancy between the two Portuguese sources is intriguing. It is possible that Almada was simply mistaken in his identification of the Jabundos as Bagnun-speaking. One cannot dismiss, however, the interpretation that the two writers, separated by eighty years, actually document a change in the population of Buluf, for the chronology is consistent with oral traditions from Thionk-Essil.

In Thionk-Essil, traditions purport to preserve the names of each bukut initiation since the ancestors of the Diola immigrated from Essil-Bandial south of the Casamance River. Each ward in Thionk-Essil maintains a separate list. Since the bukut is celebrated only once in twenty years, the lists offer a rough estimate of the number of generations since the traditional founding of the village. These lists vary in length from thirteen to eighteen generations (see chart). Before the first bukut was held in Thionk-Essil, one or two generations are said to have been initiated in the old village, in Kasa. Thus, the bukut lists may be interpreted as dating the Diola migration from Kasa to slightly more than 300 years ago. Of course, these lists may be truncated and the migration could have occurred much earlier. The 300-plus date would however, accord with the early Portuguese sources.\textsuperscript{26} If the Diola did, in fact, arrive in western Buluf in the early 1600s, this would explain the discrepancy between Almada and Coelho.

Oral traditions have a tendency to represent gradual historical processes as sudden, often dramatic changes. It is very possible that the process of population change in Buluf was a gradual one. As more Diola arrived from Kasa, they would slowly have achieved economic ascendency by opening new and very fertile tidal wetlands to rice cultivation. Ultimately, they then assimilated the Bagnuns, who slowly lost their autonomy and their language and assumed Diola cultural traits.

Throughout western Buluf, traditions recall that the first inhabitants of the region were the Bagnuns. The Diola are understandably reluctant to share this information with outsiders, although in informal private discussions the early Bagnun presence is mentioned. Today, the Bagnun are confined to the village of Niámodé, an isolated pocket in a Diola population. Cultural elements of Bagnun origin do, however, survive in Diola communities. Two of the most common patronyms in Buluf are Diatta and, particularly in Thionk-Essil, Sambou. Both of these names were originally Bagnun.\textsuperscript{27} There are many Diattas in the oldest ward of Thionk-Essil. The local word in Gusilay for the central meeting place in the village is “Kasambu”, or “the place of the Sambu”.

A linguistic analysis of Gusilay, the dialect spoken by the inhabitants of Thionk-Essil, might provide further evidence of the village’s Bagnun origins. Such a linguistic comparison is beyond the scope of this study. However, a late seventeenth century French-Bagnun-Diola word list, preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale, lists as Bagnun many words which are today preserved in Gusilay.\textsuperscript{28}

\textsuperscript{22} Almada 1664:288.

\textsuperscript{23} The Blue Book for the Gambia, 1888.

\textsuperscript{24} Lemos Coelho 1953:32–33 and 145: Along all of the coast are Falupos ... on the north bank, close to the water are the lands of Bosól, Usól, and Jafuncó, the largest realms which exist in this region ... they are very fertile in rice and well-stocked with Blacks whom they sell, and the men are very warlike.

\textsuperscript{25} See Archives Nationales du Sénégal (ANS) IG 23, "Rapport de M. Bertrand-Bocandé, Voyage au Pays de Kion", 1850.

\textsuperscript{26} The use of bukut lists as a chronological yardstick is of only limited reliability for the period before 1860. In Thionk-Essil, unlike some other Diola communities, informants claim that the rule of approximately twenty years between each initiation has always been observed. This periodicity can be verified for the past six generations. Nearly precise years are recalled for each initiation since that of ca. 1885. In addition, the preceding bukut was named “Bampeck”, or “buttons”, a reference to the recently developed trade with the French at Carabane. 1860–65 would accord with the development of that trade. (Less secure correlations to the written record may be found in the bukut list of Tíobon, for the bukut of ca. 1820.)

Used to provide a general time frame for pre-nineteenth century events in Thionk-Essil, the bukut lists most likely provide a “terminus ante quem”.

\textsuperscript{27} Bertrand-Bocandé 1849:333.

\textsuperscript{28} The shift of “k” to “g” which distinguishes Gusilay from Diola-Fogny is readily apparent in the Bagnun word list. The modern Gusilay word for “to eat” — “acha” or “achá” is very close to the word in this early list, “gouacha” (Bagnun). Other Bagnun-Gusilay similarities are also found; see Bibliothèque Nationale, Fonds orientaux, fonds africains 4, “Dictionnaire des langues français et nègres dont on se sert dans la concession de la compagnie Royale du Sénégal ...”
This process of assimilation and ethnic admixture has repeated itself numerous times over the centuries in different parts of the Lower Casamance. Written and oral sources record only the most recent of these historical changes. The gradual transformation of Buluf communities from Bagnun to Diola, reflected in early Portuguese records and adumbrated in oral traditions, indicates that this process of cultural interaction and change has a very long history.

**Bukut** lists from three wards of Thionk-Essil

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Niaganan</th>
<th>Kamanar</th>
<th>Daga</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Eher</td>
<td>Djaumbi</td>
<td>Er</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Djaumben</td>
<td>Baiana</td>
<td>Tunkoro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Baiafon</td>
<td>Jabangur</td>
<td>Erigalik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Batorior</td>
<td>Tunkoro</td>
<td>Jibangur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Tunkoro</td>
<td>Bajuten</td>
<td>Sowal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Bahendey</td>
<td>Erigelej</td>
<td>Eberaynya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Bajuten</td>
<td>Sawal</td>
<td>Soyaback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Djabangor</td>
<td>Djiberyunya</td>
<td>Bapempeck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Erigelek</td>
<td>Soyaback</td>
<td>Djigele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Sawal</td>
<td>Bapempeck</td>
<td>Djigele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Djabero</td>
<td>Burussu</td>
<td>Bagomban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Soyaback</td>
<td>Djgele</td>
<td>Fasfas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Bapempeck</td>
<td>Efoce</td>
<td>Fasfas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Burussu</td>
<td>Bagomban</td>
<td>Djaumbi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Djigele</td>
<td>Elandu</td>
<td>Tunkoro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Efoce</td>
<td>Djaumbi</td>
<td>Jibangur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Bagomban</td>
<td>Fasfas</td>
<td>Sowal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Fasfas</td>
<td>Djigele</td>
<td>Erigelej</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kamanar calls the 1962 *bukut* by a different name than the other wards do.

THE "ARRIATOS" OR "ARRIAEROS"

A second Casamance people mentioned by Almada but no longer found today, are the "Arriatos". According to Almada the Arriatos, who lived north of the mouth of the Casamance River, spoke a language which could be understood by their Falup neighbors to the south. This suggests that the Arriatos may have been another of the many peoples who, during the nineteenth century, came to be known as Diola. The present inhabitants of the area indicated by Almada, the islands of Karones, speak a dialect of Diola quite different from the language of their neighbors in Buluf and Fogny to the west.

Carreira has proposed an alternative explanation for the Arriatos. He suggests that migration and assimilation ("mesticamento") caused "the complete disappearance of the Arriatos and the Jabundos". In the case of the Jabundos, he is wrong. It is possible that the Arriates, as he suggests, simply disappeared. Another hypothesis is, however, worthy of consideration.

The name "Arriatos", or "Arriaerós" as it is given by John Barbot, is close to the word "ariarol" which, in Diola Fogny, may be translated as "one — or those — who eat one another"; in other words, "cannibals", or alternatively, "ariaut", "those who never eat each other". The pejorative appellation could well have been bestowed on the inhabitants of Karones by other Diolas. Even today, the people of Karones are the most isolated Diola sub-group and are considered backward by their neighbors. Furthermore, this negative term would be in keeping with the image presented elsewhere by Almada of warlike and uncivilized Falupos. Nor would this be a unique case in West African history where a name, given in derogation by another group, was accepted by Europeans as if it were the named group's own term for themselves.

There is, however, another plausible explanation for the term "Arriatos" or "Arriaerós". The name may be a Portuguese transformation of "Arriarut", — "He/they never eat each other". The origins of this term would have derived from Diola usage. In 1849, Emmanuel Bertrand-Bocandé observed among the Diola that:

> On voit encore d'autres tribus qui forment maintenant des peuplades différentes, mais qui sans doute avaient autrefois une communauté d'origine, entre lesquelles existe le serment de ne jamais se 'manger' l'une et l'autre. Il faut que j'explique cette expression. Les Africains ne mangeaient pas leurs prisonniers comme les sauvages de Panique, mais ils les vendaient pour des boeufs qu'ils mangeaient en un jour de fête. Dans la Casamance, les Africains ne mangeaient pas leurs prisonniers comme les sauvages de Panique, mais ils les vendiaient pour des boeufs qu'ils mangeaient en un jour de fête. Dans la Casamance, les Africains ne mangeaient pas leurs prisonniers comme les sauvages de Panique, mais ils les vendiaient pour des boeufs qu'ils mangeaient en un jour de fête. Dans la Casamance, les Africains ne mangeaient pas leurs prisonniers comme les sauvages de Panique, mais ils les vendiaient pour des boeufs qu'ils mangeaient en un jour de fête. Dans la Casamance, les Africains ne mangeaient pas leurs prisonniers comme les sauvages de Panique, mais ils les vendiaient pour des boeufs qu'ils mangeaient en un jour de fête.

In other words, the Diola themselves referred to the act of eating — or not eating — one another, not as actual fact, but rather as a symbolic way of expressing common origins. The accuracy of Bocandé's statement may be measured by his observation that the Foulouns and Jigouches did not "eat each other". The Foulouns, or people of Hulump in Kasa are, in fact, related to the Jigouches of Mlomp village. The Diola of Mlomp-Jigouches migrated from Mlomp-Kasa. They are, therefore, related and would not have sold each other into slavery.

The origins of the word "Arriaros/Arriatos" should be clear. The term derives from an indigenous Diola expression meaning, literally, "cannibals" or "they

31 Barbot 1732:77. Barbot has nothing original to say about the Casamance. He takes his information on the Arriatos indirectly from Almada. The changed spelling may derive from "Arrrrios", found in Pierre Daviti 1660:409.
32 Bertrand-Bocandé 1849:80—81.
33 The "f" — "h" shift is common in the Kasa dialect.
The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries
don't eat each other", but in fact referring to two groups who considered themselves to be related. There never were a people known as the Arriatos, except in this narrow context.

It is not possible, on the basis of early Portuguese records, definitively to locate and identify each of the population groups in sixteenth century Lower Casamance. With the help of local oral traditions, however, most of the peoples mentioned in these early accounts can be tentatively identified with groups which are still found in the Casamance today.

The accompanying maps show the general location of the major ethnolinguistic groups in Casamance at the end of the sixteenth century and again, approximately a century later. This reconstruction differs from earlier models, particularly Pélissier's and Boulégué's in its recognition of a Bagnun presence throughout much of present-day Buluf. Although the Diola may actually have supplanted the Bagnun at an earlier date, the earlier inhabitants were absorbed into the growing Diola communities. The sixteenth century "Jabundos" must be seen as part Diola and part Bagnun in origin.

LATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY TRADE IN CASAMANCE

Only towards the end of the seventeenth century does the situation with respect to written sources for the history of the Casamance improve substantially. From the last two decades of the century come the two manuscripts of Francisco Lemos Coelho (1669 and 1684), together vital sources for Lower Casamance history as well as Fr. Portuense's writings on Cacheu and the Bissagos Islands.

By this time the French, too, had established commercial relations through their Cie. de Senegal, with Senegal and the Casamance-Cacheu region. Increased French interest in the Casamance, and particularly in the existing trade networks, is reflected in the detailed descriptions written by Michel Jajolet de la Courbe after his 1687 visit. La Courbe's manuscript has an unfortunate lacuna, just at the point where he travels overland from Gerégia to Cacheu. Happily, however, that manuscript has come down to us indirectly, in Labat's *Nouvelle Relation de l'Afrique Occidentale*, which freely plagiarizes the missing manuscript and attributes that voyage to André Briic. In addition to these sources, François Froger gives some information of interest to students of Casamance history.

34 Pélissier 1966.
35 Boulégué 1980:477.
36 Lemos Coelho 1953.
37 Teixeira da Mota 1974.
38 Col tranquill. 1913.
39 Labat, 1728: v.
40 Col tranquill. 1913: introduction, v.
41 Froger 1698.
Both Lemos Coelho and de la Courbe focus their attention on the commercial and political situation along the Gambia — Casamance — Cacheu trade route. They are both primarily concerned with the Soungrougrou — Vintain region, because of its continuing economic importance to the Gambia. By comparing their accounts, it is possible to draw a rather clear picture of relations among the different groups who then inhabited the northern Casamance.

By the 1680s, the political situation in Fogny, the area which extends west of the Soungrougrou as far as Buluf, and south from the Gambia nearly to the Casamance River, had become unsettled. Relations between the Bagnum inhabitants and the Diola who had begun to settle Fogny in increasing numbers were heated. In Geregia, too, there appear to have been growing numbers of Feloupes or Diolas. There, however, the long distance commerce between the Gambia and Cacheu continued to thrive.

In Geregia, several ‘Portugais’ or Luso-African traders had settled and there was even an Irishman living there as a Factor for the British, who were themselves established in the Gambia at James Fort. La Courbe was impressed by the large quantity of wax that was collected in Fogny and then brought there for export. In addition, he noted that ivory, dried cattle hides, and captives, as well as a small amount of gold were traded. The most important import items included cotton, which the local people made into thread to be woven into cloth, and kola.

The wax was collected in Fogny by Africans who travelled from village to village working for the Portuguese. The raw wax was then brought to Geregia, melted and formed into loaves, and later sold to the English or the French. La Courbe does not mention direct Diola involvement in this trade. He does, however, write:

On fait en ce lieu là un grand commerce de cire; les peuples de ce pays sont Feloupes et dépendent du roi de Faugni.

This would seem to imply that the Africans who went from village to village collecting wax, “pour acheter ce qu’ils en peuvent trouver”, were in fact buying the wax from the Floupes. At a time when European writers who had not themselves visited the Casamance continued to describe the Diola as hostile to all traders, de la Courbe’s on-the-scene report demonstrates that the Diola of Fogny were indeed involved in trade. Coelho confirms the abundant supply of wax in Fogny. He further states that the Portuguese purchased it from the Bagnums. It would, therefore, appear that it was the Bagnums who went from village to village buying wax from the Diola. This would constitute the earliest evidence of trade on the local level between the Bagnum and the Diola.

In Fogny, however, relations between the two groups were becoming increasingly strained. There, during the period between Donelha’s visit of about 1580 and Coelho’s visit in 1669, the Bagnums had achieved their independence from the Cassanga empire. It is difficult to interpret the information de la Courbe and Coelho present on the political situation in Fogny at the end of the seventeenth century. The Bagnums were apparently coming under attack by the Falupes.

Coelho and de la Courbe present a confusing and at times contradictory picture of Fogny and its inhabitants. De la Courbe writes that there was a “king” who ruled over both Feloupes and Bagnums:

Il commande à deux différents peuples spavoir: les Bagnums et les Feloupes. Les Bagnums sont civilisés, mais les Feloupes sont la pluspart sauvages, et par ce qu’ils ne le reconnaissent pour roi qu’avec contrainte, il les fait souvent la guerre et en tire les esclaves qu’il vend.

Elsewhere, however, de la Courbe speaks of Fogny as peopled primarily by the Feloupes. Coelho, too, writes that Fogny, which he calls by the term “Jano”, was inhabited by Feloupes. Like de la Courbe he also mentions that the Bagnum took captives from this region.

The dominant impression then, is that Fogny was frequently convulsed by warfare between the Diola and the Bagnum. When Coelho travelled through the region his party procured captives who were very likely the victims of this continuing fighting. While the Bagnums were taking Diola captives and selling them to the Portuguese, the Diola for their part seem to have been expanding their own territory at the expense of the Bagnum ruler. De la Courbe’s statement suggests that the Bagnum king was fighting the Diola perhaps as much in self-defense, or to put down an “independence” war by the Diola, as to take captives.

THE SLAVE TRADE

An important factor in the increasingly unsettled situation in Fogny was the development of the slave trade. Next to wax, captives seem to have been the most important commodity exported from the northern Basse Casamance at the end of the seventeenth century. Warfare was the primary source of captives to be sold to the Portuguese and, by the time of de la Courbe’s visit, fighting appears to have been almost endemic.

Discussing Floup-Bagnun relations, Labat says that the Diola only paid tribute to the “King of Fogny” when that ruler was strong enough to force them to do so. The Bagnum military expeditions reported by de la Courbe then, served a dual purpose. They constituted a Bagnum effort to put down rising Diola opposition to

42 Cultru 1913:203.
43 Cultru 1913:205.
44 Cultru 1913:203.
45 Cultru 1913:205.
46 Lemos Coelho 1953:30.
the hegemony of the Bagnun "empire". They were also slave raids. As Labat writes about the Bagnun ruler.

C'est aussi ce qui fournit les esclaves qu'il vend aux Européens ... il enlève tous les ans un nombre considérable. 10

The instability caused by these raids is also reflected in the manner in which the Diola of Fogny now built their houses. Labat reports that their homes were surrounded by palisades made of concentric circles of stakes. 31 The protection thus afforded would have served against slave raids by the Bagnun "King".

The growing demand for slaves in the Casamance is seen in the emphasis given to the trade in captives in each of these late seventeenth century reports. Coelho makes it clear that the Portuguese were purchasing large numbers of slaves throughout the Basse Casamance. North of the river, "On the other shore the Bagnuns purchase slaves, and some wax, which come from that other shore at a place they call Jame." 52 Coelho is also the first writer to refer to Fogny as "Jame". The name is clearly his rendition of the Diola term "Kujamatay" which, even today, refers to that region of the Basse Casamance.

Slaves were, by this time, possibly more important as a trade item than wax. South of the Casamance River too, the impact of the slave trade was marked. Among the groups living there, Coelho reports that the "Sacalates", near the mouth of the river, were pirates and thieves and much given to taking captives. 53 Finally, Coelho describes the three Diola groups mentioned above, the people of Bosol, Usol, and Jafunco, as deeply involved in the slave trade. In the continuation of the passage in which he first mentions these lands and their extensive rice fields he writes:

as aldeas de Bosol, Usol, e Jafunco ... são muy ferteis de arros, e muitos negros que vendem, os homens são muy guerreiros, e muitas vezes tem guerras com os brancos de Cacheu com quem fazem pazes por amor do trato, e vão a elles todos os dias com as canoas carregadas de mantimentos, e peixe secco, e negros. 54

Captives seem to have been the most important trade item but it is interesting that, for these western Diola, dried fish were also a significant export.

The description of Usol, if it is, as seems likely, to be identified with Thionk-Essil, is most significant. This passage provides by far the earliest description of a Diola community that was not on a major trading route and that did not house a permanent settlement of Europeans or Luso-Africans. Coelho affords us a glimpse of the rice culture which was and remains the foundation of Thionk's economy. His description of the trade between Thionk-Essil and Cacheu shows that the community's involvement in commerce with Europeans, documented in the early nineteenth century with the arrival of the English and French in the Lower Casamance, is actually far older than the nineteenth century. The pirogues which served as both warships and freighters are still used in Thionk, although now only in the latter capacity. At the end of the nineteenth century, such vessels were used by the men of Thionk to transport rubber to the Gambia. But already in the 1890s, the involvement of Thionk-Essil in riverain long distance trade was more than 200 years old.

Thionk-Essil's reputation as a base for sea-borne marauders also survived until the nineteenth century. Essilians were still raiding and taking captives as late as 1860, when the French mounted a punitive expedition against the community. Oral traditions in Thionk-Essil keep alive the memory of the early slave trading exploits. It is recounted that pirogues filled with as many as forty warriors would prey upon the people of Kasa. Place names, too, preserve the memory of these raids. One marigot near Thionk is still called "Banfutik" -- from "futikaf fubane", or "The war is over" -- because a war canoe capsized there, drowning the crew.

Many of the captives taken in these raids were incorporated into lineages in Thionk-Essil. This form of forcible adoption, sometimes referred to elsewhere in Africa as "domestic slavery", 55 usually entailed few enduring social handicaps. The individual was quickly regarded as a member of the adopting lineage and could, if a male, inherit his own rice fields from his adoptive family. 56 Oral histories also recount that those captives who failed to show absolute loyalty to their new family were sold to the Manding. Coelho's report indicates that, during at least the seventeenth century, still other captives found their way into the European slave trade.

The nature of Diola domestic slavery is confirmed by nineteenth century sources. Early nineteenth century involvement in the slave trade is documented by Koelle. One of his informants had been captured by the Diola of "Esin" in about 1830. 57 In 1900 Lasnet reported that the Diola had few slaves and that these:

sont achatés tous jeunes et deviennent captifs de case, traités comme des membres de la famille, jouissent rapidement des mêmes privilèges, peuvent se marier avec les femmes libres, ne sont vendus qu'en cas d'absolue nécessité. 34

50 Labat 1728:v, 20.
51 Labat 1728:v, 20f.
52 Coelho 1953:30.
53 Ibid. The identity of these "Sacaiates" has not been established.
54 In his 1669 manuscript, Coelho refers to "Safunco" (p. 33) but, in the 1684 manuscript he corrects the spelling to accord with Almada's more accurate rendition, "Jabon". (p. 145). This passage may be translated: The lands of Bosol, Usol, and Jafunco ... are very fertile in rice and have many Blacks whom they sell, the men are very warlike, and many times they go to war with the whites of Cacheu, with whom they then make peace out of their love for commerce, and they go there every day with canoes loaded with food, and dried fish, and captives.
55 See Miers and Kopytoff, eds. 1977: introduction.
56 Interview with the elders of Daga ward, Thionk-Essil, June 1976.
57 See Snyder, 1981:42. Koelle's Banjal informant was himself from the community of Essil-Banjal. "Esin" must therefore refer to the other community by that name, Thionk-Essil. Oral traditions in Essil-Banjal still recall these raids by Thionk.
58 Lasnet 1900:170.
From an early date, the people of Thionk-Essil have been not only warriors but also traders. The origins of that trade are not documented, but it is likely that Thionk did not suddenly enter into riverain trade with the Portuguese just at the time of Coelho's report. Very likely the village was already involved in waterborne commerce when the Portuguese arrived in Casamance and Cacheu, and simply adopted to the new markets.63 The people of Thionk also adapted to the demand for new products, including slaves. It seems probable that a pre-existing local system of forced adoption and assimilation—domestic slavery—was modified, to provide captives for export.

By the second half of the seventeenth century, the Diola of Buhluf were very much involved in the slave trade. Some of their captives they kept as agricultural laborers ultimately to be assimilated into local lineages. Others they sold to the Portuguese. One is compelled to take issue with Walter Rodney's claim that the Diola "remained largely indifferent to the slave trade."60

Thionk-Essil's active involvement in commerce with the Portuguese was unusual for "Feloupes", if one is to credit the many European sources that mention "Feloupe" reluctance to get involved in trade. The Bagnuns were the long-distance traders of the Lower Casamance, and it was they who maintained commercial relations with the Portuguese. Thionk-Essil, however, had been founded by Bagnuns. As late as 1600 it may still have been a predominantly Bagnun community. The Bagnuns may well have initiated the trade with Cacheu, thereby tying into the preexisting Bagnun trade diaspora. As they were displaced and assimilated by Feloupe immigrants from south of the river, the Bagnun would have given over control of the trade to an increasing Diola population.

Thionk-Essil is unique among Diola communities north of the Casamance River for the degree to which its history has been recorded in early written sources. These documents confirm many details of local oral traditions. The most interesting and difficult question which arises from that history is the issue of why a major Diola migration seems to have occurred during the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.61 Could the migration into Thionk-Essil and adjacent parts of Buhluf have been related to the Diola's gradual achievement, during the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, of political dominance in Fogny (see chapter 4)?

Both Diola migrations may have resulted from a population expansion which, in turn, was caused by the greater availability of iron through trade with the Europeans. Diola agricultural techniques are very old. Archeological evidence suggests that early inhabitants of the Lower Casamance were using iron implements to cultivate rice before the middle of the first millennium AD.62 The cultivation of swamp rice is mentioned by the earliest European reports, in the mid-fifteenth century.63 While limited quantities of iron would have been available long before the fifteenth century, the arrival of the Europeans on the coast provided an important and abundant source of the metal. For the Diola, the primary use of iron was to sheath the blade of the kayendo.

Early European sources provide ample testimony to the demand for iron in Casamance. When de la Courbe wished to rent a horse for one day from the alquier of Geregia, the price—about which he complained loudly—was set at seven bars of iron.64 Labat's description, presumably taken from la Courbe, of Portuguese commerce at Ziguinchor, the trading center they had established on the Casamance River about 1636,65 also emphasizes the local demand for iron:

Les Portugais tirent ordinairement de ces deux escales [Ziguinchor et Guinguin] cent ou six-vingt quintaux de cire jaune tous les ans dans les mois d'Avril, Mai et Juin.... On traite avec eux cette eire sur le pied de seize barres le quintal, a payer les trois quarts ou le tout en fer effectif.66

The Casamançais were not only reckoning the value of goods in terms of "bars"; they were requiring payment in iron as well. The wax trade alone was bringing a minimum of 1200 bars and perhaps as much as 1900 bars of iron per year, into just these two Casamance trading centers.67

In the 1680s the iron bar had a standardized weight of slightly more than 13 kg.68 The wax trade alone thus accounted for the annual import of 15 to 25 metric tons into Casamance. This local demand for iron is a feature which links Casamance overseas commerce to the rest of the Senegambia. As Philip Curtin notes, "The high proportion of iron was a principal mark distinguishing Senegambia from other parts of West Africa."69

For those who were able to acquire it, iron served 2 vital purposes. It gave them the ability to make superior weapons, and it provided the cutting edge for the kayendo. An iron-tipped kayendo, of course, would have greatly facilitated the process of clearing the mangrove bushes from around the marigots, opening new areas for cultivation. These low-lying wetlands are the most fertile land for growing wet rice. More iron implements would consequently have resulted in greatly increased crop yields. The resulting agricultural surplus could have been traded, but the evidence suggests that it was not. In fact, the Diola, who before the colonial

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63 On the history and techniques of rice cultivation see Lauer: 1969.
64 Culfu 1913:206.
65 Ziguiinchor must have been located on the site of an earlier African settlement, quite possibly a Bagnun trading center. In 1594 Almada had referred to the Bagnuns of "Ziguches", on the south bank of the Casamance River. The Bagnuns were noted both for their commerce and for the markets which they held in their villages.
67 In England a bar was reckoned to be worth about five shillings; Barbot 1946:77.
68 Curtin 1973:244.
69 Curtin 1973:312. He estimates iron imports for the Senegambia north of the Casamance for the 1680s at 150 tons per year.
period reckoned a man’s wealth by the size of his granaries as well as by the size of his herds of cattle, tended to store huge quantities of the grain as protection against famine and to feed larger households. They would, therefore, have possessed the supplies necessary to feed a rapidly expanding population.

Population growth would have occurred naturally, as increased food supplies and improved nutrition led to decreased mortality. But the population growth was accelerated by the Diolas’ system of capturing and adopting people from other communities, in order to increase the size of their extended family groups. For the individual, such captives were a source of social prestige. At the same time, captives would have increased the agricultural labor force, thereby leading to even greater production. In time, however, the expanding population would have required additional rice fields.

The expansion of the Diola in Fogny and Buluf during the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was, then, a consequence of this population increase, which was itself a direct result of the increased availability of iron through trade with the Portuguese and, later, the French and English. In addition, iron weapons would have given the Diola the upper hand in fighting against whoever was already living on the lands onto which they were moving.

This correlation between trade, iron, and Diola expansion, first suggested by Joseph Lauer, is corroborated by Diola oral traditions. In Thionk-Essl, informants state that the first Diola settlers arrived there from south of the river and that they came in search of new rice fields. Elsewhere in Buluf, the same south-to-north migration pattern, followed by the displacement of earlier inhabitants — undoubtedly Bagnun — is also recorded in oral traditions. The earliest settlers in Mlomp, just north of Thionk-Essl, are said to have migrated from the community of Mlomp in Kasu, a migration which is also recalled in the village from which they came. Both Thionk-Essl and Mlomp are located adjacent to the large Djouloulou marigot. This waterway affords easy access to the Casamance River and to Kasu. For the growing population of late sixteenth century Kasu, the vast mangrove swamps of western Buluf would have offered the nearest suitable agricultural land for settlement.

The date of these migrations, as implied by lists of bukat initiations, about fifteen generations ago, should be considered as a ‘terminus ante quern’. Chronologically, however, an early seventeenth century migration from the south bank of the Casamance into Buluf is congruent with the hypothesis of a population expansion that was the result of increased availability of iron through commerce with the Portuguese.

In Fogny, too, the Diola must have benefitted from increased access to iron. These Diola were involved in trade with the Bagnun, to whom they sold wax. Very likely, the Bagnun were paying for the wax with iron. This would have had the ironic longterm effect of solidifying the situation of the Diola in Fogny and of leading, ultimately, to the displacement of the Bagnun from that region.

It might well be asked why, in both Buluf and Fogny, the Diola were able to push out or assimilate the Bagnun. The Bagnun, after all, controlled much of the trade with the Portuguese and would have had more ready access to iron than the Diola. The primary reason appears to be that the Diola were more effective warriors. Even though the Bagnun of Fogny had established at least the beginnings of a centralized state with an “emperor”, it was the Feloupes who had a long-established reputation as fierce fighters. In Kasu, and later in Buluf, the Diola were particularly renowned and feared as warriors. The Bagnun, on the other hand, were basically traders: This did not prepare them for warfare. The fighting, which in Fogny did at first provide the Bagnun with captives to be sold, ultimately came to disrupt the commerce that was the foundation of their economy. In addition, as Lauer points out, by the mid-1600s Portuguese trade was in decline, a development which probably hurt the Bagnuns’ economic position. Along the Songrougrou, later, they were further weakened when the Manding replaced them as the primary group serving English commercial interests in the Gambia.

It may be that the Diola system of incorporating captives into their own society was in the long run an important source of new manpower and helped them to expand geographically. By the end of the seventeenth century, the Diola had become the dominant ethnic group in Buluf and were well on their way to displacing the Bagnun as the most powerful group in Fogny. Those Bagnuns who were not assimilated by the newcomers were either reduced to inhabiting pockets in the midst of a predominantly Diola region, or were forced to move eastward into the narrow band of territory along the Songrougrou.

That the Diola were already the dominant group in Fogny by 1680 is attested to by Coelho, who repeatedly refers to that region as “Jame”. “Jame” is Coelho’s interpretation of “Kujamata”, by which even today the Diola refer to Fogny. The word derives from “kujam”, “to understand”. It refers to the territory of those people who understand the language, Diola. If the Diola term for Fogny was sufficiently widespread in the late seventeenth century for a foreigner to hear it and accept it as the common name for the region, this is rather convincing evidence that the Diola had already established a significant presence in the region.

By the late 1600s then, the Feloupes had established themselves in most of the area that they were to occupy at the time of the French occupation of Basse Casamance, in the late nineteenth century. The northward expansion of the Diola during the sixteenth and seventeenth century can be traced to population increase. This expansion was itself the result of improved agriculture, thanks to the greater availability of iron of European origin. Diola population growth was also abetted by their system of incorporating captives into their own communities, a practise which relied upon their skill as raiders and warriors.

71 Interviews conducted in Mlomp-Buluf, January 20–23, 1975 with Benjamin Sambou, Jangok Diatta, Djimis Coli, Mamadou Diedhiu, Ibrahima Sambou, and Mamadou Sambou.
72 See Almada 1964:288; Lemos Coelho 1953:145; Labat 1728:v, 45.
73 See for example Lemos Coelho 1953:30.
SEVENTEENTH CENTURY CASAMANCE RELIGION

Little information is available to us about seventeenth century Diola religious rituals or about the concepts upon which the rituals were based. The few written sources which mention religion filter it through the strongly negative attitudes of European observers, who considered that non-Christian Africans who were also not Muslims, essentially had no religion.

The prevailing attitude towards local religion is typified by Coelho. Describing the Bagumons, he says, "não observaõ religiao nenhum". Later, he refers to them as "bara e e tambem sem religião". Likewise about the Feloupes he states categorically that, "one might say they ascribe to no religion". The same attitude is found in Labat:

Les peuples de ces quartiers sont appelés Feloupes ou Floups; ils ont une langue particulière, ils sont idolâtres, ou pour parler plus juste, ils n'ont point de religion fixe.

Barbot, likewise, termed the people of Casamance "gross superstitious pagans".

Such a pejorative view of African religion did not lead many narrators to seek out and describe local rituals. Nor, on those few occasions when they did witness religious sacrifices, was the image of superstitious idolatry conducive to objective reporting of what they saw. Where local religious practices are cited, the purpose is usually to confirm the presumably barbarous nature of the beliefs and parenthetically to point out the readiness of these people for the arrival of Christian missionaries. Descriptions are therefore often quite lurid. References to human sacrifice are not uncommon and should be taken at the very least, with a grain of salt. These caveats notwithstanding, the infrequent mention of Casamance rituals does permit at least the most general analysis of the elements described. On occasion, comparisons can be drawn with the much more detailed documentation of nineteenth and twentieth century local rituals.

Unfortunately, the most detailed early description of Casamance religious ritual, published by Barbot (1732) who copied it from Dapper (1668), is of little use. Dapper borrowed the passage from Davty, who in turn relied upon Du Jarric (1608—14). The original source was Almada, with emendations that are of dubious validity. Barbot writes:

Those of Casamance, besides their other multitude of idols, pay a particular veneration to one they call China, which in their language signifies God, in honor of whom, about the latter end of November they make a general yearly procession at midnight, just when they are to sow their rice, which devotion is performed after this manner. All the

people being assembled at the place where the idol China is kept, they take it up, with great humility and reverence and go in procession to the appointed station, where sacrifices is to be offered; their chief priest walking at the head of the congregation next before their god China, with some shinbones of men who perhaps have been put to death for the purpose, and a quantity of honey is burnt before the idol after which every one present makes his offering and smokes a pipe and then they all go to prayers, begging of their god that he will give blessing to their harvest and afford them a plentiful crop, in due season. This done, they carry China back to the place of his residence.

For the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, information about Diola religious practices is so limited that for even the most basic material, one has to rely on sources that treat together the different people of the Casamance — Cacheu region. Where these peoples continue to show similar practices today, and where the descriptions also indicate parallels to recent or contemporary Diola institutions, one may tentatively conclude that the early descriptions reflect Diola practices.

Several Portuguese chroniclers were motivated primarily by the desire to speed conversion of the Africans. This concern for Christian missionary success led Alonso do Sandoval in 1627 to lament the recidivism of many Christians near Cacheu. These converts included Manjaks, Bagumons, and Feloupes. Sandoval wrote:

The African Christians, because of the extensive communication they have with the others and their lack of [Church] doctrine, turn easily to certain rituals, foreign (alienes) to our sacred Faith. . . . there are fetishers (hechiceros) who perform divination and cure with remedies and words learned in the school of Satan.

For all its disapproving tenor, this passage is a useful source of information. It shows that in Sandoval's time, divination and the curing of illness were two aspects of local religion most likely to survive Christianization. What sort of remedies and words Sandoval meant, we can only speculate. Clearly, ritual leaders or the elders in charge of shrines were performing sacrifices and prayers for those of their Christian neighbors who had been afflicted by illness.

In Fogny and Buluf today, both Christians and Muslims continue to visit local shrines when they are ill. This curative role is the primary function of surviving shrines among the now overwhelmingly Muslim northern Diola. Even before the spread of Islam and Christianity, many shrines were associated with specific ailments. The bekim (enanti, pl. sinanti in Fogny dialect) "grabbed" its victims, causing them to fall ill. One who believed himself to be suffering from a bekim-induced malady would arrange with the guardian of that shrine to perform a sacrifice. This usually consisted of palm wine libations and an animal sacrifice. A properly performed ritual would induce the shrine to cease its attack. The cured patient then offered a pig or a goat to the guardian as compensation for his services.

80 I am indebted to Adam Jones for providing me with the "genealogy" of this passage. Almada's description was elaborated upon by the later writers but, as P.E.H. Hair suggests in an as yet unpublished annotation of Barbot's 1688 manuscript, it was embellished in an "implausible" manner.

81 Alonso do Sandoval 1956:90.

82 This procedure, described by informants born in the nineteenth century as having been widespread before the introduction of Islam, is still found among non-Muslims in Buluf.

75 "They do not observe any religion", Coelho 1953:32.
76 "Barbarians and also without religion", Coelho 1953:142.
77 Coelho 1953:141.
78 Labat 1728:v, 10.
79 Barbot 1946:84.
in Sandoval's time Christians often visited the σινατι for this medicinal purpose. This is significant, for it suggests that in the eyes of Casamance and Cacheu Christians there has long existed a compatibility between the imported religion and local rituals. Since the coexistence of Christianity and indigenous practices is not a recent phenomenon, one might say something of an equilibrium has been established. Christianity did not spell the inevitable, progressive decline and disappearance of local religion.

From the arrival of Jesuits in Bissau in the seventeenth century, the Casamance-Cacheu region was exposed to missionaries. As George Brooks has shown, Luso-African Christians were deeply influenced in their beliefs and rituals by indigenous customs. It is not surprising that local Casamance religion, likewise, bore the imprint of contact with Christianity.

The actual sacrifice is only hinted at by Sandoval, but it is described in far more detail by Almada. He, however, was writing of Casanga rituals. The Casangas were closely related to the Bagnuns, perhaps even in the sixteenth century comprising a linguistic and cultural sub-group. In their ritual, the Bagnun today remain very close to the Diola. Therefore, although Almada does not refer to the Diola, he is worth citing here:

Their idols to which they pray are wooden sticks placed in the ground under any large and shady tree... These are their idols, which they call Chinas and to which they pay reverence, by offering them palm wine and grain that is like beer, but not so lasting. They place on these shrines meal-pap of rice and millet and the blood of cattle and goats and other animals.

Like the Diola, from whom they probably borrowed the word, the Bagnun called their shrines chin or chinás. They, like the Diola, often placed these shrines at the base of large trees. The sacrifice itself consisted of alcoholic beverage, either palm wine or millet beer, both of which are used in present-day Diola rituals. Palm wine is the preferred Diola libation, although millet beer is occasionally used in Fogny.

Animal sacrifice is central to Diola offerings, as it was for Almada's Casangas. Chickens are the most common offering, with goats being more prestigious and valuable. The highest offering one can make is cattle, which are reserved for significant occasions such as rain ceremonies in time of drought, the bukut initiation, and funerals. The skulls of sacrificed animals are left at the shrine as momento of the offering. In Buluf, the most powerful and renowned rain and fertility shrine, in the village of Tendouk, occupies a large room. This σινατι is surrounded by animal skulls, suspended from the walls and ceiling of the building. It was probably just such tokens of past sacrifices that led Dapper to speculate about human sacrifice.

Sixteenth and seventeenth century descriptions of Diola religion, together with more detailed accounts of rituals common to the different peoples of the Casamance — Cacheu region permit a reconstruction of the major elements of religious ceremonies and offerings. All indications are that there was a great deal of continuity among the rituals of the different groups: Manjak-Papel-Brame, Bagnun-Cassanga, and Feloupe-Jaboundo-Arriata. This early evidence also strongly suggests that there was considerable continuity in Casamance rituals from the seventeenth century until the spread of Islam during the colonial period.

83 Brooks 1982.
84 Christian medals and images also came to be prized by non-Christian Diolas, another instance of the reciprocal influence between local religion and Christianity. Hecquard (1850) noted that the Fbrops and Bagnuns near Ziguinchor venerated Christian medals and images, to which they attributed the power to protect against accidents. Hecquard adds: les trai­tants portugais en avaient fait un objet de commerce et les troquaient contre des esclaves... Ce genre de commerce a cessé depuis peu, non parce que c'était immoral, mais parce que les objets ne sont plus appréciés depuis qu'un floup, qui portait un image du Christ, a été tué d'un coup de fusil. (Archives Nationales Françaises, Section Colonies, Fonds Spécial 185 M6 61.
85 Almada 1964:296 (translation with assistance from Dr. Beatrice Heintze).
86 On rare occasions, such as when a village shrine had to be moved, human sacrifice may have been practised; interviews with the elders of Batine ward, Thionk-Essil, 1975.
III. PRECOLONIAL MASKING TRADITIONS AS A SOURCE FOR EARLY CASAMANCE HISTORY

The distribution of common artistic traditions can be an important indication of historical contact among peoples. For the precolonial Lower Casamance, the diffusion of masking traditions reflects contact among ethnic groups and confirms the existence of long-distance trade that is suggested by early European sources. The widespread appearance of the Kumpo anti-witchcraft mask, in particular, substantiates written and oral evidence of extensive precolonial communication among the different groups in the region.

The sources for constructing a history of Diola artistic traditions are limited to a few written descriptions which are usually anecdotal, and to oral testimony. Pre-nineteenth century objects no longer exist. To try to discover the underlying aesthetic concepts that characterized a now vanished art, would be little more than conjecture. Only where there exists strong evidence for significant stylistic and ritual continuity between past mask forms and surviving styles, can one attempt an even a general assessment of precolonial aesthetics. Even where the evidence for such artistic continuities is convincing, only the most general assessment of precolonial art forms is warranted. If not carefully limited, such art history by analogy to contemporary works risks recreating the old anthropological stereotype of a static traditional culture. That image does not accord with available information about the history of the Lower Casamance and there is little reason to assume that art in the region has been static since 1500.

BOVINE MASKS

Diola masks can be divided into two categories: cattle-horned initiation masks and raffia fibre-covered figures who help to maintain social control and combat witchcraft. The horned masks, of coiled or woven raffia fibre, usually made from the leaves of the 'ronier' or fan palm tree, are worn by young men after their initiation. They are called usikoi - from usin, horns - and belong to an ancient cultural tradition that extends from the Gambia south through Bissau, coastal Guinea and Sierra Leone. Closer to the Casamance, such masks are documented to the seventeenth century. There is a marked similarity between Froger's 1697 illustration of a Gambian initiation mask, and contemporary Diola examples. (Illustrations 1 and 2) To the south, not only are the Diola related both linguistically and by agricultural techniques to the peoples of northern Bissau, but also the ritual sac-

1 See Weil 1971:288.
2 On Manjik horned masks see Antonio Carreira 1947b.

The bovine symbolism of the usikoi reflects the fact that, to the Diola, cattle are a form of wealth and a measure of a man's prestige. Large herds, probably of the relatively tse tse resistant 'ndama' breed, were seen by European visitors to the Casamance as early as Fernandes' time. The cattle were not raised primarily for food. Instead, herds were allowed to increase in size, rather like a stock portfolio. The animals were only consumed at important ritual occasions such as the funerals of wealthy men, the bukat initiation and, as Almada witnessed among the Cassangas, visits to the most important shrines.

The usikoi are intimately related to the bukat initiation. Each Diola community celebrates bukat, during which an entire generation of young men is initiated into manhood, about once every twenty years. A liminal period of instruction in the sacred forest is preceded by a celebration at which the father of each initiate - kambaj -- sacrifices cattle in the son's honor.

After two days of public celebration, the future initiates are led to the sacred grove. There, under the tutelage of elders, they undergo a month-long period of instruction in traditions, sexual knowledge, and a secret language. The youths endure hardship and strict discipline. At the end of this liminal period they emerge from the forest and are symbolically reborn as adult members of the community.

Before the Islamization of the northern Diola, pigs were often immolated at the bukat. Cattle were less frequently offered and would consequently have been of even more value. Nineteenth century travellers' descriptions of Diola customs also mention that the horns of sacrificed animals were preserved and hung on the walls of the extended family compound. In 1847, Tardieu reported that houses in Moomp-Kasa were decorated with cattle horns. Ornamental cattle horns served as a reminder of the wealth of the owner or, in the case of funeral sacrifices, they recalled the wealth of the departed. In 1852 Hecquard mentioned "hetacombs of cattle" in honor of the deceased and in 1885 a priest at the Holy Ghost Father's Carabane mission wrote:

Tout autour sur les parois de la case [à Itou] on apperçoit des cornes de boeuf qui s'y trouvent suspendues, c'est afin, disaient-ils, que leurs enfants voient que leurs ancêtres avaient des troupeaux, et afin de les inviter par là à marcher sur leurs traces.

3 Fernandes mentions the sacrifice of cattle as part of funeral ceremonies for kings of the Beufaris.
4 For the rain ceremony a black bull, color of the rain clouds, was sacrificed. Dietelin has observed similar color symbolism at Bambara rain ceremonies.
5 Hecquard 1850:409--434.
6 Archives de la Congrégation des Pères du St. Esprit (ACPSE) IV, boîte 159. One sees, all around on the walls of the house, cattle horns which, they say, hung there so that their children may see that their ancestors had large herds, and to inspire them to follow in their footsteps.
Further south, Bérenger-Féraud found the same custom among the peoples of the Rio Nunez (the Nalu, Ba'a, and Landuman). Among the southern Diola this practise is occasionally still followed today.

At the *bukut*, after the animals have been slaughtered, the initiates’ fathers fashion headgear using the cattle horns. Not to have such a helmet mask is a sign of poverty. These *usikoi* are worn and danced by the young men when they leave the sacred forest at the end of the initiation retreat. The horns are worn with pride as indication of the cattle — i.e. wealth — which have been sacrificed and they are also emblematic of physical strength. They symbolize, by synecdoche, the power associated with the youths’ new status as adults. Sometimes, the physical prowess of the *kombaj* would be ritually portrayed by the youth stepping on and crushing the horns. In brief, then, the *usikoi* stood for wealth and for the individual virtues such as physical strength, prized by the Diola, which would enable young men to achieve wealth and recognition as adults. These same traits were also commemo-rated by the horns preserved from funeral sacrifices.

In addition to the simple horned cap of some *usikoi*, there are full-faced *usikoi* (Illustration 3) which disguise the identity of the wearer. In spite of the difference in form, however, there is apparently no significant difference in function between the two varieties. The anonymity that the full-face version affords is appropriate for, during the initiation retreat, the boy has ritually died. The “coming out” marks his public rebirth as an adult. His old identity is replaced by a new adult one.

The full-face mask is characterized by an extremely broad forehead, which gives the whole an almost diamond-shaped aspect. Typical, too, are the prominent tubular eyes of woven fibre. These, together with the prominent forehead add to the sense of power associated with the young bull. A version from the village of Thionk-Esslil, known locally as *ejumbi* (Illustration 4) is decorated by red seeds which form a cross on the forehead. The color of these seeds echoes another important theme associated with bovine imagery: sexual potency. The name *ejumbi* may hint at the antiquity of the bovine mask. In Thionk-Esslil, the first or second *bukut* was known as “Djumbi”. Since each *bukut* is named after a significant event which was associated with it, it may well be that the masks were associated with the first *bukut*.

Red, referring to blood and to war, relates to the general theme of masculinity. Among the Diola, blood or the transmission of blood is also intimately linked to the concept of procreation. Certainly, the association of the bull with male sexual prowess is a metaphor not unfamiliar to Western art history.

It is difficult to reconstruct a history of the cattle-horned initiation mask among the Diola. Froger’s illustration from 1697, while similar in form to the smaller cap-like Diola mask, nevertheless depicts a Manding version. One cannot necessarily assume that late seventeenth century Diola *usikoi* were the same. While early references to Diola society, beginning with Fernandes in 1506 and continuing through Tardieu in 1847, mention both large herds of cattle and the sacrifice of animals at funerals, it is not possible to say with certainty that cattle-horned masks were fabricated and worn at the earliest *bukut*. There is, on the other hand, no strong reason to doubt their existence before the nineteenth century.

The *usikoi* certainly developed their present form no later than the mid-nineteenth century. Five Casamance masks which came to European museums as early as 1878 have the same form and decorative motifs as contemporary examples. An *usikoi* in Leiden’s Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, acquired in 1886, and one that has been in the Vienna Volkerkunde Museum since 1878 have the tubular eyes, conical forehead and triangular chin, as well as a rafia tuft from the top of the head to the chin, that characterize present-day masks. The Vienna piece is unadorned but the Leiden mask bears the remains of red seeds and the imprint of now lost shells, along with strips of vegetal fibre, found on twentieth century *usikoi*. Only the superior workmanship of the Leiden mask betrays its earlier date.

The earliest description of a Diola *usikoi* dancing was published by Lasnet in 1900.

Quand ils sont tous guéris, les circoncis font leur rentrée solennelle dans les villages … ils sont coiffés de casques en paille s’enfonçant jusqu’aux épaules, présentaient deux étuis à hauteur des yeux, ornés de graines rouges et surmontés de deux cornes de bois; une longue chevelure en flasque d’écorce de baobab leur fait suite et descend jusqu’à la ceinture; à leur ceinture sont attachés des grelots et une chevelure analogue à celle du casque qui retombe jusqu’aux pieds; ils portent à la main un baton de bois blanc de 1 m 20 environ surmonté d’un plumet tout droit fait de feuilles de palmier. Les moins fortunés n’ont pas de casque. 11

It is tempting to hypothesize that the *usikoi* is the product of a rather long evolutionary process, one which, however, was very largely completed long before the nineteenth century. The hint of a much longer stylistic continuity provided by Froger’s illustration, along with oral traditions in Thionk-Esslil that mention as many as fifteen generations of initiations since “Djumbi”, seem to support the argument for historical continuity in the masks. The *bukut* is, after all, the core of Diola tradition, and it has been less open to rapid change than many other aspects.
of Diola society. It is not unlikely that components of the most important role in the Initiation as the masks were also subject to only the most gradual evolution, once they had been introduced.

It is significant that the oldest museum pieces predate the widespread development during the colonial period of Diola urban migration. This essentially rules out the possibility that the initiation masks were appropriated by Diola immigrants to the Gambia. Such a conclusion would anyway have been extremely implausible. The usikoi, like the Initiation, is of more-southerly origin. Its beginnings are undoubtedly to be found among the closely related groups of the Basse Casamance -- Bissau -- Guinea region.

The decoration of the usikoi and its attendant symbolism are common to a broad range of Diola artistic creations. A mid-nineteenth century description of warriors’ helmets from Djougoutes shows that some of the elements associated with masculine virtues in the usikoi also appeared in that context. In 1862 Lt. Vallon wrote, “The people of Djougoutes use as defensive weapons a helmet, decorated with shells and red seeds.” It is unclear of what material these helmets were constructed, although they may have been made of woven fibre, much like the initiation masks. The decoration is, however, significant. Both shells and red seeds are still used to embellish usikoi in Buluf.

In the mid-nineteenth century, cowries were used as a form of currency by the Diola. As in other parts of West and Central Africa, their use as decoration served to imply wealth. Red seeds, in the context of initiation masks, symbolize blood and, by extension, masculine strength. This symbolic meaning is fully congruent with their use on warriors’ costumes. In both contexts, red seeds, associated with blood, stand for aggressiveness and strength. The evident impulse to decorate the basic, functional form of the helmet is also congruent with the embellishment that often characterizes contemporary Diola masquerade costumes such as the usikoi. It is unfortunate, indeed, that no examples of these mid-nineteenth century head-coverings have been preserved.

The Diola usikoi, with its implications of just barely controlled strength and potency, is closely related to similar initiation masks found among the Diola who now live in the Gambia. Those immigrants probably brought the mask with them. In addition, it is related to Manjak masks from northern coastal Bissau, and it recalls initiation masks made of wood and cattle horns, from the Bissagos Islands.

The usikoi, in fact, belongs to what might be termed a family of bovine masks. These masks are found from the Casamance south through coastal Bissau and throughout the Bissagos Islands. The Diola actually form the present northern limit of the range of these masks. Everywhere in this zone, the bovine headpieces play their most important role in ceremonies associated with men’s initiation.

12 Vallon 1862:457.
13 Marche 1879:77.
14 Personal communication, David Gamble, January 14, 1982.

Closer perusal of cattle horn masks among the Diolas’ southern neighbors adds further evidence of the close cultural ties that link all of the groups living in this region. These esthetic and ritual ties are especially evident with the Bijagos and the Manjak.

The most fully developed form of the bovine initiation mask is that of the Bijagos. Esthetically, ritually, and in terms of variations on the bovine theme, cattle symbolism here attains its fullest development. Among the Bijagos, ritual dances associated with male initiation mime the strength and even the sexual courting practices of bulls.

The central iconographic importance of the bull to the Bijagos peoples has been enunciated by Santos Lima.

It is an incontrovertible fact that the bull represents, among all other animals, a particular attraction for the Bijagos. It would appear that this predilection is in accord with the strength, the beauty of form, and the bravery of the bull, especially of wild animals, attributes which the Bijagos hold indispensable to a man, and which in this case, are termed ‘macho.’

Such association of the bull with masculine power and sexual prowess is not peculiar to the Bijagos. Since before ancient Crete and through Picasso it holds a prominent position in the iconography of Western art, as well. However, the emphasis which the Bijagos place on this symbolism distinguishes them from their northern neighbors. Even outside of initiation rituals, bovine masks hold an important position in their art. As figureheads on the pirogues of local chiefs, carved wooden cattle heads are an aggressive symbol of sea-borne military strength. Even Bijagos children are exposed to this dominant symbolism of masculinity. Small boys fashion figurines out of mud, a fine instance of art serving as a means of socialization. Among the Bijagos then, cattle symbolism appears in a much broader range of artistic representations and is more fully developed than among the Diola.

In this respect, the Manjak appear to be much closer to the Diola, as one would expect for two such closely related groups. The Manjak kataqa, the men’s initiation, which takes place every ten years, is similar in many particulars to Diola Initiation. The initiates, or kataba, to use the Portuguese spelling -- the term is startlingly close to the Diola word, kambaj -- wear helmet masks of bark and raffia skirts when they leave their initiation retreat. The Papel, part of the Manjak cultural group, fashion circumcision masks of considerable complexity which incorporate cattle horns. One variant of this helmet mask substitutes thick sticks for the horns. With these formidable poles, the initiates attack each other and

16 Excellent examples are found in the Tishman Collection, N.Y. and in the Museum für Völkerkunde, Hamburg (cat. no. 23.54.6). The latter piece was collected before 1929 by E. Hinte. For illustrations of masked dances see Bernatzik 1933: II, especially plate 205.
18 See Bernatzik 1933: II, plates 163–164.
19 On Manjak initiation see Carreira 1947b.
20 op.cit. 116.
endeavor to knock off their opponent’s headdress. They thereby act out the dominant bovine symbolism of aggressive power and strength.

Along with the Manjak-Papel, the Balantes too have a horned mask, worn by a raffia-clad dancer, that closely approximates the Diola usikoi. The closest stylistic similarities then, are found between the Diola and their immediate southern neighbors. The possibility of direct borrowing cannot be ruled out. If such borrowing occurred, it was part of the enduring process of cultural contact and mixing that definitely affected the Manjak and Papel, and that probably extended as well to the Diola.

The evidence of the cattle horn masks accords with the picture of close parentage among these four groups. In addition, the distribution pattern of the horned masks, with their fullest development among the Bijagos and the major part of their range lying south of the Casamance, strongly suggests southern origins, very possibly in present-day Bissau, for the bovine mask.

North of the Casamance, there do exist examples of bovine masks. During the twentieth century, however, the presence of these masks in the Lower Gambia is a direct result of Diola migration into that district. There does not appear to be a continuous tradition of cattle horn initiation masks dating back to the time of Froger’s illustration. The earlier artistic tradition may have disappeared as a result of the thorough Islamization of the Manding.

It should be stressed that the spread of Islam in the Senegambia has not led inevitably to the loss of indigenous masking traditions. Nevertheless, in the Gambia, the maraboutic wars of the mid-nineteenth century expressly attacked pre-Islamic traditions that had survived in “Soninke” culture. In that specific, polarized military situation, the cattle-horned masks associated with non-Muslim initiation ceremonies very likely did come under attack. The reintroduction of usikoi into the Lower Gambia by the Diola is, therefore, most likely a twentieth century phenomenon. The implications of such a contemporary development are noteworthy. For, as urban migration continues to bring members of rural communities to the cities, the migrants bring with them dances and masquerades. In the new setting, these traditions may become secularized. As the usikoi in the Gambia demonstrate, however, the traditions do not necessarily disappear. In fact, the masquerade traditions may even spread to other groups.

One form of the Diola ejumbi has spread to the Gambia, where the Mandinka have picked it up from Diola migrants. The Gambian version, too, shows the characteristic broad, triangular forehead, narrowing to a pointed chin. The name of the Gambian mask, “Red Spear”, is a rather thinly veiled reference to the sexual theme. The broader symbolic meaning of fertility and fecundity is revealed by the green leaves, symbol of lushness, growth, and fruitfulness, that entirely envelope the body of the wearer (Illustration 6). The leaf-covered or ‘fita’ figure is itself indigenous to the Gambia. The earliest illustration, from Dochard and Gray in 1825, clearly shows stylistic continuity with the contemporary leaf costume (Illustration 6).

The geographical distribution of woven fibre and cattle horn initiation masks, together with stylistic variations on this basic masking type among the different peoples of Casamance and Bissau, link the Diola to their southern neighbors the Manjak, and, more distantly, to the Bijagos. Both of the latter groups also have figurative wood-carving traditions. The Bijagos fashion wooden cattle masks and anthropomorphic shrines, while the Manjak also carve some of their shrines into simplified, vaguely human forms. The Diola, on the other hand, do not make any figurative wooden sculpture nor, at least among the northern Diola, any carved shrines. In this respect, the Diola constitute an artistic frontier.

This “artistic frontier” reflects the Diolas’ geographical and social location. The Lower Casamance is at the northern limit of the sub-tropical forest and, until the end of the last century, it was also the northern boundary of the area that remained outside of direct contact with the Muslim states to the north and east. The savannah peoples of Senegal have not, within the past several centuries, maintained wood-carving traditions. The forest peoples living south of the Diola have kept such traditions. It is, therefore, reasonable to speculate whether, at an earlier time, the Diola may not have had their own wood carvings. This hypothesis is particularly intriguing, in view of the fluid nature of geographical boundaries between the Diola and other groups, and given the manifold cultural and ritual similarities between the Diola and the Manjak, similarities which bespeak extensive historical contact. One wonders whether the forked stick which constitutes the center of so many Diola shrines was always an uncarved piece of wood.

There is, in Lasnet’s 1900 discussion of Diola religion, a tantalizing hint that carved shrines did, indeed exist. Speaking of the shrines of the Diola south of the Casamance River, Lasnet wrote.

Parfois on les abre ins sous une paillette ou sous une case en pie; leur autel est représenté par quelques recipientes en terre placés au pied d’un arbre, ou on leur offre du vin de palme ou on les arrose de sang des animaux.

This quite accurate description is followed by the statement, “Ces fétiches sont tres nombreux; quelquefois ils ont la forme de statue.” Lasnet may have been mistaken, or he may have misidentified as Diola a Papel-Manjak carving. But there

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21 Bernatzik 1933:II, pl. 148. This competition recalls the long initiates’ sticks described by Lasnet and still carried by Diola initiates today.
22 Thionk-Essil was among the first Diola communities to take part in seasonal migration to the Gambia. It is therefore conceivable that the ejumbi was the specific inspiration for the Mandinka “Red Spear”. On Red Spear, see Weil.
23 On the fita figure see Weil.
24 See Bernatzik 1933:II, plate 207.
25 See illustration in Carreira 1947b:64.
26 Lasnet 1900:160. This passage refers specifically to the area around Carabane and to the nearby Bayotte peoples: Sometimes they are sheltered beneath a small thatched roof or in a dried mud house; the altar is represented by some earthen receptacles placed at the base of a tree, one offers them palm wine or freshens them with animal blood.
is certainly the possibility that some of the Diola in the area near Carabane did carve at least some of their shrines into figures, as late as the end of the nineteenth century.

KANKURÀN MASKS

A second category of Diola masks includes figures that consist entirely of fibre from head to foot. The two main examples of this form are Kumpo and Kankuràn. Kankuràn, most likely of Manding origin, belongs to the group of ‘fara’ or shredded bark-covered figures.27 According to Peter Weil, Kankuràn served to apply social sanctions, without the risk of engendering societal discord. At initiations it enforced discipline; as the embodiment of impartial and anonymous justice, Kankuràn also legitimized punishment of the initiates. Formerly, the figure may have administered oaths, a function now taken over by the ulema among the Muslim Manding.28

The introduction of Kankuràn among the Diola appears to have been directly associated with the spread of Islam. The mask reached the Lower Casamance at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the present century, at precisely the time that the first Diola became Muslims. Today, in Muslim Diola communities, Kankuràn plays a role in the bukú, where it helps to enforce discipline.

One of the first descriptions of a Diola Kankuràn, at a 1939 initiation retreat near Ziguinchor, leaves little doubt about its Manding origins. The initiates were under the tutelage of Muslim elders who, on occasion, even spoke Manding among themselves. The observer, a Catholic priest, had come to “rescue” members of his congregation from a two-month seclusion in the sacred forest.29 As a distinctly unwelcome visitor, he attracted the attention of Kankuràn and the two of them nearly came to blows. Father Doutrémepulch was in a position to provide a close and vivid description of the masked figure:

... un individu masqué, complètement caché par un vêtement de fibres couleur ocre, gesticule. Ses mains sont enveloppées ainsi que ses jambes et ses pieds: sa figure est cachée par une tunique de fibres qui pendent de sa tête. Il tient dans chaque main un coup-coup... ce qui ajoute à son aspect terrifiant, au moins pour les enfants.30

Kankuràn demanded absolute obedience from the initiates. When he let out a yell, they were expected to prostrate themselves and answer his questions in unison.

29 Most communities now shorten the retreat to two or three weeks.
30 Doutrémepulch 1939: A masked individual, completely hidden by a garment of ochre fibres, gesticulates. His hands are covered as well as his legs and feet: his face is hidden by a fibre tuft that hangs from his head. He holds in each hand a coup-coup... which adds to his terrifying demeanor, at least for the children.

To those who challenged his authority there was the threat of physical violence. Then, as in Muslim Diola communities today, Kankuràn served not simply as a threat to the initiates; he was also their protector.

By his threatening mien, Kankuràn enforces discipline and obedience during the period of liminality. This is the time, during the retreat in the forest, when the initiates are instructed in traditional lore and esoteric knowledge and are put through demanding and even demeaning paces, aimed at teaching respect for the elders and at mollifying the most headstrong adolescent. Kankuràn has a second function: to protect the youths against malevolent forces, whether in the form of sorceror (assay) or priest. Both roles work together to ensure continued social harmony in the community. By fighting against witchcraft, Kankuràn opposes the supernatural forces that would otherwise spread discord in the community and harm individuals. By enforcing respect for authority, the masked figure helps to engender respect for the norms of social conduct that provide the surest defense against witches and thus further the goal of social harmony.

KUMPO

The other major Diola masked figure, Kumpo, is found among a broad range of peoples from the Gambia through the Casamance and south into Bissau. Written sources describing Kumpo among the Manding of the Gambia date from as early as the 1730s: this provides unusual historical depth for the study of a West African masking tradition.

Like Kankuràn, Kumpo traditionally worked to mete out discipline, particularly to women and uninitiated boys. A second, more important function was to detect and fight against witches (assay, pl. kusaay). Both Kumpo and Kankuràn belong to the category of spirit forces who possess supernatural powers which they place at the service of the community. These “têtes clairvoyantes” — to use the French term often employed by different ethnic groups — are frequently fearsome, but they are at least potentially beneficial. Their anti-witchcraft role seems to have been interchangeable. Most ethnic groups used Kumpo, but some turned to Kankuràn.31

In appearance, the Diola Kumpo is remarkably similar to the figure described by Francis Moore during his travels along the Gambia River in 1732.32 Moore wrote:

On the 6th of May at night, I was visited by a Mumbo Jumbo, an idol, which is among the Mandingoese a kind of a cunning mystery. It is dressed in a long coat made of the

31 The Bajaranké use Kankan to fight sorcery, while the Bagam and Diola use Kumpo. On the Bajaranké see Simmons 1971.
32 Mumbo Jumbo was also described in 1795 by Mungo Park, in terms very similar to Moore's. Park emphasized the mask's role controlling women and resolving disputes among co-wives.
When the Kumpo dances, the swirling raffia tumbles and cascades in the moonlight. This is entrusted to the care of initiated young men. Members of the association function of the Diola Kumpo. During the public dances where Kumpo appears. In many communities, there is a Kumpo association in each ward.

In the Casamance today, Kumpo is made of ‘ronier’ tree fibres which cover the dancer’s body and head. The entire form is topped by a stick several feet long. When the Kumpo dances, the swirling raffia tumbles and cascades in the moonlight. He becomes the visual embodiment of electrical energy, an energy which cleanses the community of the kussay (Illustrations 8–9).

Like the “Mumbo Jumbo” of which Moore spoke, the Diola Kumpo (or Ekumpay) is entrusted to the care of initiated young men. Members of the association must not, however, be married. In many communities, there is a Kumpo association in each ward.

Among the northern Diola, most of whom are Muslim, Kumpo still functions to ensure social control. Although this control is not overtly exercised, as it was among the eighteenth century Manding, oral traditions collected by L.-V. Thomas show that the maintenance of domination over women was formerly an important function of the Diola Kumpo. During the public dances where Kumpo appears, an accompanying figure named Samai frequently chases away women, small boys, and visiting anthropologists who have wandered too close to him. The primary function of Kumpo is now, however, to provide an opportunity for community-wide dancing and singing and for acrobatic dance competitions. These dances themselves serve an important purpose: they bring together the entire community and ensure a time of communal spirit, mediated by the together-playing of drummers, participants — there are no disinterested observers — and dancers. This unifying role may be the most significant social function of the contemporary Kumpo.

In this latter respect, it may not have been coincidence that Kumpo appeared in Thionk-Essil (Niaganan ward) in December 1978 on the very night that many teenagers, returned from Dakar for the harvest and winter holidays, had planned to hold an “edansay”, with record player and disco music, in the local “foyer des jeunes”. Needless to say, nearly everyone turned up not at the dance, but in the village clearing, under the moonlight with Kumpo. The youths were, at least for that evening, reintegrated into their home community.

In such Muslim communities as Thionk-Essil, Kumpo’s appearance is often associated with the Muslim New Year. This is a time when forces from the invisible world, both benevolent and harmful, are particularly potent. Consequently, the village needs all the protection it can find. Kumpo affords such protection. The fact that the mask was not originally associated with Muslim rituals has not precluded its use in villages which are today over 90 percent Muslim. There are no vocal protests from the local imam, when Kumpo appears to dance on the evening of the first day of the first month of the new year. It is especially significant that, among the Diola of Buluf, the spread of Islam has not led to the disappearance of this anti-witchcraft mask.

This situation is similar to the survival of the Ghain anti-witchcraft figure described by Bravmann, among the Muslim Mandé of Boundoukou, in west central Ghana and Ivory Coast. In fact, both Ghain and Kumpo appear in their respective societies during the important ceremonies that mark the beginning of the New Year. Furthermore, the survival of Kumpo among the Muslim Diola corroborates Bravmann’s suggestion that fear of witchcraft plays a vital role in the retention of masking traditions among West African Muslims. In fact, the historical spread of Kumpo among the peoples of the Lower Casamance may well be directly associated with the mask’s ability to combat witchcraft.

KUMPO: HISTORICAL ORIGINS

Oral sources and early European travellers’ reports indicate that Kumpo is of considerable antiquity in the Lower Casamance, where it very likely originated among the Bagnun. Central to Kumpo’s role in the Casamance and the Gambia is its status as a “tête clairvoyante”. Among the Manding, this trait is expressed by the concept of “kung fano” or “wide head”; the mask supposedly has the ability to identify sorcerers. Identical concepts are expressed in the Casamance by both the Bagnun and the Diola. To the Diola, the interpenetration of the physical world and the invisible world is reflected in the existence of individuals who have access to supernatural powers and have the ability freely to change into animal form. There are two categories of such beings. First, there are the malevolent spirits, people who transform themselves into animal familiars in the night and then draw off the life force of their human victims, causing the latter to sicken and perhaps to die. The Diola refer to these “eaters of souls” as kussay or kusanga (“witches”, or “cannibal-witches”). These kussay engendered great fear in all Casamance societies, for they were responsible for epidemics, drought, and other catastrophes. Typical of the intense fear and concern they aroused, was the reaction of the Balantes, recorded by Hecquard in 1850:

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33 Moore 1738:116.
35 Thomas 1959:II. 433.
36 Bravmann 1974.
One does not normally become a beneficent spirit by choice. Although the status of the human community. They are able to identify the kussay, intercept them on their nefarious nightly rounds, and even kill them. The Diola refer to these beneficent beings as “kotokofe hit bukan”, literally “They never munch people up.” One does not normally become a beneficent spirit by choice. Although the status is often passed on from father to son, it is somewhat akin to a divine gift, in the words of one informant, “Bien qu’il le veu ou pas, c’est forcément qu’il le soit.”

Historically, Kumpo’s prestige and importance derived from his proven efficacy against witches. Supernatural powers are still widely attributed to the mask. One urban Muslim informant, explaining the superior power of the Bagnun version of the figure, vividly described Kumpo’s ability to dance weightlessly on the leaves at the very top of a tree.

The key to understanding Kumpo’s wide geographical range lies in the universal appeal of a figure that could combat the ever-present danger of witchcraft. Where there was extensive communication between adjacent ethnic groups, Kumpo’s powers could readily have been translated into the similar idiom of the neighboring group. This is precisely what happened as Kumpo spread among the Diola. To establish a general chronology for this diffusion is difficult. Information about precolonial trade networks in the Lower Casamance, however, provides an important clue to this historical reconstruction.

Kumpo is older than most studies of Diola history have suggested. Several scholars have implied that Kumpo is a twentieth century phenomenon among the Diola. Thomas, for example, cites local traditions that the dance was introduced about 1900, either from Bissau or from the Manding to the north. At first glance, this theory seems in accord with recent Casamance history. In the Casamance, the French were able to impose their colonial authority only after 1893. This brought to an end the regional warfare and continuous slave raids that had convulsed the Lower Gambia and the Casamance since the 1840s. The advent of peace stimulated migration. Returned migrants formed the core of the first Muslim communities among the Diola and it is conceivable that Kumpo, too, was brought from the Gambia to the Casamance by these individuals. If this were the case, then the northern Diola would represent an intriguing example of a people who accepted a new masking tradition at the same time and from the same source that introduced them to Islam.

Less plausible is a theory propounded by Girard (1969). He claims that Kumpo was introduced in Diola villages at the moment when each community was converting to Islam, and that the masked figure was a device intentionally used by the elders to control the youths and counteract the heightened individualism fostered by Islam. There are problems with this thesis. It rests on the assumption that Islam suddenly attracted the bulk of the population when, in fact, Islamization was a gradual process that extended over two generations. Islamization was itself a response to, rather than a primary cause of increased individualism in Diola society. Those centripetal forces that weakened paternal control over their migrant sons were engendered by travel to the Gambia and by the spread of a cash economy. Efforts to counteract those changes would have occurred, most probably, in the institution already aimed at preserving tradition and enhancing the authority of the elders—the bakut. This may, in fact, help to explain the spread of Kunkurani, but not of Kumpo.

Kumpo, by contrast, was in the hands of younger men who were the most directly affected by economic changes and who comprised the largest group of early converts to Islam. Girard’s theory that Kumpo was adopted to counter the growing autonomy of young adult men is, consequently, difficult to credit. In addition, at least in communities neighboring Balingore in eastern Buluf where Girard worked, oral sources indicate that Kumpo’s arrival predated the spread of Islam.

Girard also suggests that Kumpo was already widespread among the Bagnun and that the Diola may have borrowed the figure directly from them. With this observation he makes a significant contribution to the history of Casamance masking traditions for, if Kumpo first was danced by the Bagnun, then its spread to the Diola need not have waited for the development of migration to the Gambia.

The Bagnun themselves may have begun to dance Kumpo long before the colonial period. Certainly, the reputation which the Bagnun enjoy throughout the Casamance for spiritual powers is enhanced by possession of a powerful masked figure associated with protection against witchcraft. In view of their reputation, one is tempted to ask whether the Bagnun may not have been the original Casamance possessors of this mask. The Bagnun may then also have been the ultimate source from which, at an early date, Kumpo spread northwards from the Casamance into the Gambia.

Several factors support the idea that Kumpo may have been danced first among the Bagnun and then spread to the Diola. First, Bagnun informants corroborated Girard’s statement that their masked figure enjoys special powers. Casamance peoples tend to attribute greater force to the original shrine or spirit and to those who possess it, than to its offshoots. Second, the Bagnun were in fact the first inhabitants of much of the Lower Casamance, including the greater part of Buluf
as well as some areas south of the Casamance River and most of Fogny. Throughout
the region now inhabited by the northern Diola, as early as the sixteenth century
the Diola and Bagnun lived in close proximity to one another. The long history
of interaction between the two groups includes trade and warfare, but also intermarriage and assimilation.

Near the Soungrougrou trade route there was also extensive contact between
Diola and Bagnun. Not all of this intercourse was entirely peaceful. From the late
seventeenth century, the Diola of the "Kujamatay" were often subjected to slave raids42 and, by the early 1700s, the territories of the two Bagnun "emperors" of
Fogy had been partially depopulated as a result of this trade.43 The gradual
dissolution of the Bagnun "empire", followed by the assimilation of the remaining
Bagnun in Fogy by the Diola, would have led to some cultural amalgamation, just
as it did earlier in Buluf. Assimilation is, indeed, implied by Francis Moore's descrip-
tion of the Bagnun rulers of Fogy as belonging to "a Banyoon Race, which is a
sort of Floops".44

Throughout the northern Basse Casamance, both written and oral sources in-
dicate there was such a merging of Bagnun and Diola. In an historical context it
is difficult as well as misleading to speak of the two groups as if they have always
been completely distinct and clearly differentiated entities. Rather, there was often
a fluidity to ethnic boundaries. Local populations of Bagnuns more than once were
incorporated gradually into populations who spoke dialects that we now call "Diola".

At the trading entrepôt of Geregia near Vintain Creek, there was extensive close
contact among members of several communities. Bagnun, Diola, Manding, and
Luso-Africans; Muslims, Christians, and adherents of local religions, all inhabited
the village when Moore passed through in 1732. All the African peoples represented
at Geregia and throughout the Soungrougrou region shared an abiding concern
about the dangers of witchcraft. Certainly, any spiritual force or being which had
demonstrated success against the depredations of cannibal-witches would have
attracted close and widespread attention. Conditions must therefore have been
conducive to the diffusion of masked anti-witchcraft figures. Eventually, the
Kumpo masquerade spread through the Lower Casamance.

In accordance with this scenario, one might expect to find documentation of the
presence of Kumpo among the Bagnun before the colonial period. In spite of the
scarcity of precolonial information about Casamance rituals, this evidence of
Kumpo's early presence does exist.

By the second half of the nineteenth century, the Bagnun were confined largely
to the east bank of the Soungrougrou, as a result of decades of attacks by the
Manding of Pakao, the Diola of Fogy, and the Balantes from Bissau. In 1872, a
Dr. Hamon visited the Casamance. His notes provided the basis for Bérenger-Féraud's
account, published seven years later, of the peoples of the region. Describing the

42 See chapter two.
43 Moore 1738: 24.
44 Moore 1738: 74.

Bagnuns' fear of witchcraft — a fear undoubtedly exacerbated by the extreme so-
cial dislocation they had recently suffered — Bérenger-Féraud wrote:

"Ils croient aux sorcières, comme les Floups et Balantes et, plus facilement encore que
les premiers, ils imposent l'épreuve du poison à ceux qui sont accusés d'entretenir des
relations avec les esprits infernaux. L'accusation se fait d'une manière assez étrange
pour que nous la reportions d'après les indications que nous fournit le docteur Hamon:
par une nuit obscure, un individu qui reste inconnu et que le vulgaire considère comme
un être fantastique du nom de Mamma-Diombo, apparaît masqué et couvert de "euilles"
qui empêchent de la reconnaître. Il designe à haute voix qui sont suscités de sorcellerie,
et les individus dont le nom a été prononcé sont obligés d'aller se laver de l'acccusation
par l'épreuve du mancone".45

It is conceivable that Bagnun oral traditions could shed some light on the
question of whether Kumpo (Mumbo-Jumbo; Mamma-Diombo) originated in the
Casamance or in the Gambia. However, if it is of Manding origin, it must have
reached the Bagnun several centuries ago. At the time of Hamon's visit and since
the 1840s, relations between the Bagnun and the Manding had been characterized
by sporadic fighting, as the Manding forced the Bagnun out of the area east of the
Soungrougrou. It therefore seems highly unlikely that Mamma-Jombo, in 1872,
was a recent cultural borrowing from the Manding. If the masquerade was not
indigenous to the Bagnun, it had very likely reached them before the period of war-
fare, during the centuries of Bagnun ascendancy in long distance trade with the
Gambia.

Kumpo certainly reached the Casamance before the imposition of French
colonial rule. The date of its diffusion among the Diola remains uncertain. Based on
evidence of commercial relations between the northern Diola and the Bagnun
dating to the seventeenth century, and on the assimilation in Buluf and Fogy of
many Bagnun by the Diola, it seems highly probable that Kumpo has also been
danced in some Diola communities since well before the nineteenth century.

CONCLUSION

Close study of early European records, combined with oral histories and evi-
dence of local masking traditions, all point to the same picture of precolonial

45 Bérenger-Féraud 1879:299. They believe in sorcerers, like the Floups and Balantes and,
more readily than the Floups, they impose the poison test on those who have been accused
of maintaining contact with infernal spirits. The accusation occurs in a manner sufficiently
remarkable that we shall report it, according to the information supplied to us by Dr.
Hamon: on a dark night, a person who remains anonymous and whom the vulgar folk
consider to be a fantastical being named Mamma-Diombo, appears masked and covered with
leaves which prevent recognition. He designates in a loud voice those who are accused of
sorcery and these people must clear themselves by the 'mancone' ordeal.
society in the Lower Casamance. Ethnic groups were not isolated from one another as scholars have long assumed. Peaceful trade, particularly along the north-south axis of the Soungrougrou River, but also supplemented by west-to-east commerce from Buluf and Fogny to Geregia, ensured contact among the diverse peoples of the region. Even competition for territory and the warfare which interrupted trade relations during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, resulted in assimilation of many Bagnun by the Diola. Among the important elements of Bagnun culture to be adopted by Diola communities was the Kumpo masquerade.

**IV. 1700 TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COLONIAL RULE**

In Fogny and along the Soungrougrou trade route during the eighteenth century, there was continued political unrest as the Diola pressured the Bagnun and took over much of their territory. Commercially, the most significant developments were the continuing decline of the Portuguese and the cumulative, disruptive impact of generations of slave trading on local commerce. With the increasing importance of French and English trade centers in the Gambia, the French at Albreda and the English at James Fort, the commercial center of gravity moved north away from Cacheu. The Portuguese decline exacerbated the already weakened position of the Bagnun, whose role as the dominant African middlemen and long distance traders was now increasingly taken over by the Manding. For the historian, a significant consequence of this economic change is the drying up of Portuguese written sources for the Casamance. As a result, the eighteenth century is not as well documented as is the preceding century.

The most detailed eighteenth century description of the northern Casamance is Francis Moore's account of visits which he made to Geregia and to Vintain in 1730 and 1731. The picture which he drew of these trading centers at the northern terminus of the Cacheu-Casamance-Gambia network is essentially a confirmation of de la Courbe's and Coelho's observations of half a century earlier. The Bagnun "emperors" still maintained nominal control over Fogny, but their political supremacy was obviously precarious. The Diola continued to pressure them:

> The next country is Fonia . . . governed by two emperors who are of the Banyoon race, which is a sort of Floop, and have each their distinct districts. And now I speak of Emperors, I must observe that when these countries were first discovered, they were then large and worthy of that title, but tho' they are now much lessened not only in territories, but by having sold into slavery infinite numbers of their subjects, yet do they still retain their ancient grandeur of title.¹

¹ Moore 1738:24.

The slave raiding that had been noted by Coelho had taken its toll on the hinterland. Depopulation may have been a cause of the decline of the Bagnun state, just as extensive slave raiding in the hinterland of other West African states such as Dahomey served ultimately to weaken the power of those states.

Equally important as a cause of Bagnun decline was the growing Diola presence. Again, this was the continuation of a trend noted by de la Courbe in the eighteenth century. Moore presents an image of the Diola as controlling a very large area. Their society was also clearly oriented both towards waging war and towards self-defense. Moore writes of the Diola-Fogny that they:

> 1 Moore 1738:24.
1700 to the establishment of colonial rule

[are] in a manner wild. They border close to the Mandingoes and are bitter enemies to each other. Their country is of a vast extent, but they have no king among them, each of their towns being fortified with sticks drove all around, and filled up with clay. They are independent of each other, and under the government of no one chief, notwithstanding which, they unite so firmly that all the force of the Mandingoes cannot get the better of them. They were not limited to the Manding, but were also directed against the Bagnun. On February 2, 1731 one of the Emperors of Fogny, a man named Tassel, arrived at James Fort to plead with the English for gunpowder and ammunition, “in order to defend himself against some people with whom he is at war”. These people were undoubtedly the Diola of Fogny, whose depredations had already caused the territorial losses noted by Moore.

The defensive palisades which surrounded Diola villages served to protect them from slave raids. The continued instability in the hinterland of the Fogny state must have had a disruptive influence on the beeswax trade. Yet, remnants of that earlier trade remained. There were still some Luso-African merchants settled at Vintain at the time of Moore’s visit. They, as well as French and English factors, continued to carry on trade in ivory and wax. Vintain itself had become the home of a quite diverse population, all settled in or regularly travelling through the village. The Muslims had even constructed a mosque, which Moore found quite impressive.

In Vintain, unlike the countryside to the south, relations among the diverse groups were apparently peaceful. Trade — even if much of it was in human merchandise — was still the main business of the community. Away from the commercial entrepôts, however, the disruptive influence of the slave trade remained strong. Into the nineteenth century, a burgeoning domestic slave trade led to increasingly frequent slave raids. In 1806 Durand wrote that Vintain, the residence of the Emperor of Fogny, “was formerly of more importance than it is today”. The commercial decline of Vintain continued into the nineteenth century.

Further south along the Gambia-Cacheu trade route, Portuguese domination continued through the eighteenth century. Ziguinchor remained the center for their commerce on the Casamance River. In 1785 Golberry described this Portuguese settlement:

wo sie einen sehr vortheilhaft Bandel an Sklaven, Elfenbein, rohem Wachs, roben Hauten, Gewürzen und Färbelöhne mit den Felupsgern und den Bagnunsgern treiben, welche an den Ufern dieses Fusses wohnen.4

The Bagnuns remained the dominant African population in the region of Ziguinchor. There, unlike in Fogny, they were not reduced to fighting a rearguard action to stave off the incursions of other groups. The Bagnuns’ stronger position south of the Casamance River very likely reflects the important commercial role which they continued to play around Ziguinchor. There, they had not been supplanted as long-distance traders by the Manding. In consequence, the economic foundation of Bagnun society in the southern Casamance remained intact and, culturally, they were still the dominant group in the region.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The abolition of the Atlantic slave trade, accompanied by the growth of “legitimate commerce”, had far-reaching effects not only on those West African peoples who had enjoyed direct commercial relations with Europeans, but also on peoples further inland who had either supplied captives or suffered from slave raids. In the Gambia River basin and along the Middle Casamance, the fifty years beginning about 1830 saw the rapid expansion of groundnut cultivation as a cash crop. Although no significant quantity of peanuts was grown during this period in the Lower Casamance, this agricultural development had profound implications there, too. Much of the labor force used to grow the groundnuts consisted of domestic slaves. There was, therefore, an increased demand for captives. Far from quelling the Casamance slave trade, abolition and the rise of “legitimate commerce” caused an increase in slave raids and trade.

The decline in Portuguese commercial fortunes inspired the French, who were seeking to outflank English competition and shipping blockades of Albreda in the Gambia,6 to establish a trading center in the Casamance basin. In 1828 M. Dangles led a mission which recommended the establishment of a French post in the Casamance.7 In 1837, an expedition led by the Commandant at Gorée, Dagorne, reported that Portuguese commerce at Ziguinchor posed no threat to increased French activity in the region.8 Encouraged by the potential for trade in wax, ivory, animal hides, and rice, the commission recommended that Carabane, an island near the south bank at the mouth of the river, and Sédhiou, in the Middle Casamance on the north bank of the river, be developed as entrepôts.9

The 1828 and 1837 reports are, parenthetically, the earliest French sources to use the term “Jola” or “Yola”. In 1837 the name was applied inconsistently, in one passage to “Les Yola, qui habitent les fles de l’embouchure de la Casamance”.

2 op. cit., 36.
3 op. cit., 64.
4 Golbery 1803:162: Where they carry on a very profitable trade in slaves, ivory, raw wax, hides, spices, and wood for dyes with the Felups and the Bagnuns, who inhabit this bank of the river.
5 Brooks 1975.
6 Archives Nationales, Section Outre-Mer (ANFOM) Sénégal et Dépendances IV, dossier 2.
7 Archives Nationales, Section Colonies, Fonds Spécial, 185 MI 45.
9 Ibid.
in contradistinction to "les Feloups", but in another passage to "les Yolas des deux rives". The appellation had not yet assumed its later, generic implication.

With the establishment of Carabane in 1836-7, much of the trade between the Portuguese and the Diola and Bagnun was immediately short-circuited, to the benefit of the French. Within months of the opening of the new comptoir, Diolas from both banks of the river were coming to exchange quantities of rice and wax for guns, textiles, iron, copper, and other items. Among those who travelled to Carabane were Diola from Djougoutes (Bulufl). Still feared as slave-raiders, the people of Djougoutes were nevertheless quite willing to mix legitimate commerce with a continuing illicit trade in captives. Commission members at Carabane in 1837 encountered:

un pirogue dont les 12 ou 14 hommes d'équipage ... s'emprêntent [sic] de descendre à terre avec leurs boucliers et leurs autres armes ... C'étaient des gens de Dihiagoutes, les forbans du pays, mais qui venaient sans doute d'échanger des bosufs pour du riz. 13

The early trade at Carabane is recalled as well in oral traditions in Buluf. There, informants agree that the earliest commercial contact with the French occurred at Carabane. The 1837 report was probably mistaken about the particulars of that trade. The Diola were much more likely to have been bringing their own surplus rice to Carabane, to exchange for other goods, including cattle. It is reported by the elders of Thionk-Essil that, before the colonial period, their predecessors traded rice for a wide range of items, including iron. Cattle, too, were procured in this manner. One ox was reckoned to be the equivalent of a panier of rice so huge that a man could fit inside. 14 This commerce predates the French arrival at Carabane. The rice trade had begun as local commerce between neighboring Diola communities. Thionk-Essil, with the most extensive rice fields in Buluf, was thus able to use surplus agricultural production to acquire iron and cattle.

The Diola of Buluf were not unfamiliar with trade with other communities, at the time the French arrived in Carabane. The fact that this regional commerce, based on surplus rice and using rice as a measure of exchange, was already common enabled "les gens de Dihiagoutes" to enter into trade with the French within months of the establishment of the post at Carabane.

The decline in Portuguese commerce in the Casamance, however, reduced Ziguinchor to a state of sad disrepair. The 1837 expedition noted that "Les Portugais de Ziguinchor n'ont qu'un commerce fort borné." 15 The inhabitants of Ziguinchor had to purchase all trading goods of European manufacture from English merchants. In 1850 Hyacinthe Heequard made a watercolor sketch of the town (Illus. 10). It shows a dozen rather substantial houses, as well as a few smaller, round dwellings, built at the river's edge and surrounded by a low palisade which appears to be in disrepair. 16 This view is reminiscent of the description given by the French in 1837:

le comptoir portugais de Zechinchor au milieu des Bagnuns et pour ainsi dire à leur disposition, entouré d'une mauvaise palissade. 17

The Cacheu-Soungrougrou-Gambia trade route which had passed through Ziguinchor was also in decline. The exploratory commission, whose aims included an assessment of long distance trade routes in the Casamance, did not even mention this formerly vital network. Twelve years later when Bertrand-Bocandé described the old route, he explicitly referred to it in the past tense. 18 By 1850 the Portuguese had virtually abandoned the formerly profitable wax trade. 19 The Diola of Fogny did not welcome traders as the Bagnuns had. Consequently, it was increasingly dangerous for the Portuguese to travel up the Soungrougrou. Bertrand-Bocandé reported that numerous Portuguese Factors had been captured by the Diola of Fogny and sold to the Manding in the Gambia. 20 The irony of that situation was not lost on French observers, several of whom remarked on the fact that the Portuguese had become the victims of the slave trade which they themselves had initiated.

By the mid-nineteenth century the center of the north-south trade had shifted eastward into Pakao in the Middle Casamance. There, long distance commerce came largely under the control of the Manding. 21 This development was highly detrimental to the Bagnuns, whose economic well-being had for centuries been based on their vital role in the Soungrougrou trade network. The loss of their position as long distance traders had occurred gradually over 150 years. It is no coincidence that, during the middle third of the nineteenth century, the Bagnuns were pushed out of most of their former territory along the Soungrougrou. The aggressors were the two groups which had succeeded in usurping much of the profitable commerce with the Europeans: the Diola and the Manding. In 1849 Bertrand-Bocandé,

16 The sketch is entitled "Ziguinchor - Comptoir portugais Casamance"; along with the watercolor sketch Heequard made of Carabane, it is number B22 2456 in the archives of the Frobenius-Institut.
17 ANFOM Sénégal et Dépendances IV, dossier 20.
18 Bertrand-Bocandé 1849:272.
19 Bertrand-Bocandé 1849:310.
20 Bertrand-Bocandé 1849:331.
21 The French commission of 1837 had concluded that, "en effet, des caravannes qui descendaient du pays de Gabou, du Fouta Dhialon et des pays à gauche de la Casamance passent fréquemment à Sedhiou". ANFOM Sénégal et Dépendances IV, dossier 25b. The discovery of these important commercial routes was an important factor in the commission's recommendation that a permanent trading center be built at Sedhiou. By the 1850s Sedhiou was already an important comptoir for the burgeoning groundnut cultivation of the Middle Casamance.
wrote of the Soungrougrou, "Les Floups en ont chassés les Bagnuns, ainsi que des autres villages plus au sud." This expulsion had taken place only a few years before. The few remaining Bagnun villages were now all surrounded by protective stockades. Deprived of their economic base, the Bagnuns were reduced to a few isolated pockets along the route of their lost hegemony. Bagnun possessions north of the Casamance River continued to shrink through the nineteenth century, as the initial Diola expansion was followed by waves of Manding pressing in from Pakao.

The expansion of French commercial interests in the Casamance led to the first efforts to establish their political control over the region. This culminated, in 1860, in a series of treaties with the northern Diola and in a French military expedition against Thionk-Essil. There ensued a hiatus of more than two decades before the French established their administration north of the Casamance River. The period from 1849 to 1862, however, provides a wealth of written materials, the by-products of this early colonial activity.

Both archival and published sources from the mid-nineteenth century provide important ethnographic information, particularly about the Diola of Buluf. In 1850 the resident at Carabane, E. Bertrand-Bocandé, visited Thionk-Essil. Bocandé, who had already spent eleven years in the Casamance, was an astute observer. In his writings he was frequently sympathetic to the local peoples and his reports provide unusually thorough and objective information. His 1850 report, "Voyage au Pays de Kion", gives a detailed account of social organization, religious leadership, housing, and commerce in Thionk-Essil. It is among the most important written sources for the pre-twentieth century history of Buluf. In addition, in 1849 Bertrand-Bocandé published an article entitled "Notes sur la Guiné Portugaise", which is a valuable source of ethnographic material for the entire Basse Casamance.

Bertrand-Bocandé thereby established himself as the authority on the Casamance. When, in 1850, Hyacinthe Hecquard visited the region in the course of his own West African travels, he turned to Bocandé for much of his material. Hecquard, who had also spent years in Senegal, with the 'Spahis Sénégalis', stayed only a month in the Casamance. In 1852 he published "Rapport sur un Voyage dans la Casamance." The map which he used to illustrate this piece, he copied from Bocandé. In his article, Hecquard also borrowed extensively from Bocandé's 1849 piece, without however, citing his source. Much of the ethnographic material Hecquard presents is simply a restatement of Bocandé. Hecquard was also, how-

22 Bertrand-Bocandé 1849:273.
23 Bertrand-Bocandé 1849:331, 336.
24 See Jean Bocandé, et. al. 1969.
26 E. Bertrand-Bocandé 1849.
27 ANFOM, Sénégal et Dépendances III, dossier 8. Hecquard had been born in 1814. After an abortive attempt to travel from Sedhiou to Segou, he was back in Sedhiou in August, 1850.
28 Hecquard 1852.
ever, an amateur artist. In the course of his travels he painted and drew a large number of works depicting villages, scenery, and the local inhabitants. Fifty-two of his sketches and watercolors are preserved in the collection of the Frobenius Institute in Frankfurt. These pictures show what trading centers such as Ziguinchor and Carabane looked like in 1850. They also offer helpful information about Casamance culture. They portray, for example, slaves collecting palm wine, an activity in which many Diola who ended up as domestic slaves in the Gambia must have participated. Hecquard's artwork then, can illustrate and sometimes corroborate information from written sources.

The third important French informant from the mid-nineteenth century, A. Vallon, first visited the Casamance as the commanding officer of a naval vessel. His observations from this trip were published in 1862 in the *Revue Maritime et Coloniale*. Subsequently, Vallon served as Governor of Senegal. His article is similar to Hecquard's in that it presents an overview of the region and its inhabitants. He, however, includes details not found in either of the other sources and he does not depend entirely on either Hecquard or Bocandé. For familiarity with the land and its peoples, however, and for details derived from first-hand observation, Bertrand-Bocandé is the most important of the three writers.

Bertrand-Bocandé was one of the first to use the term "Jola" in its present, inclusive sense and he also gave an accurate explanation of the other names in use then.

He wrote of the "Flous ou Jolas":

> Le premier nom leur a été donné par les Portugais; c'est par celui de Jolas que le désignent les matelots jolof de Gambie et de Golée; dans leur langue, ils se nomment presque tous Aiamats. Ainsi les Flous, les Jolas, les Aiamats (et non Ariates) sont le même peuple.

From Bocandé's description it is clear that commerce, both regional and long distance, was widespread in the Basse Casamance, inspite of the decline of the Soungrougrou trade route and the almost derisory state of the Portuguese post at Ziguinchor. The Diola of Fogny, or the Kujamat-Diola — Bocandé is careful to use the indigenous term — had expelled the Bagnuns only a few years earlier, thereby completing the takeover of the northern Basse Casamance which had begun in the seventeenth century. Commerce along the Soungrougrou had not totally died out, but it was now controlled by the Diola of Fogny. They carried on a brisk business in captives.

The end of the Bagnun trade diaspora opened the north-south commercial route to competition from the Manding who had established control of commerce from the Middle Casamance north to the Gambia. Some of them now began to migrate westward towards the Soungrougrou. Bocandé noted that Manding Muslims had established a community there among the easternmost Flous.

Diola oral accounts of the slave trade suggest that it was a continuation of the earlier traffic in captives to the Portuguese, English, and French. With the growth of the domestic slave trade to provide agricultural manpower for groundnut cultivation, the trade route that had supplied captives for the Atlantic trade was still used. Captives from as far west as Buluf were fed into the Soungrougrou trade route. To sell captives, a man would take them to a friend in a neighboring village — the people of Thionk-Essil brought theirs to Dianki, to the northeast — and the friend would in turn convey them to an acquaintance in a community further east. The "merchandise" thus progressed in stages; with a ready market for domestic slaves, anybody who attempted to bring his captives personally all the way to English Kombo risked himself being captured and falling victim to the trade.

The captives whom the Diola sold to the Manding came from several sources. Most of them had originally been procured in raids. Since the sixteenth century, the "Jougoutes" had maintained a fearsome reputation as pirates and raiders and they continued to live up to that reputation through the 1850s. In 1849 Bocandé characterized the people of Buluf as "un peu pirates"; he reported that in 1846 they had become so emboldened as to attack Ziguinchor, although they were repulsed. On several occasions, the men of Thionk had captured representatives of European trading houses.

As late as 1862 a Wolof trader and his wife were captured while crossing Thionk's territory and the woman was sold. Such incidents, it must be admitted, would seem to modify Bocandé's claim that the people of Djougoutes "attachent le plus grand honneur à recevoir des traitants chez eux".

Captives played an important role within Djougoutes society, too. During the nineteenth century, they were probably few in absolute terms. The possession of captives, however, brought prestige to the owners. According to Bocandé, the Diola used all of their available wealth either to acquire captives or to procure cattle, which could in turn be traded for slaves. Locally, at least in western Buluf, these captives were generally incorporated into the lineage of the captor. The term "forced adoption" might more accurately describe this institution. There is, on the other hand, some indication, at least in informal oral testimony, that domestic

32 Ibid.
33 Interview with Lamine Djiba, Batine ward, Thionk-Essil, June 16, 1976, and with elders of Batine, April 1975.
34 Interview with chef Mamadou Diatta and elders of Daga ward, Thionk-Essil, June 17, 1976.
35 Bocandé 1849: 329.
36 See ANS 13G 361 (April 25, 1850).
37 ANS 1G 23.
38 ANS 13G 366.
slaves were used in Thionk-Essil to cultivate rice fields. Individuals who were enslaved in this manner were usually war captives, adults who would not readily have accepted assimilation into local society. By contrast, fugitives who had arrived voluntarily were assimilated into the community, and youngsters who had been captured in raids were also often assimilated.

If the captor was pleased with the youth, he might allow him to eat with his own children. From this time on the person could no longer be sold and he was given the patronym of his captor. Although the community was aware of the individual's origins, he was now considered a member of the family. Upon marriage, he inherited rice fields like his adoptive siblings. Only if he caused problems — perhaps by resisting assimilation — was he warned to be careful, lest he forfeit his new status.

In Diola society, an individual could become a domestic slave as punishment for specific crimes. In the case of theft or adultery, fines would be levied. According to Hecquard,

> Si le coupable n’a pas de quoi payer, que ses parents ne veuillent pas le faire pour lui, un des anciens acquitte l’amende, qui doit lui être remboursé double l’année suivante; si à cette époque il n’a pas été satisfait, il peut vendre son débiteur ou en faire son esclave.

Such judicial punishment was frequently encountered in other West African societies that had been involved in the Atlantic slave trade. It is, however, interesting to note that this mention of captivity as legal punishment among the Diola refers specifically to the community, Thionk-Essil, which was the most deeply involved in the domestic slave trade. One may assume then, that most delinquent criminals soon found themselves on the way to the Gambia.

In his discussion of the political organization of Djougoutes, Hecquard adds,

> La force ou plutôt la richesse fait la loi, car c’est celui qui a le plus de captifs qui impose sa volonté.

Since the elders who were responsible for the administration of justice were also empowered to pay the fines and, if the fines were not reimbursed, to take the transgressor captive, the elders had the greatest access to new captives. Those captives who were not sold were used to cultivate the rice fields, thereby creating additional wealth for the person who "owned" their services.

The process of forced adoption illustrates one way in which the cultural and linguistic identity of an individual or even of a group could shift in the course of

40 Interview with Gana Diatta (born ca. 1900), Thionk-Essil, Batine ward, June 16, 1976.
41 Interview with elders of Batine ward, Thionk-Essil, June 20, 1976.
42 Interview with Mamadou Diatta and the elders of Daga ward, Thionk-Essil, June 17, 1976.
43 Hecquard, “rapport sur un Voyage dans la Casamance”; manuscript for the article eventually published in Revue Coloniale; ANFOM, Sénégal et Dépendances II, dossier 8.
44 Ibid.
46 Hecquard’s watercolor, entitled “Carabane—comptoir français (Casamance)” is in the Frobenius-Institut, Ethnologisches Bildner-Archiv, number 2456.
47 Bertrand-Bocandé 1849: 329.
people of “Jigouches” depends heavily on Bocandé, adds that they also served as sailors. This may have been true, or he may simply have misread Bocandé’s manuscript.\footnote{Bocandé writes of the “Jigouches” (p. 329): La force, la richesse, et le nombre font le droit, moins tempéré par les assemblées que chez les autres Floups. Les Jigouches se louent comme manoeuvres pour laborer et faire des moissons; ils sont braconteurs et un peu pirates. Requand's version (ANFOM Sénégal III 8) reads: Les Dijouches... n'ont aucune forme de gouvernement, la force et plutot la richesse fait la loi, car c'est celui qui a le plus de captifs qui impose sa volonté; aussi pour s'en procurer, ils emploient tous les moyens [who taken from Bocandé 1849:91]: voyons-nous les Floups... mettre toute leur fortune à acquérir des esclaves]. A l'exploitation du sol, à la culture du riz, ils joignent la piraterie; ... ils se louent aussi comme laptots, comme manoeuvres, et sont alors fidèles et bons travailleurs.}

48 In 1862 Vallon also reported that the people of Djougoutes were working for trading houses at Carabane,\footnote{Vallon 1862:458.} but he did not mention them as sailors.

The Diola of Buluf then were involved in two forms of commercial transactions with the French. First, they brought their own surplus rice to Carabane to exchange for iron, cloth, cattle, and guns. This exchange was not barter. Rather, for the Diola it marked a continuation of their accustomed trade practices, whereby the values of all goods were expressed in terms of quantities of rice.\footnote{Before the introduction of money into the Casamance economy at the very end of the nineteenth century, there had been contact between the Diola of Combo and Europeans in the Gambia. Before the mid-nineteenth century, there developed a regular migration. Dangles’ 1828 Casamance report implies that the Diola were even then travelling to Bathurst to trade with the English. That report states: Si les français étaient établis en Casamance d'une manière convenable les indigènes ne s'exposeraient point à faire un long voyage aux (sic) risque d'être pillés ou faits captifs pour aller à St. Marie ou dans les autres établissements anglais cherche ce qu'ils pourront trouver plus près d'eux.} Here again, their precolonial professional experience was readily adapted to the economic opportunities afforded at Carabane.\footnote{51 The Diola rice trade is also mentioned by Bouet-Willaumez 1848:63-4.}

The importance of cloth and of clothing as trade items during this period is reflected in Diola oral narratives. In the *bukut* lists preserved by each of Thionk-Essié's wards, the name of the initiation which took place two generations before the 1905 *bukut* is Bampeck. Each *bukut* was named after an event that distinguished that generation of initiates. “Bampeck” means “buttons”. It refers to the precolonial commercial experience was readily adapted to the economic opportunities afforded at Carabane.\footnote{48 Bocandé writes of the “Jigouches” (p. 329): La force, la richesse, et le nombre font le droit, moins tempéré par les assemblées que chez les autres Floups. Les Jigouches se louent comme manoeuvres pour laborer et faire des moissons; ils sont braconteurs et un peu pirates. Requand’s version (ANFOM Sénégal III 8) reads: Les Dijouches... n’ont aucune forme de gouvernement, la force et plutôt la richesse fait la loi, car c’est celui qui a le plus de captifs qui impose sa volonté; aussi pour s’en procurer, ils emploient tous les moyens [who taken from Bocandé 1849:91]: voyons-nous les Floups... mettre toute leur fortune à acquérir des esclaves]. A l’exploitation du sol, à la culture du riz, ils joignent la piraterie; ... ils se louent aussi comme laptots, comme manoeuvres, et sont alors fidèles et bons travailleurs.}

The second form of economic transaction, where the Diola hired themselves out as day laborers, had no precise precedent in the local economy. Working for trading houses at Carabane did not, of course, entail reciprocal assistance. Rather, the labor was purchased for cash or for goods. Archival sources do not indicate what form this early payment took, nor how much the Diola were paid for a day’s labor, although by the end of the century the pay was often half in cash and half in goods. As late as the 1890s, however, Carabane firms preferred to pay for rice and rubber not in specie, but in goods.\footnote{Working for trading houses at Carabane did not, of course, entail reciprocal assistance. Rather, the labor was purchased for cash or for goods. Archival sources do not indicate what form this early payment took, nor how much the Diola were paid for a day’s labor, although by the end of the century the pay was often half in cash and half in goods. As late as the 1890s, however, Carabane firms preferred to pay for rice and rubber not in specie, but in goods.}

Thus, far from being isolated, as many writers, including this author, have maintained, the Diola of the early nineteenth century were involved in long distance trade with both the Manding and the English. Even the French arrival at Carabane did not stop this northward oriented trade. In 1849 Bertrand-Bocandé wrote that there was no commerce between the northern Diola, known as the “Karones” and the “Jamat-Kabils”, and Europeans in the Casamance River. The “Karones” are the Diola of the Islands of Karones, the westernmost part of the Lower Casamance. The “Jamat-Kabils” come from the area around the village of Kabiline, north of Buluf and only a few miles from the border with British Kombo. According to Bocandé, both of these Diola sub-groups went to Bathurst to seek work.\footnote{52 Archives Nationales, Section Colonies, Fonds Special 185 Mi 45.}

The four northernmost communities of Djougoutes: Tiobou, Katiak, Dianki, and Bassir, are separated by only a short pirogue trip from Combo and the route which leads north to the Gambia. At an early date the inhabitants of these Djougoutes villages, too, had entered into contact with the British at Bathurst. Just as the Diola of southern Djougoutes travelled to Carabane to find work, so the people of northern Djougoutes worked as laborers in Bathurst.\footnote{54 Interviews with Sidiku Diatta, chef of Tendouk, and chef Louis Seydou and elders of Katiak, January 1975 and June 1976.} The journey was, however, somewhat more time-consuming. Therefore, the visits tended to be longer. This in turn required establishing contacts in an area that was not Diola territory. The visitors had to find accommodations, arrange for meals, and transact business, all in a strange language – Manding or Wolof or Creole. These contacts, once established,
could serve the migrants on subsequent visits. The initiation of this travel marked the beginning of the long distance labor migration which was to become an important part of the Buluf economy and would have profound implications for social and religious institutions in the decades after 1890.

Diola commercial migrations were complemented by the growing numbers of Wolof traitants, employees of European trading houses, who travelled through the Lower Casamance by the mid-nineteenth century. The English had even established two trading houses, one at Cajinol south of the Casamance River, and the other in the area of southern Djougouttes. Southern Djougouttes and Fogny were far from "terra incognita" to the French. They, like the Portuguese, frequently travelled to the villages of Affignam and Djigohel to purchase salt from the Diola. Thus, not only were the Diola coming to Carabane and Bathurst, but employees of French and British trading houses were regularly visiting the Diola.

Already by the middle of the nineteenth century, the Diola of Djougouttes and Combo were actively involved in trade with the French at Carabane and the English in the Gambia. For the Diola, the rice trade at Carabane marked the beginnings of production for market. With the ensuing development of the rubber and palm produce trades and, after 1910, with the extension into the Lower Casamance of the ground nut trade, production for market was to bring the Diola more closely into the cash economy. Travel to English Kombo, likewise, would grow by the end of the century into a considerable seasonal migration.

THE FRENCH IN THE BASSE CASAMANCE

The first direct manifestation of French colonial presence among the northern Diola occurred in March 1860 when an 800 man column under the command of Pinet-Laprade attacked Thionk-Essil. The purpose of the expedition was to punish Thionk for its continuing slave raids, some of which had victimized traitants working for French and British trading houses. The attack on Thionk left forty Diola dead and took twenty prisoners. In addition, 200 head of cattle and 150 goats plus large stores of rice were taken from the village and part of Thionk was then burned.

Pinet-Laprade’s expedition was intended to make the Diola aware of French military power in order that they might stop attacking traders. Two months after the battle, Bertrand-Bocandé signed a treaty with the eight “chiefs” of Thionk, according to which the village agreed to receive future traitants in peace. Following this military foray, the French continued to attempt to exert their authority over Buluf. Their designs may be characterized as imperial. On June 14, 1860, Bocandé received instructions from Faidherbe which clearly show that the Governor’s interest in the Basse Casamance went beyond assuring free access to traders:

A votre disposition pour terminer la collection des traités que nous avons à faire pour nous assurer la possession de la Basse Casamance jusqu'au dépandance du comptoir Portugais de Ziguinchor.

Even before the attack against Thionk-Essil, Pinet-Laprade had linked the Casamance to more ambitious plans which included the economic exploitation of the Futa Jalon. Ultimately, he hoped, nous pourrions enlever aux Portugais le commerce de la rivière Saint Domingue et du Haut Géba et attirer peut-être vers nous des caravans du Futa-Djallon.

By the end of 1860 treaties had been signed with several other Buluf villages, including Tendouk, Elana, and Mangagoulack. By these treaties, the French hoped both to make the region safe for European commerce and to assume the role as mediator in inter-village disputes, thereby establishing their own judicial authority.

The Diola reaction to these events is preserved in informal histories told by the men of Buluf. In Tendouk, immediately after the arrival of these first whites, the elders and “têtes clairvoyantes” gathered secretly in the sacred forest. There, they performed kafuka, "things of the night", rituals to ensure that the strangers would soon leave their village.

It is unlikely that the Diola who put their marks to the treaties were fully aware of the implications of these documents, each of which stated:

Les Djigouches [name of village] ayant demandé à se placer sous la suzeraineté de la France...

Pinet-Laprade noted that Tendouk, in recognition of French authority, had sent a cow and a pig to Carabane. The Diola understanding of this transaction was very different. Even today, asked what form the earliest taxes took, people in Tendouk reply that the entire village paid a pig. What the Diola viewed as a forced donation, the French interpreted as acceptance of their authority.

60 ANS 4B 35 54; “It is up to you to complete the signing of the treaties which we still have to make, in order to secure our possession of the Basse Casamance as far as the Portuguese trading center at Ziguinchor.”

61 ANFOM, Sénégal et Dépendances IV, dossier 51a; call for an expedition against Thionk-Essil, 9 November 1859; “We might even be able to take over from the Portuguese the commerce along the St. Domingue and the Upper Géba, and perhaps even attract to ourselves the caravans which come from the Futa Jalon.”

62 ANS 13G 461.

63 Interview with Silounya Sagna, Tendouk, February 1975. Sagna, who claimed to be over 100 years old, was more likely about 80 at the time of the interview.

64 ANS 13G 461; “The people of Djougouttes, having requested that they be placed under French sovereignty.”
There was not, however, any immediate follow-up to this first colonial foray into Buluf. Rather, for more than twenty years, the treaties marked the highpoint of French imperial designs in the northern Basse Casamance. With the retirement of Faidherbe as Governor in 1865, those policies came to an end. Only in the 1880s, with the growth of rubber and palm produce exports from the Casamance, did the French again focus their attention on the region.

In 1886 Portugal ceded Ziguinchor to France. With this development, the government of Senegal set out to bring the Lower Casamance firmly under its military and political control. From that date, expeditions were sent out to “pacify” the Diola, beginning with the area closest to Carabane and Ziguinchor, south of the river. The first permanent administrative center north of the Casamance River was established in 1894, with the stationing of a military command post at Bignona. Located in southern Fognj just east of Buluf, Bignona was strategically placed for extending control over both areas. It immediately became the center for French efforts to set up administration over the northern Diola. From Bignona, too, were sent out military expeditions which, during the next three decades, gradually forced the people of Fognj and Buluf to pay the impôt and to accept French-appointed local and regional chiefs.

The maraboutic wars

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the maraboutic warfare which had broken out in the Gambia about 1850 spread into the Casamance. The invasion of Fognj by Fode Kaba in 1877 or 1878 marked the beginning of a period of warfare which devastated Combo and Fognj for fifteen years and occasionally affected Buluf. Peaceful commercial contact between the Diola and the Manding was partially disrupted, as travellers risked being captured by Manding raiding parties. The only form of commerce that thrived between the Casamance and the Gambia was the slave trade. Although some Diola continued to go to Bathurst, only with the cessation of hostilities in 1893 did regional trade expand. By then, the exploitation of forest products was to stimulate a tremendous increase in commerce between the Diola and the Manding.

During the period of warfare, the Diola were subjected to attacks by other warriors besides Fode Kaba. The Manding warrior-marabout Fode Sylla carried out a “religious war”, at least partially motivated by the desire for slaves, against the

65 For a comprehensive study of the establishment of French colonial administration in the Casamance, see Roche, 1976.
66 Plessier 1966:796 dates the attack to 1877 while Roche 1976:205 claims that the Diakhané marabout invaded Fognj in 1878.
67 Blue Book for the Gambia, 1888.
68 Roche 1976:289 ff. Roche presents a comprehensive account of the fighting which occurred in the Casamance.
69 Archives de la Congrégation des Pères du St. Esprit, boîte 673, Journal de Père Kioffer, entry of March 17, 1886.
70 Roche 1976:299 ff. Roche presents a comprehensive account of the fighting which occurred in the Casamance.
71 ANS 4B 72, p. 349; April 29, 1886.
72 ANS 4B 72, correspondence of 25 July 1886: Les Yoias de Djougoutes ont entrepris de résister contre Ibrahim N'Diaye. Le Commandant de la Casamance a réussi à faire comprendre à ces sauvages que leur déraison était la cause de leur perte et qu'ils ne pourraient venir à bout des bandes de Ibrahim qu'en réunissant... Jusqu'à présent, (N'Diaye) n'a pas osé attaquer les Djougoutes depuis qu'il s'agit qu'ad vit entre eux ces villages.
73 Interviews with Seku Coudiaby and Assoumna Badji, elders of Mandegane, March 24, 1975.
Thionk-Essil. Many of the invaders were killed, others drowned while trying to escape, and the remainder fled back into Combo. Fodé Sylla never again bothered the Diola of Buluf.

The defeat of “Combo Sylla” is well-documented by both written and oral sources. On May 20, 1886, a Casamance naval report mentioned:

Un autre marabout révolté du nom de Sillah a envahi vers (la fin d’avril) le pays de
Thionk situé à côté de Djougoutes, mais sa témérité lui a été fatale car il a essuyé une
sanglante défaite et a été grièvement blessé.

Gambian sources too, mention an important Diola military victory in April 1886.

The successful resistance to Fodé Sylla showed that, when faced by a foreign military threat, the Diola could cooperate on a regional level. After the battle of Dianki the region was never again subjected to maraboutic attack. This early contact with militant Islam did not result in any religious conversion in Buluf. The Diolas’ military success precluded any forceful conversion.

TRADE IN FOREST PRODUCTS

During the 1880s in the Lower Casamance, in spite of the maraboutic wars, trade in three forest products — palm kernels, palm oil, and rubber — first reached commercially significant proportions. These products were important to the subsequent social and economic development of the region for two reasons. First, they provided the Diola with a readily available source of income and, second, the commerce brought them into closer contact with Manding and Wolof traders and led ultimately to increasing Diola migration to harvest rubber and palm produce in the Gambia.

In Casamance the traffic in palm kernels had its inception shortly after 1850. This trade had spread north from Bissau where it began by 1840. By 1885 production had reached one and a half tons a month. All of the palm produce

74 Interviews with Bakari Badi (b. ca. 1895) and elders of Thionk-Essil, Batine; with chef Sulaiman Diedhiou of Tiobon; with the elders of Kartiak. Chef Suleyman claims that his ancestor, Dianku Diedhiou, arranged the inter-village alliance. This is plausible, as Dianku Diedhiou was recognized by the French as village chief and the French were actively encouraging such alliances (see ANS 4B 72).

75 ANS 1D 50, “Rapport de sec, mission du Dieu.” Another marabout who has led an uprisings, named Sillah, invaded the territory of Thionk, at the edge of Djougoutes towards (the end of April), but his courage was a fatal mistake, as he suffered a bloody defeat and was gravely wounded.

76 See Quinn 1972:171.

77 See Vallon 1982. As late as 1849 French awareness of palm kernel exports from Liberia was just beginning to interest them in this new product. See ANFOM, Sénégal et Dépendances III 8 chemise 7 (Roussard).


81 On the Fante see Sanders 1982.

82 Henry 1913:231.

83 Henry 1913:284.

84 ANS 2G 4 26, “Sénégal, Rapport d’Ensemble, 1904”, p. 52: Their production is usually inversely proportional to the rice harvest. . . The Diolas only gather this product to trade it for rice, in the event that their own rice fields cannot provide for their nourishment.

85 The 1893 rice shortage was worsened by an invasion of locusts, which often came in dry years; Gambia, Annual Report for 1893.
Rubber was far more remunerative than palm produce and the Diola preferred it as a source of income. The latex was collected from several varieties of plants which grew wild in the Casamance forests. The vines were cut, allowing the sap to fall onto leaves, where it was coagulated by the addition of salt, lemon juice, or urine, and was then rolled into balls. The rubber was harvested at the beginning of the dry season. The work was not physically taxing, and so was often undertaken by children. One person could make from two to five balls in a day. 86

The earliest recorded rubber exports from Senegal were in 1880. By 1884 the colony produced 103 tons. Landoephia, or wild rubber, grew abundantly on the plateau of central Djougoutes. Rubber from this region was reaching Carabane by 1885 and, five years later, three traders were reported to have visited Djougoutes to buy rubber from the Diola. 88 The Diola either sold their latex to traitants such as these, or to dyula merchants who also visited Buluf, or they themselves made the short trip by pirogue from northern Buluf to Combo, to make the sale. Sometimes the Diola were paid in cash, but more often they exchanged their rubber for iron, clothing, and guns.

In the Gambia, rubber production began at about the same time and reached 216,000 pounds in 1884 (see Table 1). At first, the trade was dominated by outsiders. Manjaks from Bissau gathered rubber in the Casamance and then sold it in Bathurst. These migrants played an important part in the trade as late as 1907. It is impossible to estimate what percentage of Casamance rubber they collected, or how much was gathered by the Diola themselves. 89 By about 1900 there was a significant Diola role and, by 1909, conflicts broke out as the local inhabitants sought to keep Manjak and Akou rubber collectors out of their country. 90

In 1887 a French administrative report noted with dismay the superior quality of Gambian rubber, worth 7.10 francs in the main European rubber market of Liverpool, whereas Casamance rubber sold for only 5 or 6 francs:

Les Anglais sont arrivés à cette supériorité de qualité, non pas à cause de l'espèce de caoutchouc ni d'un sol meilleur, mais par une préparation, sur place, à la fois plus habile et plus simple. Ils ont fait venir en Gambie des équipes de Krumen qui s'engagent un peu partout, même [au Sénégal] et qui ont fait connaître aux indigènes de la Gambie les arbres à caoutchouc et à gutta percha et la manière de préparer le produit. 91

Table 1 - Casamance Rubber Production (export by region) in tons net

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86 In 1895 in the Futa Jalon a 150 gram ball of latex was worth 0.50 francs while at Port Lokho in Sierra Leone, rubber brought 3 francs per kilo; "Renseignements sur le caoutchouc dans la region de Faramah", Bulletin de la Société Africaine de France, 1895, p. 127.
87 ANS 4B 74 24.
89 In 1906 the administrator at Ziguinchor estimated that the Manjak were collecting two-thirds of the Casamance rubber crop. He undoubtedly exaggerated, to buttress his plea to the Governor to regularize tax collection in order to force the Diola to gather more rubber; ANS 2G 6 1.
90 ANS 2G 9 1.
91 ANFOM Afrique IV, dossier S2c, February 22, 1887: The English have achieved this superior quality not by virtue of the species of rubber, nor by richer soil, but by a manner of on-the-spot preparation both cleaner and simpler. They bring to the Gambian teams of Krumen who seek work everywhere, and who have taught the people of the Gambian to recognize the rubber trees and gutta percha vines and to know the manner of preparing the product.
The problem of inferior quality continued to plague the Casamance rubber industry even during the boom years of the early 1900s. Ultimately, this poor quality was a factor in the abrupt decline of local production and in its virtual disappearance by the time of World War One.

Some Diola travelled to Bathurst where they were involved in the rubber and palm produce trades, even as warfare and slave raids made their journey hazardous. Such communications between the northern Diola and the Gambia had precedents dating back to the seventeenth century. In 1888, six years before the “pacification” of Fogny and Combo there were Diola working in the Gambia:

"There are also another set called the Chabon Diolas, who live more in the immediate neighborhood of the Casamance, but they do not all speak the same language. They are decidedly an industrious race, and numbers of them come to Bathurst to obtain work as laborers, especially during the trade season. Vessels are laden almost entirely by Jola women, and the merchants would find it difficult to get on without them."

Substantial numbers of women were thus travelling north from Combo and Buluf during the dry season. This migration pattern was obviously already well-established, and of sufficiently long duration that the British were relying on Diola women to load their boats. Clearly, migration from the Lower Casamance to Bathurst developed substantially before the 1890s. Such a picture of earlier commercial contact between the two regions is quite in keeping with patterns of established trade that linked the Casamance to the Gambia and to Cacheu, from the sixteenth through the nineteenth century.

SUMMARY

The nineteenth century saw the establishment of extensive commercial relations between the Diola and the French, whose presence in the Casamance dates to the 1830s. During the middle third of the century, trade and day labor at Carabane and, quite possibly, at Bathurst provided the Diola with cloth and guns and other imported goods. At the same time, France and England took measures to suppress the long-standing Casamance trade in domestic slaves. During the last three decades of the century, first the maraboutic wars and then the gradual extension of French colonial administration impinged on the northern Diola. At the same time, increasing European demand for rubber and palm produce led to the growth of new trade and the further development of migration to both Carabane and Bathurst. Together, these developments set the stage for the partial transformation of northern Diola economy and society during the ensuing colonial period.

Historical studies of the Senegambia have tended to focus on the region from the Senegal River valley to the Gambia River basin. As a result, the Casamance has been often excluded, or has at most received peripheral attention. In his study of precolonial commerce and trade, Philip Curtin, for example, pays scant attention to the Casamance. As a consequence of this northerly focus, the Lower Casamance is not treated as an integral part of the Senegambian trade networks. In fact, there is now clear that the Basse Casamance was directly linked to the Gambia long before the colonial period. From at least the sixteenth century, the Bagnun diaspora linked the Casamance to the Gambia and to Cacheu. The decline of Portuguese and Bagnun commercial ascendency in the eighteenth century did not dissolve these ties. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, as this chapter has indicated, the Diola themselves were actively engaged in trade, selling captives to the Manding and exchanging items of “legitimate commerce” with the English at Bathurst. The Lower Casamance, rather than constituting a pocket of isolated peoples, hostile to trade, was a significant part of both the Gambian and Bissau commercial networks.

92 The Report for the Blue Book for the Gambia, 1888, p. 36.

93 Curtin 1974.
V. RELIGION IN PRECOLONIAL DIOLA SOCIETY

Information about Diola religious practices and about ritual leadership is much more accessible for the second half of the nineteenth century than for earlier periods. For the first time, written sources provide concrete information specifically relating to Diola religion; one is no longer forced, as for preceding centuries, to infer from references to Bagnu or other neighboring peoples, what Diola religion may have been like. Both Bertrand-Bocandé and Hecquard write about Diola religion and a generation later Bérerger-Féraud, Hamon, and Marche all offer detailed descriptions of specific Diola rituals. After the establishment of a French post at Bignona in 1894, administrative reports become an additional source of first-hand information on Diola social organization, in which the shrines and ritual leaders played an important role. At the very end of the century, Lasnet gives a Christocentric, but historically valuable interpretation of the Diola conception of God (Emitay) and of the metaphysical foundations of their religion. After 1880 too, the records of the Holy Ghost Fathers (Les Pères du Saint Esprit) who in that year established a mission at Carabane, speak directly to questions of religious practice and thought, although from the perspective of missionaries who were dedicated to changing those structures.

Equally important, the latter half of the nineteenth century is within the chronological range of informal oral narratives. The oldest inhabitants of many villages, often among the few individuals who have not turned to either Christianity or Islam, can recall their youth at the end of the last century and can often give detailed information about shrines, rituals, and ritual leadership from their own parents' generation. Sometimes in these narratives, the most insignificant seeming details can shed light on the underlying thought which inspired the rituals.

Nevertheless, to seek the ontological foundations of Diola religion is a daunting task. To attempt to reconstruct a nineteenth century Diola understanding of the Inchoate is even more difficult. Thought, even concepts about the Deity, the universe, and man's place in it, is not static. The Diola of 1850 are no longer here to speak for themselves. They left no permanent records that might afford us access to their understanding of these matters. We are left with only the partial recollections of a later generation, influenced by the spread of Islam, Christianity, and literacy. The only written records are those of another, literate culture and another religious tradition, Christianity.

It is difficult enough for one who lives in a literate society to understand the ontological basis of another, non-literate religious tradition. To do this for the past requires the perhaps reckless willingness to read backwards from contemporary Diola thought, and the patience to look at nineteenth century accounts long enough to begin to see through the multiple filters of Western ethnocentrism and Christian worldview. Even then, there is an additional problem. The late nineteenth century sources that describe Diola belief in a Supreme Deity and which try to explain the role of Diola shrines within this metaphysical framework, not only interpret what they observe into their own Christian perspective, they also describe a Diola society, close to the mission at Carabane, that had already come under the influence, at least peripherally, of Christian ideas. As the similarities among the religions of the different peoples in the Casamance show, local religions were never impervious to outside influence. Even with nineteenth century ethnographic sources there is no such thing as "pristine" traditional religion. In trying to grasp an indigenous or "Diola" understanding of God or "the numinous" and of man's relation to the invisible world, one has to find a way to sort out the often subtle influences of Islamic and Christian doctrine.

In matters of ritual and the organization of shrines, there was considerable variation even from one Diola community to another. It is dangerous to generalize about the people of Djougoutes, let alone about all the Diola. Even the institution of the oeyi or priest of the village rain shrine did not exist among all the Diola. The people of Bandial, south of the Casamance River, had an oeyi, as did those communities in Djougoutes, including Thionk-Essiil and Mlomp, whose first Diola inhabitants had migrated from Kasa. Some Fogny villages, too, had a rain priest, who also served in some limited capacity in the mid-nineteenth century, as village chief.

As ritual priest of the rain shrine, the oeyi played exactly the same role and was identified by the same regalia, as the ritual priests of the Papeis described in 1695 by Portense. It seems likely that the institution of oeyi had already existed for a long time among the Diola, too, by the time that Bertrand-Bocandé described these emblems of office:

Un petit balai est le sceptre des rois; un bonnet, qui est ordinairement rouge, en est la couronne... Chez quelques Floupas... être coiffé du bonnet, prendre ou recevoir le bonnet... signifient être reconnu roi ou chef de village. Ce diadème des rois est presque toujours orné d'une amulette, faite avec des cornes de gazelle, entourées d'écarlate à la base. 3

1 Islam, too, left written records pertaining to religion in the Lower Casamance. The most important of these is Cherif Mohammed Chamedine Haidara's history of the Islamization of the Casamance (1968). This work treats primarily the important role of his own father, Cherif Mahfous, in the spread of Islam. Chamedine does not concern himself with indigenous religion, other than as that which was replaced by Islam.

2 Rudolf Otto 1917. I am indebted to Dr Charles Long and to the members of his 1977 National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminar, "Primitive and Civilized in the History of Religion", for the insight that ethico-moral systems alone do not constitute a religion and that to understand the thought and ontological orientation of another culture, one cannot be satisfied to ask "writing" questions. Without the challenging ideas of the seminar participants, who included David Carrasco, Irene Vasquez, and Ed Yonan, I would not have been able to even attempt to write this chapter.

3 Marche 1879: 75.

The **oeyi**'s authority was generally limited to performing agricultural rituals and settling land disputes. Outside of these specific areas he held very little power.\(^6\) "Chef,\(^5\)" wrote Bocandé after his visit to Thionk-Essil, "est plutôt un grand prêtre qu'une espèce de Roi".\(^7\) Nevertheless, his ritual authority did reflect a position as the unique focus for powerful spiritual forces. It was the **oeyi**'s duty to perform the proper sacrifices and libations so that these spirits might act to benefit rather than harm the human community.\(^8\) In Bocandé's description one can sense not only the tremendous responsibility vested in the **oeyi**, but also the underlying conception that the visible and invisible worlds are intimately related. The appropriate ritual sacrifices served to establish the correct ordering between the two realms.

The unique position of the **oeyi** is also seen in the fact that he alone, of all the adult members of Diola society, was exempt from working in the rice fields. In fact, he was prohibited from doing so; to have performed such common agricultural labor would have caused the rains to fail.\(^9\)

Elderly informants in Buluf recall that the **oeyi**'s main function was to officiate at the annual rain ceremony.\(^10\) Each year, at the approach of the **hivernage**, the adult members of Diola society, was exempt from working in the rice fields. In fact, he was prohibited from doing so; to have performed such common agricultural labor would have caused the rains to fail.\(^9\)

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Un grand nombre de chrétiens se sont joints aux fétichistes de Carabane pour aller solennellement sacrifier au 'Bekine' afin d'obtenir un temps plus favorable au culture... Non seulement nos chrétiens s'étaient réunis au 'Bekine', en compagnie des païens, pour

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\(^5\) Bertrand-Bocandé 1849:268.

\(^6\) Thomas 1958:646, postulates that in precolonial Kasa the **oeyi** did exercise temporal power. There is evidence that the **oeyi** of Tendouk had assumed some temporal power at the end of the nineteenth century, but this may simply reflect the tendency of French administrators and missionaries who visited Tendouk at the time, to interpret Diola institutions in terms of European prototypes. See Congrégation des Pères du St. Esprit, Archives (ACPSE) boîte 673, January 1888 and February 16, 1900.

\(^7\) Bocandé, ANS 1G 23, "Voyage au Pays de Kion."

\(^8\) Bocandé 1849:268.

\(^9\) Interview with Kepi Diatta, non-Muslim, approximately 90 years old, December 30, 1974. See also Bocandé, "Voyage": En échange de ses prières on cultive ses rizières et ses champs.

\(^10\) Interviews with Kepi Diatta of Thionk-Essil, Niaganan ward; with the elders of Batine ward, January 1, 1975, and with the elders of Kamanar ward, February 12, 1975. Tapes in possession of the author.

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Accordingly, the bull was sacrificed and, by an "aggravating coincidence", a very strong rain immediately arrived. The "fétichistes" claimed a victory and the priests watched helplessly as many Christian Diolas came to the conclusion that the **bekin** was more effective than the Christian god.\(^12\)

Arranged hierarchically beneath the village shrine of the **oeyi** there were a large number of other shrines. Although there was some variation among different Diola sub-groups, the basic form of these shrines, as well as their relation to the social structure, seem to have been consistent throughout the Basse Casamance. Most of the **ukin** were associated with and entrusted to the care of either a single extended-family compound (**fanha**) or a sub-ward, or a ward (**kalol**). In addition, there existed some unaffiliated shrines, a small number of which gained regional reputations for their ability to ensure rain or to help women become pregnant.

Spiritual forces manifested themselves or were thought to make their abode in the shrine itself, at least during the sacrificial ritual. The shrine thus became the locus for interaction between man and spirit. There, the proper libations of palm wine were offered, along with animals and prayers.

These shrines could take various forms. A few, which exist even today, are as simple as a small stick, placed upon a raised foundation of clay and laid against the rear wall of a dwelling. Others are far more elaborate, and may occupy their own small building. The largest number take the form of a forked stick planted in the earth, often at the base of a large tree, and sometimes covered by a small thatched roof. These are therefore quite similar to the Casamance shrines described by Almada in 1594.

The use of huge trees as shrines is also documented as early as Almada (see chapter 2). In a region like the Casamance which is bereft of either mountains, hills, or even large boulders, the choice of trees is quite logical. Not only are they the largest and most prominent feature in the landscape; they are the oldest living things. Trees are a symbol of enduring life. In fact, vanished settlements can sometimes still be located by the trees which give evidence of earlier human occupation. Trees are thus associated with the elders, "sipay sifan", who brought human society into existence and who founded the rituals.\(^13\)

Ancient silkcotton trees are stationary, they are immense, and they are mute. They confront the onlooker with "the silence of the unchanging".\(^14\) It is natural
that a peoples' preferred metaphor for the Transcendent and the perduring should derive from their environment. For the Diola, a dominant symbol of the Transcendent is, therefore, the tree. Without stretching the point, one might speak of the Diola as perceiving "a hierophony of trees".

The shrines and the spiritual forces with which each is associated have different names among various Diola sub-groups. In Fogny, shrine and spirit are referred to as emaati (pl. sinaati), while in Kasa the generic term is bekin (pl. ukin). The latter term, of course, was found in Portuguese Creole and among the Manjak-Papels and the Cassangas as early as the sixteenth century.

The family shrine was usually in the charge of the eldest male. He was responsible for the upkeep of the shrine and for performing appropriate sacrifices. Frequently, the position of guardian was hereditary. Sometimes, however, an individual who had been afflicted with an illness and then cured by a shrine in another community would become custodian of a similar bekin in his own village. In addition, some of the most powerful shrines were in the care of women.

A large number of ukin were concerned with female fertility and with rain. This reflected the central importance of both matters in an agricultural society where drought was a constant concern and where disease caused a very high infant mortality. In addition, the sinaati played a medicinal role. A wide range of ailments was attributed to attacks by certain shrines. The victim was said to have been grabbed (esof) by a specific emaati. Only by making a libation and sacrifice to that shrine could he be freed from the attack. This medicinal role is quite old, being implied in the seventeenth century by Sandoval (see chapter two). In 1879, Marche described in considerable detail a curative ritual among the Diola-Fogny. This ritual, he added, was typical of the "old customs and national traditions" of the Diola:

Quand un noir est atteint par un malheur ou manacé par un augure funeste, il prend ce qu'il possède de plus beau; généralement c'est un beau bœuf; qu'il accompagne du vin de palme et d'autres liquides, et va offrir le tout au prêtre pour qu'il prie le Bakinn de lui expliquer ses songes ou de parler à son malheur. Le prêtre tire le bœuf, répand le sang sur la butte, coupe une corne de l'animal, et la remet à celui qui fait l'offrande; puis il s'enfume seul dans l'enceinte, où il invoque le Bakinn en ces termes: 'Un tei, un de tes grands serviteurs, vient t'implorer et te fait cette offrande, pour que tu détournes les maux qui sont près à fondre sur lui.' Après quoi il prend deux bambous, entendant l'un dans l'autre en façon de coulisse, et produit avec un son rauc que qu'il dit être la voix du Bakinn; puis il traduit la chose à celui qui est venu le consulter, venu sur la butte un peu de la liqueur; tous les assistants boivent le reste. 'God arrange it now that she may bear a child. Bunaati of my father. Bunaati of his father, Bunaati of his father.'

After the woman has become pregnant, she returns to the shrine and the guardian hangs a medicinal charm, or bufulab around her neck. When the child is born, a similar charm is hung around its neck, too. After the child has grown up, the charm is removed and is placed at the base of the shrine. "Fupihe" is renowned, and people come from each ward of Thionk-Essl as well as from neighboring communities, to avail themselves of its powers.

WOMEN IN DIOLA RELIGION

Women exercised considerable influence in traditional Diola society, both in decisions relating to local government and in religious affairs. They may also have played a vital role in councils of war. This tradition of a significant women's role in
government was found as well among the Bagnun of nineteenth century Fogny. In 1849, Bertrand-Bocandé described Bagnun government as “a monarchy with representation and a court composed of women.” Given the long history of contact and assimilation between Diola and Bagnun in Fogny and the fact that the principal Bagnun lineages to which Bocandé referred, the Jata and Jambu (Sambu) are now predominantly Diola, it is possible that this equality between the sexes spread from the Bagnun to the northern Diola. In 1906, speaking of the Diola of Buluf, the resident at Bignona wrote, “It is the consensus of women that predominates and decides in principle, in matters of tax or war.” He also noted that in Buluf, two of the village shrines in the community of Katiak were controlled by women.

Hecquard in 1851 reported a ceremony which he claimed to have observed among the Diola inhabitants of Carabane, which shows the important role that women played in rituals concerned with rain and fertility:

Je fus témoin d’une de leurs cérémonies. Depuis quelque temps la pluie avait cessé, le riz jaunissait sur pied, et tout le monde s’inquiétait pour la racolte. Les femmes se rassemblèrent, prirent des branches d’arbres dans leurs mains; puis, séparées en deux bandes qui se croisaient en danant, elles parcourrirent l’île, chantant et priant leur bonne génie de leur envoyer de la pluie. Ces chants continuaient deux jours entiers; mais le temps ne changeait pas. De la prière elles passèrent aux menaces; les fétiches furent renversées et traînées dans les champs au milieu de cris et d’injures qui ne cessèrent qu’avec la pluie.

Alors seulement les malheureux dieux retrouvèrent leur considération accoutumée.

This episode appears in subsequent French sources, with some variation. It may be that Hecquard’s anecdote served as the source for these stories of the “fétiches” of Carabane being mistreated and insulted for failing to protect the community. The episode is, however, so much in keeping with the predominant disparaging nineteenth century view of indigenous African religious ritual that one has to be rather sceptical.

In Diola communities, women’s authority was reflected in their important role as guardians of some of the most powerful shrines. The Buluf village of Tendouk housed an important enaatti named Kaoucka. This shrine ensured rain, protected women’s fertility, and assured peace within family groups. It was also reputed to be able to cure critically ill children. People came from throughout Buluf to offer sacrifices. The priestess was renowned throughout Buluf for her powers. Before the spread of Islam, similar shrines existed elsewhere in Buluf and in Fogny.

With the spread of Islam through the northern Basse Casamance, Diola women have lost much of the prestige which they formerly enjoyed in matters of religious ritual. Yet, they have not lost all of their authority, as two diverse examples from the last forty years illustrate. In 1942 Alinsitoue, the priestess of a powerful shrine in Kabrousse, south of the Casamance River, declared that she had received divine revelation. She and her followers were no longer to follow the Whites, they were to refuse to cooperate with military recruitment, and they were to resist the forced sale of rice to the French. They were also to resist the corvée. Alinsitoue quickly gained a wide following among men and women, including many Diola from the region north of the River, which even then included many Muslims. The colonial authorities treated this religious revival movement as a revolt against their authority—which, in part, it was—and they arrested and deported Alinsitoue. But the potential for Diola mass movement, founded on traditional religious structures and led by a woman, was not obliterated. Events of December 1963 suggest that Diola political movements can still form around the twin poles of social and political demands, and indigenous religious structures.

The second episode occurred in the early 1970s in Buluf, during the prolonged drought of 1968–74. On this occasion, a group of women elders gathered secretly to discuss the causes of the crisis. They determined that the drought could be attributed to several factors, including that the people of Basse Casamance were following too closely in the ways of the Europeans and that the Diola had turned their backs on their own shrines in order to follow Islam. These women made no effort to hide their antipathy towards the Muslim faith. The continued resistance of many Diola women to accepting Islam is directly related to the loss of status they have suffered in the religious sphere, as a result of the new religion.

**EMITAY**

One of the central questions about pre-twentieth century Diola religion concerns the nature of the “traditional” Diola conception of the Supreme Being and of Man’s relation to the Deity. The widespread African notion of a “deus otiosus” accords with the Diola view of the Deity as described by ritual leaders in contemporary Buluf and as recorded by European observers since the end of the nineteenth century.

The Diola name for God is Emitay. Significantly, Emitay can also mean “sky”, “year”, and “rain”. Each of these meanings of course, indicates a central attribute of the Deity. Emitay is associated with the sky and its qualities of being alien-family expressed confidence that Emitay would select a successor. This unusually personal view of the Deity as ready to invoke Himself directly in the affairs of Tendouk may be attributed to the fact that Catholic missionaries have visited the community since 1886, longer than any other community in Buluf.
comprising, above, and awesomely vast. The sky, as Mircea Eliade has written, can symbolize "transcendence, power, and changelessness, simply by being there". 26 Emitay is also associated with the year, or rather, the agricultural cycle that brings sustenance and gives life.

Emitay is "deus otiosus". One does not approach him directly, even with prayers for rain. Among the Diola-Fogny, Sapir notes that:

This term [Emitay] has been appropriated by both Muslims and Christians to translaterespectively as Allah and God. In terms of traditional Diola belief, however, emit remains a distant creative force, an unmoved mover that has nothing at all to do with the immediate, or even distant, fate of man, either during life or after death. It is with the sinatti that man must contend. 27

Prayers are funneled through the sinatti, who thus serve as intermediaries between man and Emitay.

A people's idea of God is, however, a dynamic concept. There is some reason to think that the Diola conception of Emitay has undergone change under the influence, first of Christian missionaries and, more recently, of Muslims. Missionaries have been present in the Lower Casamance since 1880 and there were Portuguese priests at Ziguinchor and Cacheu as early as the sixteenth century. More recently, especially in Fogny and Buluf, the large Muslim presence has had an appreciable impact on the non-Muslim view of God. In fact, this dynamic makes it impossible precisely to define a "traditional" Diola conception of Emitay.

There is evidence to suggest that, just as the concept of Emitay has been appropriated by Diola Muslims and Christians, so too, Diola "traditionalists" 28 have begun to identify Emitay with Allah and God. As a result, Emitay has become rather less remote. The guardian of a shrine and priest of a sacred forest in Miomp expressed his understanding of prayer in the following manner: When Abako Diatta prays at his shrine, he addresses himself directly to Emitay, but through the intermediary of his eneetti. There is at least the hint of a personal relationship to the Divine, for Diatta identifies Emitay as "the same God" to whom his Catholic and Muslim neighbors address their prayers. 29

One wonders whether this interpretation has been influenced by the teachings of a Catholic catechist who formerly visited Miomp. It certainly sounds like the Christian idea that one prays directly to the Father, but through the intermediary of the Son. Even allowing for the possibility that Diatta, a hospitable man, was consciously translating his metaphysics into a language which he felt his Western interlocutor would understand, the influence of the World Religions, with their universalist and monolatric cults seems evident.

If today the Diola concept of Emitay has been modified, in part as the result of contact with other religions, there is little reason to think that the dynamic of change is a recent phenomenon. Lasnet's description of Diola religion, published in 1900, may show the Diola to be already interpreting their religious ideas to make them comprehensible — or acceptable — to Christian Europeans. Lasnet's probable source of information was the Holy Ghost Fathers' mission at Carabane. His description suggests that Christian doctrine had had an impact on the traditional Diola conception of the relationship between man and bekin and between man and God. Lasnet's words may reflect what he had been told by the Carabane priests, but certainly the last two clauses reflect the ideas of the Diola themselves:

Les Diolas croient à un être suprême, sauveur maître de l'univers qui recompense le bien et le mal; mais ce Dieu souverain, dient-ils, s'occupe surtout des blancs; il a sous ses ordres des divinités secondaires, les fétiches, auxquels il confie plus spécialement les Diolas; aussi s'adressent-il jamais à Dieu qui n'a pas le temps de les entendre, mais seulement aux fétiches. 30

The Diola appear in this account to be making the effort to extend their understanding of the cosmos to incorporate the more personal Christian god. Accordingly, that god is seen as looking out for whites, while the "fétiches", or bekin relate specifically to the Diola. Even though the two metaphysical systems are seen as separate, awareness of the Christian cosmology had already entered the Diola consciousness, necessitating some adjustment in their cosmology.

Neither Emitay nor the individual Diola shrines were directly concerned with human morality. The idea of a High God who keeps track of good and bad deeds is utterly foreign to the Diola. Likewise, when a bekin "grabs" an individual and causes him to fall ill, it may be because that person has transgressed rules of ritual conduct or has perhaps walked too close to the shrine. But intent, at least among those Diola who were not in direct contact with the missions, has absolutely nothing to do with the reason why one is "grabbed". Good and evil, punishment and reward, are concepts imported by the Church. Lasnet's description of a god who "repays good and evil" sounds very much like a missionary's reinterpretation of Emitay. If, however, it does reflect the words of Diola informants, then clearly some Casamançais had been influenced by Christian doctrine before 1900, in their understanding of Emitay as underpinning the moral order.

Since the mid-nineteenth century, it is difficult or rather, misleading to speak of pristine, traditional Diola religion. Throughout this period in Kasa and in parts of Buluf, contact with European Christians brought the Diola in touch with another metaphysical system. In Fogny and northern Buluf from the 1890s, Islam served the same function. For those Diola who did not turn to one or the other of the World Religions, a result of this extended contact with Christianity and Islam was the appearance of a rather less remote and more universalist conception of Emitay.

27 Sapir 1907:1331.
28 "Traditionalist" and "traditional" are used here solely for want of a better term. The words are not here meant to imply that non-Muslim Diola are hidebound by tradition or that "traditional" religion is unchanging.
29 Interview with Abako Diatta, head of the sacred forest of Boundia ward, and a non-Muslim and non-Christian; Miomp, January 21, 1975.
30 Lasnet 1900:160.
Diola religion has never been static. To the Catholic and Muslim presence it responded in the same way that it had, earlier, to contact with the Manjak and the Bangun and, quite possibly, to the earliest Portuguese Jesuits and Franciscans. Each of the African peoples had borrowed from one another, as is evidenced by the existence throughout the Casamance and northern Bissau of common rituals such as the Kumpo masked figure. The Diola assimilated those concepts or rituals which were compatible with their fundamental ontology, with their understanding of a world in which physical and spiritual forces interpenetrate and mutually affect one another, a universe in which man gains a measure of meaning and a sense of place by respecting and preserving the relationships with the spiritual world that were established by his ancestors.

THE PHYSICAL - SPIRITUAL CONTINUUM IN DIOLA COSMOLOGY

The vision of a universe in which physical and spiritual forces interact and where there is often no clear distinction between these realms is central to Diola cosmology. This sense of the oneness of the visible and invisible world permeates Diola religion and ritual. It lies at the heart of their efforts to explain and predict human health and man's fate. The interpenetration of these two realms and the absence of clear boundaries between them are particularly evident in the concepts of the kussay, or sorcerers, and the bukan bujak, or "good people". Both categories comprise individuals who have the ability to assume what might be termed "non-physical" states of being, when they travel tremendous distances virtually instantaneously. Yet, these beings or forces - even Western vocabulary betrays a perception of a dichotomy between form and spirit and is ill-suited to describing kussay or bukan bujak - can very profoundly affect other beings in the physical realm, by bringing disease or protection against disease to the human community.

Like so many other African peoples, the Diola understand illness and death, not as the workings of matter upon matter (microbes and antibodies), but as the result of the machinations of the kussay. The Diola themselves often describe the depredations of the kussay by referring to nocturnal feasts at which these cannibal-witches consume the souls of their human victims. This in turn causes the victims to fall ill and die. The Diola look upon such cannibalism with fear and horror. Yet, when asked whether this was not a cannibalism of the spirit, rather than actual consumption of human flesh, even Muslim informants responded with blank stares and incomprehension. The Westerner's all-important distinction between body and soul simply does not exist for them.

One can easily see how misunderstandings could arise due to the different perceptions of "cannibalism". The Diola have always viewed the concept with abhorrence, but their reaction is heightened by fear, an anxiety occasioned by the proximity of cannibal-witches. During the colonial period, it was easy for French authorities to overlook the fact that the Diola did not differentiate between consuming a victim's spirit and eating his flesh. The colonial administration tended to treat all accusations of cannibalism according to the European understanding of the term. On one occasion in 1926, accusations of witchcraft, occasioned by rivalry or animosity within a Lower Casamance community, were dealt with in just this manner. 186 people were brought to trial for "cannibalism". Six of them were found guilty and were sentenced to death.32

The unity between the physical and the spiritual is borne out, too, by the Diola approach to preventing or curing illness. While a Western view would hold that it is the physical properties of the substances used as medications that combat the disease - itself seen as an essentially physical problem - the Diola approach to fighting disease integrates the physical with the spiritual. In the everyday world, for example, the kutokonerit bukan fight sorcery chiefly through the use of medicines. However, the efficacy of these medications comes as much from the power of the bukan bujak to combat the kussay in their own realm, as it does from any innate properties of the plants from which the medications are made. The kutokonerit bukan can also ward off future attacks by the kussay by making medicines from plants and roots, which are then placed in bottles and buried in the courtyard or suspended from poles in the housing compound (fank) of the sorcerer's intended victim. These objects are known generically as bujak ("buried thing"), or perhaps "night thing", from fukaray, "night". They attract the kutokonerit, who fight off sorcery-induced illness. There are also charms, of both Muslim and non-Muslim manufacture, which contain vegetal substances or a verse from the Koran, and are worn against the body. The general term for these charms is safi, from safr, "to pray", thus betraying Islamic influence. The indigenous Diola word bubenben, "medicine", can also be applied to these charms. They protect the wearer against a wide range of misfortunes, including snake bite and bullets. There is clearly continuity between the indigenous and the Islamic variety of these charms.

Finally, there are the medications, bubenben, which are ingested. These include the specifically Muslim draught of ink water which has been used to write a verse from the Koran and has then been washed into a bottle. Produced by Muslim specialists, such liquids are consumed in daily doses, much like Western medicine.

It is significant that for each of these forms of protection, the skill of the maker, whether traditionalist or Muslim, is as important a factor in the effectiveness of the medicine as is the nature of the ingredients used.

This is not to imply that the Diola have not also acquired a rather impressive pharmacological knowledge of local plants. The author's respect for this knowledge comes from personal experience. In 1975, I was cured of a severe allergic reaction

31 For a good description of witchcraft among another Casamance people, the Bajaranké, see William Simmons 1971.

32 The Archives Nationales in Dakar are strangely mute on this subject. See, however, ANS 2G 26 10 and 2G 27 18.
to an insect bite, by the application of the crushed leaves of some plant, after antihistamines from my own medicine kit had failed to stop the reaction. My skepticism was substantially diminished, on the spot.

**DIOLA ONTOLOGY OF DEATH**

Nowhere in traditional Diola ontology is the absence of a Cartesian mind/body dichotomy more apparent than in their understanding of the causes of death. As the Diola see it, human beings do not die simply because they have fallen victim to accident or disease. Although the immediate reason for the death may be evident, it is important to discover, if possible, why that specific illness or accident befell that particular individual. More often than not, the machinations of the kussay lurk behind the immediate physical reason for the death.

In pre-colonial Diola society, and certainly as late as the 1920s, each death was cause for suspecting sorcery. To detect the individual who was responsible for the death, the Diola developed an elaborate ritual as part of the funeral. This ritual, the “questioning of the deceased”, is common not only to the different peoples of the Casamance; it is found among a wide range of societies throughout West Africa. Terray has described the evolution of this “interrogatoire du cadavre” during the late nineteenth century among the Abron of Ghana. The ritual was, in fact, so common among different societies in West Africa that it constituted a common idiom. Peoples who did not speak the same language could nevertheless understand the importance and meaning of each others’ witch-finding activities at funerals.  

33 Terray, 1980.

34 Because such rituals were so widespread and mutually comprehensible, they were on occasion able to survive even the cultural dislocation of the Atlantic slave trade. Neither the Middle Passage nor the often intentionally acculturative period of “seasoning” new slaves in the New World was able to obliterate anti-witchcraft rituals.

On those occasions when escaped slaves established independent societies, anti-sorcery rituals tended to survive. The interrogation of the corpse was one such survival. It is found today among the Saramaka of Surinam. There, it remains close enough to African proto-types that it can be understood by one who is familiar only with the corresponding Diola ritual. See Richard and Sally Price 1980, who observe that African survivals in New World cultures often resulted from the retention of cultural elements that were common to the diverse groups represented in the Maroon communities. Robert Thompson, on the other hand, has drawn attention to the dominant influence of a few African cultures - the Yoruba, the BaKongo - which were heavily represented in slave societies in Bahia, Haiti and New Orleans. In these areas, cultural survivals can be identified as coming from specific African societies. The interrogation of the cadaver is a widespread and general ritual, and its survival accords more closely with the Prices’ model.

Thompson quite rightly points out that anti-sorcery concerns and practises were very widespread and took diverse form among New World Blacks. For an example of the impact of such concerns on esthetic form, see Thompson 1983:222.

35 In 1975 a Diola who had worked as my informant for several months declined to use his salary to build a badly-needed new house, out of fear that his sudden good fortune might be attributed to witchcraft. He discretely waited a year before beginning construction.

36 Hequard, Archives Nationales, Section Outre-Mer (ANF-OM), Sénégal et Dépendances III, dossier 8.

37 The same dynamic has certainly not been unknown in Western societies during the last 50 years.

38 Lasnet 1900:256.

39 Ibid. See also ANS I 328, Labretoigne de Mazel, “Notice sur la Casamance”, (1906); see also Marche 1879:70.
tensions inherent in Balante society at the time of the establishment of French administration, the poison ordeals which followed had the unfortunate side effect of decimating the population.

In 1894, reports of tali, or the poison test, among the Balantes south of the Casamance River prompted the Administrator of the Casamance to make an on-the-spot investigation. He found that the Balantes were obtaining the poison beverage from their Diola neighbors. In times of natural disasters — there had been a severe drought in 1893 — the Balantes used the poison ordeal to ferret out the persons responsible for the hardships. They also used it against individuals who had become too wealthy. After the accused died of the tali, his goods were divided by surviving members of the community. Or else he fled before the ordeal, leaving behind his wealth, which was then effectively expropriated.

In 1910–1911, along the border with Guiné-Bissau, there occurred an even more serious outbreak of tali among the Balantes. In most of the border villages, the chiefs who had been allied with the French were among the first victims. There was thus clearly an anti-colonial element to the accusations. This witchhunt, however, like many in the Western world during the twentieth century, soon grew out of control. In Yatacoumba, out of a population of about 400, 59 people died of the poison ordeal. Another community of 130 inhabitants lost 83 people to the purge.

After about 1912, the situation appears to have calmed down. References in the colonial archives to the poison test among the Balantes and the Diola become much less common at about the time of World War One. Undoubtedly, this development was in large measure due to the efforts of the colonial administration to bring an end to the practise.

It is interesting to note that among the Diola, as elsewhere in Africa, the ordeal by poison was easily turned into an instrument for exacting vengeance against one's enemies and competitors. In time of social dislocation, as Terray has shown among the Abron, the poison ordeal could get out of hand and become socially destructive. In the Abron kingdom, this process led to the suppression of the poison test by the Abron themselves. Such may also have been the case among the Balantes, although there, French administrative involvement was also a factor. The Diola, who had not experienced an anti-witchcraft "reign of terror", may have dropped the use of the ordeal of their own accord.

The establishment of the new French colonial judicial system, however, while it actively encouraged the end of the tali test, did nothing to provide local peoples with an alternative means of combating the kussay, who were still perceived as a danger. The Diola were forced to rely upon their own institutions. They seem to have followed a course which is again reminiscent of the Abron.

Faced with escalating witchcraft accusations and a mounting death toll from the poison ordeal, the Abron, about 1880, turned to the masked figure called "Sacrobundi" to help protect them against sorcery. This figure had existed among the Abron since the seventeenth century, although it was originally of foreign origin - Terray implies Nafana or Kulango - origin. The spread of this important anti-witchcraft mask through northeastern Ivory Coast and adjacent western-central Ghana is thus an important illustration of the fact that "la propagation de cette influence ignore les barrières ethniques et politiques". Accepted as an effective witch-finder, Sakrobundi quickly replaced the earlier means of witch-hunting, which had resulted in many innocent victims.

In the Basse Casamance, the anti-witchcraft masked figure, Kumpo, also spread readily across ethnic and linguistic zones. With the suppression of the tali ordeal among the Diola at the beginning of the twentieth century, Kumpo took on added importance. It was now the paramount means of protection against the kussay. Just as Sacrobundi served the Abron by discovering and destroying witches — until the mask was outlawed by local colonial authorities about 1920 — so, too, Kumpo served as the Diolas' first line of defense against the kussay. The use of Kumpo was, however, never overtly opposed by the colonial administration in the Casamance. The masked dance was therefore able to survive the colonial period without going underground.

The survival of Kumpo in Diola communities which have been predominantly Muslim for thirty or forty years appears at first to be an enigma. Here is a masking tradition — albeit hardly representational of the human form — which thrives inspite of the spread of Islam. Islam is generally thought to be inimical to the use of masks. Therefore, the spread of Islam among the northern Diola ought seemingly to correlate with the loss, rather than the survival and even increased popularity of masking traditions. Such has not been the case. Kumpo remains popular, even appearing publicly at the Muslim New Year. An important factor in the continued popularity of Kumpo, even among the Muslim Diola, has been its expanded role protecting against witchcraft since the suppression of the poison ordeal.

The suppression of the tali coincided with both the establishment of colonial administration in the Lower Casamance and the first appearance of Muslims in many Diola communities. It is, of course, conceivable that the new religion gained some of its appeal from protection it may have offered against sorcery, in the

40 ANS 13G 4742.
41 ANS 13G 381, Casamance: affaires politiques 1910–1911, "Region de Yatalounda, empoissonnements rituels."
42 In 1929 five people in the village of Niamoune were killed by tali. As soon as the French Commandant de Cercle learned of the episode, five months later, he stepped in and prosecuted those responsible for administering the ordeal; ANS 2G 30 84 and ANS 2G 30 78.
43 Terray 1980.
44 op. cit., 144.
45 op. cit., 160.
46 op. cit., 163.
47 On the destruction of Sakara or Sacrobundi masks by Catholic missionaries and the suppression of the associated witch-finding rituals by French colonial authorities see Bravmann 1974: 102.
form of Koranic charms and the prayers offered by marabouts. Kumpo, too, however, took on added importance as a result of the end of the talii. The combined result of these changes is that Kumpo continues to be danced among the northern Diola, but in a modified and ostensibly Muslim context.

The survival of Kumpo provides significant information about continuity in contemporary Diola religious ritual. Kumpo's importance to the Diola of Buluf implies the survival, in spite of Islamization, of fundamental elements of the traditional world view. The absence of a perceived dichotomy between the physical and the spiritual, and the ritual means selected by the Diola to gain a measure of control over the forces of the invisible world, are both indigenous concepts that have been incorporated into the Kumpo dance. Therefore, a final assessment of the question of continuity and change in Diola society has to include close attention to the role of Kumpo today. Such an analysis will be one of the elements in the concluding chapter of this study.

SUMMARY

Traditional Diola religion was flexible in its response to the colonial situation and to close contact with Islam and Christianity. Both oral and written descriptions of nineteenth century rituals suggest that there is a high degree of continuity with contemporary ritual among the non-Muslim Diola. In addition, the survival and apparent expansion during recent decades of the anti-witchcraft figure Kumpo shows an underlying continuity in the metaphysical foundation of Diola religion, even among Muslims. At the same time, however, there is some indication that such ontological concepts as the nature of Emitay and His relation to man have been modified in response to the very different conceptions of the Supreme Deity expressed by Muslims and Christian missionaries in the Casamance.

VI. FRENCH ADMINISTRATION AND THE SPREAD OF ISLAM, 1890–1940

For the northern Diola, the period from 1890 to the beginning of World War Two encompassed the establishment of French colonial administration, the imposition of taxation, the rapid expansion of the cash economy, the growth of urban migration, and the development of a transportation network. These changes, not surprisingly, had a strong impact on local Diola communities and led to significant changes in social and religious institutions. Among the most important of these developments was the spread of Islam. Whereas in 1890 there were no Diola Muslims in the Basse Casamance, by 1940 Combo, Fogny, and Buluf were all well on the way to having Muslim majorities.

Between 1892 and 1894 British and French military expeditions ended the slave raids of Fodé Kaba and Fodé Sylla. These measures greatly increased the security of travellers, which in turn led to increased seasonal migration from the Lower Casamance to the Gambia and gave a substantial boost to Gambian rubber exports.

In May 1893 the French signed a treaty with the aging warrior Fodé Kaba. This agreement, which recognized French control over Fogny, led to the establishment of a military post at Bignona. More important, it signalled the return of peace to the region. In his 1894 report, Governor Llewelyn of the Gambia wrote, "following the peaceable settlement of Kombo the rubber trade has increased considerably and there is plenty of it in Fogny." A year later he noted:

Owing to the opening up of Kombo and the freedom now enjoyed by the inhabitants of that district, a great impetus has been given to the rubber trade, and the exports last year amounted to 394,164 lbs. valued at 18,879 £, which are the largest figures that I can trace for this product.

During the 1890s, the absence of money in the Lower Casamance prompted the French to collect the impôt in the form of goods - primarily rice, millet, and rubber. Buluf, however, remained outside their effective control, prompting the résident at Bignona in 1894 to remark, "I fear they are a little too unaware of our presence." In 1902 his successor complained that the people of Buluf never paid the impôt. The French were, however, losing far more than the unpaid tax. At least half the latex collected in the region was being siphoned off to the Gambia.

1 ANS 13G 461 (May 7, 1893).
3 The Gambia, Annual Report for 1895, p. 17.
4 ANS 13G 372 77.
5 ANS 13G 378 70. Tiobon had, however, paid the tax in 1899, when the levy for the entire village was 47 kilograms of latex; ANS 13G 492 4.
Rubber exported from the Gambia was free from high export duties, so trading firms there paid higher prices to the primary producers than did trading houses in the Casamance. In addition, Casamance firms did not usually pay cash for the latex, but gave credit towards the purchase of their own goods.

In Fogny and French Combo, an 1897 commercial report complained, "Most of the rubber collected in Casamance is not sold there but is carried to Bathurst by land." The same report estimated that dyula traders annually sold 200 metric tons of Diola rubber in Bathurst. This was greater than the amount exported from Casamance ports in 1895 or 1896.

Many Diola were soon following the dyula north to the Gambia, a fact which the French, who had encouraged the Diola to avoid the middlemen, must have viewed with irony. The incentives for that trip were summarized by a Diola who, in 1900, told the Administrator of the Casamance:

A Bathurst, le caoutchouc, on nous paye un prix très élevé, en espèces, avec lesquels nous achêtons des pagnes ... tandis qu'à Carabane, le caoutchouc nous est payé beaucoup moins cher, on ne veut pas nous donner le montant en espèces, et nous sommes obligés de prendre des marchandises qui ne nous plaisent pas.

The magnitude of this commercial exodus is suggested by the fact that in Combo the Diola refused any but English currency for their rubber. In 1902 the Administrator commissioned a report on the traffic between Fogny-Combo and the Gambia. The study showed three routes were used by the Diola, two of them by the people of Jougoutes. One corridor followed the Diouloulou by land to the Gambia. In 1896, the Governor of Senegal called attention to the problem about which market to visit lay with the Diola themselves. Again, their earlier experience in trade at both Carabane and Bathurst equipped them to make this judgment.

Throughout the 1890s the French were plagued by the loss of Casamance rubber to the Gambia. In 1896, the Governor of Senegal called attention to the problem. He called on his regional administrators to take steps to prevent all the rubber from the frontier region from being sent to Bathurst.

Comparison of Gambian and Casamance rubber exports shows an inverse relationship. Substantial fluctuations in exports from one colony were usually counter-balanced by opposite fluctuations across the border. When the Casamance and the Gambia are considered as a unit, year-to-year production statistics level off. Thus for example, the 1895 Gambian trade was substantially greater than the previous year's total, but in Casamance the 1895 rubber crop was down by over 250,000 kg. from the record production of 1894. It is clear where the additional Gambian rubber originated.

The most startling fact revealed by the combined production figures is that, after a decade of substantial growth beginning about 1880, rubber exports increased only slightly. There was a spurt from 1889 to 1891, especially in the Gambia, where exports rose from 22 tons to 123 tons. During the period 1891–1898 however, the production curve is practically flat. Exports, which stood at 251,392 kg. in 1891, topped 300 tons in 1895, but did not regularly surpass that level until 1897. They then reached a plateau that was sustained, except in years of unusually low rubber prices, until the end of the wild rubber boom.

The reason for this plateau is that the two colonies were competing for a limited crop. Given the supply of rubber trees and the methods of collection, once a practical peak had been reached, increases in one colony's exports could come only at the expense of the other colony. The decision about which market to visit lay in the hands of the primary producers.

It took Senegalese authorities and Casamance trading houses a few years to respond to the trans-border traffic. However, once the firms began to pay cash for local rubber, Bathurst merchants lost their primary commercial advantage. By 1905 even many dyula were collecting latex in the Casamance and then selling it at Ziguinchor.

After 1898, the French administration was able to increase further the share of the rubber crop exported through Senegal by encouraging the Diola themselves to gather more of the rubber. Encouragement took the form of the impôt. During the late 1890s, the Diola could pay their tax bill in the form of one kilogram of latex per man. In 1902 however, the headtax was raised to one franc, to be paid in cash. At just this time, trading houses at Ziguinchor and Carabane began to pay cash for rubber. The Diola responded as expected. In 1906 the impôt was raised to two francs and Casamance rubber exports immediately set an all-time record, topping 400 tons.

6 Some French firms, including Maurel et Prom, had established posts at Bathurst during the late nineteenth century.
7 ANS 13G 487 L.
8 ANS 13G 347 71: At Bathurst, we are paid a very high price for our rubber, in cash, with which we purchase 'pagnes' ... whereas at Carabane we are paid less for our rubber, they do not like to pay cash, and we are obliged to take merchandise which does not please us.
9 ANS 13G 375 70.
10 ANS 13G 508, "Rapport sur les chemins suivis par les indigènes du Combo et du Fogny pour se rendre en Gambie anglaise."
11 Interviews with Sidiku Diatta, chef de village, Tendouk, and Louis Seydou, Chef de village, together with elders of Kartiak.
12 ANS 2G 17, "Sénégal, Rapport Politique, 1896."
13 Before 1906 cash had completely replaced payment in script redeemable only at the same trading house. See ANS 2G 6 4; ANS 2G 6 1.
14 ANS 2G 6 1.
15 ANS 13G 492.
Ironically, greater Diola involvement in the rubber trade exacerbated the very conditions that would eventually lead to the demise of the trade. For the Diola, like many other local producers, were not adverse to adding foreign substances to their latex to increase its weight. The resulting poor quality of much Casamance rubber was a matter of continuous concern to Senegalese administrators. It also served to keep prices paid at the major European market, in Liverpool, lower than prices for other varieties of African wild rubber. Ultimately, all African rubber proved unable to compete with the more pure latex from plantations in Southeast Asia, and the African market collapsed after 1913.

Another problem with Casamance latex production was that the methods the Diola used to extract the rubber were often detrimental to the plants. Eventually this caused a decrease in the rubber crop, even before the loss of markets to cultivated rubber. As early as 1884, the Governor of the Gambia termed local rubber collection "a regular case of killing the goose for the golden egg." Fifteen years later, the annual report for the colony noted a decline in the trade, which it attributed to "the practical extinction of the rubber plants by the ignorant class of men who wander about rubber-cutting in the bush".

French administrators were concerned by the same problem. A 1903 report observed: "Jusqu'à présent les indigènes ont rendu les lianes exploitées inproductives pour plusieurs années, soit par leur maladresse à y pratiquer les incisions par où s'écoule le latex, soit même en coupant les lianes."

Such worries appeared almost annually in local reports. In 1905 the Governor-General published a decree which addressed the twin problems of adulterated rubber and damaged trees. The arrêté of January 31, 1905, promulgated under pressure from the Bordeaux merchants who were by then buying 60 per cent of all Casamance rubber, prohibited the sale of impure rubber and set limits on how deeply the trees could be cut. Such a regulation was, of course, impossible to enforce and the law therefore failed to ameliorate the situation. By 1910 an agricultural report observed in Buluf, "lianes saignées à outrance... La production de caoutchouc de cette région diminue d'une façon sensible de même que la qualité." Thus, even before the full impact of Malaysian and Indonesian rubber was felt, Casamance production had begun to decline. In 1906 about 402 tons were exported. By 1908 falling prices caused a decline to 264 tons. In 1909 production climbed to 353 tons but by the following year, depleted and injured *Landolphia* prevented the Diola from responding to higher prices early in the season; by year's end the prices had declined and exports diminished to 325 tons. In 1912 the total was only 207 tons and a year later output plummeted to 87 tons. The outbreak of war dealt a death blow to the commerce, as only two tons were exported in 1914. Although a partial recovery was effected over the next two years, with production reaching 73 tons in 1916, the Casamance rubber boom was finished. Deprived of this important source of cash income, the Diola soon turned their attention to groundnuts as a potential cash crop. The progressive clearing of forest land that ensued destroyed the remaining rubber plants.

The high rubber production of the early 1900s coincided with greatly increased contact between the people of Jougoutes and the French administration. The establishment of a military post at Kartiak in 1907 — only after a village revolt against the French presence had been put down — together with the appointment of the first chef de canton for Jougoutes in 1906, were accompanied by the first successful efforts by the French to collect the impôt in the region. In 1906, of 23,500 francs assessed for the entire canton, 23,000 francs were collected. Subsequently, the Diola found it more difficult to ignore the colonial presence. The years immediately following the demise of the rubber trade brought military conscription. In 1917, the newly-appointed chef de canton, the first Diola appointed to the post, was made responsible for disarming the population. By 1920 the administrative infrastructure and control had been developed which were to be used to bring further economic and political changes to Buluf.

### PALM PRODUCE

Palm oil and palm kernels complemented rubber as important sources of monetary income for the Diola. Palm produce played a key role in the development of economic relations between the northern Diola and the people of the Lower Gambia. After production had reached a peak in the early 1890s, it slackened in response to the European Depression, and because the Diola were keeping some of the oil

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16 See inter alia ANS 2G 6 1; also Henry 1907:101; also Gouvernement Générale de l'AOF, Rapport d'ensemble annuel, 1911, p. 110.
17 For example, at the end of 1905 the highest grade of Casamance rubber brought 8.60 francs in Liverpool, but the more common "Casamance no. 3" brought only 6.60 francs.
20 Gambia, Report for 1899, p. 6. Such disparaging remarks also served as an excuse for production decline due to other factors such as falling prices.
21 ANS 2G 3 7, "Sénégal, Rapport Politique, 1903", Thus far the locals have made the lianes useless for several years, either by cutting the bark or, in actually cutting down the vines.
22 Between 1899 and 1902 Bordeaux merchants increased their share of Casamance rubber from ten to sixty percent of the total crop.
24 ANS 2G 10 4, "Sénégal, Rapport Agricole", lianes bled to the utmost... Rubber production in this region has diminished appreciably both in quantity and in quality.
25 ANS 2G 8 8.
26 See Roche, 1976.
27 ANS 13G 375 2. In 1906 the tax was 2 francs but in 1907 it was raised to 4 francs per head, ANS 13G 380.
for their own use. By 1905, however, palm kernel production had risen to surpass the figures for 1893–4. During the later period, a significant quantity of palm produce was gathered by the Diola, rendered, and sold, in the Gambia. Senegalese production statistics may, therefore, be misleadingly low.

The same factors which attracted Diola rubber traders to the Gambia – payment in cash, higher prices for their products, and a wider selection of goods to purchase with the money earned – also led the Diola to sell their palm oil in the British colony. But, whereas rubber was collected in the Casamance and only transported to the Gambia for sale, the palm produce trade necessitated long sojourns. The entire process, from harvesting to sale, was conducted in the Gambia.

Men left their villages in Jugoutou and Combo immediately after the rice harvest in January, and they remained in the Gambia until the approach of the following rainy season. These seasonal migrants would settle in one place, often choosing as their host a Manding Muslim. Before returning home, they would offer their host a quantity of palm kernels as payment for the hospitality. Frequently, the visiting Diola were also expected to make a gift of a twenty-five liter drum of palm oil to the host community. After several months of work gathering the kernels and extracting the oil – which was sometimes a communal task – an individual might have as much as 200 liters to sell at Bathurst. Most migrants then used their profits to buy clothing and cattle. By bringing animals back with him from the Gambia, a trader could increase his wealth and raise his social status.

Although it is difficult to date the beginning of this seasonal migration of palm produce gatherers, Diola migration to the Gambia certainly existed at the time the palm produce trade first became important, about 1880. It is very possible that both men and women were travelling to Bathurst to find work as day laborers, even before the inception of the palm produce trade. Oral testimony provides no date for the beginnings of the Gambian palm produce migration, but one is tempted to surmise that the drop in Casamance exports between 1894 and 1899 was due not only to Depression in Europe, but also to the fact that the Diola were selling much of their palm oil in the Gambia.

From its inception, the palm produce trade was linked to the rubber commerce. The Diola preferred rubber, which was far more remunerative and brought from five to twenty times more per unit weight than did palm kernels. But the second product afforded them greater commercial flexibility. When European demand for rubber fell, as in 1894, local producers turned to palm produce as an alternate source of income. When, in 1899, rubber exports regained their pre-

28 ANS 13G 496 3.
29 Informants include, in Thionk: imam Bakari Badji, Bassim Djiba, Gaana Diatta; in Pendok, chef Sidiku Diatta; in Mamp, chef Mamadiou Sambou; in Kartiak, Abdoulah Sambou.
30 In 1901 a French official estimated there was one cow for every ten inhabitants in Buluf. A cow sold for from 80 to 175 francs. ANS 2G 4 37.
31 In 1905 5 kg. of kernels were valued, for export duties, at 1 franc. ANS 13G 380. The Diola would have received less. By 1922 100 kg. brought 80 francs. ANS 2G 22 33. Rubber fluctuated between 2.5 francs per kilo in 1893 and 4.4 in 1899.

Depression levels, palm oil exports dropped to 30 per cent of the 1894 figure and kernels too fell sharply. The direct interrelationship was noted in a French agricultural report of 1900:

On remarque en effet . . . que les palmistes ont atteint leur maximum d'exportation les années où le caoutchouc ne se vendait pas.

African producers then, were able to respond to fluctuating market demand by switching from one product to another.

For a decade and a half, the migration of palm produce traders continued as a corollary to the rubber trade. When Asian plantation rubber began to depress the West African rubber market, Diola palm produce exports increased. In Fogny, an appreciable growth in the sale of palm produce occurred in early 1910. After 1913 palm produce output and the attendant seasonal migration of traders from Buluf and Combo to the Gambia expanded rapidly.

During the First World War, the migration of young men to the Gambia was given added impetus by their desire to avoid military conscription. Between 1912 and 1918 the population of the British colony jumped from 147,000 to 186,000 as a direct result of the military recruitment which occurred in the French colonies. Furthermore, the population of South Kombo District, directly north of Buluf and French Combo, grew from 1,012 in 1915 to 2,575 in 1918. On the eve of the first post-war recruitment campaign, in 1920, the Administrateur Supérieur de la Casamance wrote that another exodus into the Gambia had begun, but that the emigrés were expected to return to their homes as soon as the conscription drive had ended.

By the 1920s seasonal migration had become a common means of earning money during the dry season. It is a trend which continues today. Practically all young people who have completed their schooling leave Buluf between December and June. Many now go to Dakar, where they may remain for years. Others still follow the path to the Gambia, to collect palm oil or seek other employment.

The entry of the northern Diola into the Gambian rubber and palm produce trades illustrates themes important to West African economic history. The inception of this commerce predates the implementation of colonial administration in the region and demonstrates local initiative in the development of an export trade. In addition, the decision to sell at Gambian markets rather than at the closer Casamance entrepôts was clearly based upon comparison of the relative economic values of these markets.

32 ANS 13G 496 3. “In effect one notes . . . palm produce is exported in greatest quantities during the years when rubber doesn't sell well.”
33 ANFOM, Sénégal 1 97 ter (rapports politiques 1910–1913), rapport du premier trimestre, 1910.
34 ANS IF 13.
35 ANS 2G 20 36.
36 Several southwest Gambian villages house many people from Thionk-Essil who may stay for years, but retain close ties with kin in the home village. People in Thionk leave their cattle in the care of these Gambian relatives.
advantages of the two markets. The Diola were perceptive of market factors, not only in their choice of where to sell their products, but also in the decision about which items to trade. After 1890, for those years in which adequate export figures are available, the Diola situation corroborates Anthony Hopkins’ assertion that Africans responded with flexibility to changing returns on their products.37

THE INTRODUCTION OF ISLAM

The seasonal exodus to the Gambia had important effects on religious structures in Buluf, Fogny, and Combo. By the early 1900s the region was in regular commercial contact with the Muslim zone to the north. It is not surprising that many of the earliest Diola adherents to Islam were young men who had spent time living in the Gambia. In Buluf, beginning about 1893 and continuing through World War One, young men, traders who had travelled to the Gambia, became Muslims while away from their home communities. They subsequently formed the nuclei of Muslim communities in Buluf.

The first village to turn to the new religion was Tiobon. As early as 1894 there was a small community of Muslims who conversed in Manding — suggesting the origins of the Islamic influence — dressed in 'boubous', and worshipped under the spiritual leadership of a marabout.38 Islam’s early acceptance in Tiobon was due in large measure to the village’s proximity to Combo, a short pirogue ride across the Baila marigot, and thence to the trade routes to the Gambia. At least some members of this first group of Muslims had converted while in the Gambia. Lan Diatta, for example, said by many Diola throughout northern Buluf to have been the first Diola Muslim, was converted by the Manding marabout Arfan Mané, while on a trading trip in English Kombo.39

Another important factor in the Islamization of Tiobon and, ultimately, the rest of northern Buluf, was the work of the Mauritanian marabout Cherif Mahfouz Haidara, who devoted the years from 1901 to 1919 to converting the Diola. He made several trips through western Djougoutes and, in 1913, constructed the village of Dar Silamé, six hour’s journey north of Tiobon, in Combo. Dar Silamé became a center for the education of the children of Buluf Muslims.

By 1896, under the leadership of village chief Diakú Diedhiu, a Muslim, Islam had begun to spread in Tiobon. The Administrator of the Casamance mentioned Diedhiu in several reports, stressing the high esteem in which he was held by the people of Tiobon.40 Apparently, the chief’s charisma, together with that of Cherif Mahfouz who always stayed with Diedhiu when visiting Tiobon, played central roles in the early spread of Islam.41

North of Buluf in Combo, Islam made even more rapid progress. Before the end of the nineteenth century, there were Muslims throughout the Diola villages of Combo, a reflection of the extensive contact with the Gambia and the presence of Manding marabouts. In 1898 the Administrator of the Casamance wrote:

Lorsque j’ai rassemblé les chefs des villages du Combo, j’ai pu remarquer que plus de la moitié étaient musulmans; de plus, dans tous les villages, l’on rencontre des mendiants.42

In Buluf, Islam spread rather more slowly, outside of Tiobon. By 1903 there were a few Muslims in the communities of Bessire, Diatok, and Dianki.43 but not until about 1916 did Islam win any permanent followers in Thionk-Essil.44 The first Muslims in Mlomp, situated between Tiobon and Thionk-Essil, had turned to Islam about 1914 and they, too, adopted Islam while in the Gambia to collect and sell palm oil.45

Islam, as Abner Cohen has observed, can provide networks of geographically dispersed traders with an ideology and a moral framework which facilitate the organization of long-distance trade.46 While the Diola were a non-Muslim minority participating in the economic life of a predominantly Muslim society, Cohen’s observations may nevertheless help one to understand their turning to Islam. The Diola palm produce traders who became Muslims may have been viewed by their hosts as accepting their values. Conversion could therefore have provided access to the very ideological and moral community of Muslim merchants that Cohen describes. Entry into this group would likely have entitled an individual to greater trust within the Manding economic community. This in turn would have meant access to credit and perhaps better terms of exchange. Thus, to Diola migrant traders, Islam may have offered economic as well as spiritual benefits, a situation which is hinted at by some of the Diola who became Muslims while working in the Gambia.48

41 ANS 13G 375 19. Also interview with Ansoumana Diatta.
42 ANS 13G 498 2. When I gathered together the village chiefs of Combo I noticed that more than half were Muslims; in addition, one finds Manding in each of those villages.
43 ANS 2G 3 44.
44 Interview with Suleyman Sane, who became a Muslim in 1916; interview with village imam Ansoumana Sambou.
45 Interview with Cheikh Abba Bajji and the elders of Batine ward, Thionk-Essil.
46 Interview with chef Mamadou Sambou and the elders of Mlomp.
47 See Lewis 1966: 80.
48 Interview with Lamine Djiba, Batine, Thionk-Essil, June 1976.
By their policies in Casamance, the French colonial administration played an important, if unintentional role in the early establishment of Islam among the northern Diola. Many of the first Diola Muslims soon achieved positions of political responsibility under the newly imposed French colonial administration. Traditional Diola social organization was basically egalitarian, although there were significant variations in wealth among housing compounds. Authority, which was not centralized, was vested in the older adult males of the community.49 Through experience and demonstrated good judgment, an individual could achieve respect and influence among the elders of his ward or village. At the beginning of the twentieth century, however, French administrators attempted to extend colonial government to the local level by encouraging the Diola to name chefs de village. After 1916 the chefs de canton in Djougoutes were also local Diolas. These men were invested with the authority, backed if necessary by the gardes de cercle, to collect the head tax, settle boundary disputes, and even disarm the population.

Not surprisingly, the men who filled these newly created positions of authority were among the group of early Muslims. The Diola who had some experience in the world outside of Djougoutes and who therefore possessed the qualities sought by the French for local chiefs — above all, the ability to speak French, Wolof, or Manding — were precisely the people who, in the course of their travels, were most likely to have accepted Islam.

Dianku Diedhiu was the first such individual. Educated at Carabane and fluent in Wolof, he served the French as an interpreter. Originally, according to oral accounts, he was only the head of a ward in Tiobon. He, however, maintained close relations with the colonial authorities who, during the 1890s, recognized him as the village chief.50 At the same time, Diedhiu was among the very first Muslims in Djougoutes, and he was an active proponent of Islam in Tiobon.51

Throughout Djougoutes during the first decades of the twentieth century, there were men like Dianku Diedhiu. The first Muslim in Tendouk, Ansoumana Diatta, was named chef de canton in 1916. After his appointment, he chose as village notables, men whom he himself convinced to become Muslims.52 Likewise Afan Sonko, who succeeded Diatta as chef de canton in 1925, was the first Muslim in his home village of Bessire. There, he had also served as chef de village since 1904.53 In Thionk-Essil, Boubacar Sagna, who was chosen chef de village by his

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49 On the significant role women played in traditional decision-making, see ANS 13G 375 2.
50 ANS 13G 485, ANS 13G 372 70.
51 Interviews with Seku Ansoumana Diatta and chef de village Sulyeman Diedhiu of Tiobon, and Chief Chanseedine of Dar ouid Khair; ANS 13G 485 2.
52 Interview with Ansoumana Diatta (of Tendouk)'s son, chef de village Sidiku Diatta, Tendouk.
53 Interview with Sonko's son Ibrahim Sonko of Bignona. Ansoumana Diatta was removed from office in 1925 and Djougoutes canton was divided into two cantons. Afan Sonko was named chef of Djougoutes Ouest (Nord) and Ansoumana's son Akanga was appointed chef of Djougoutes Est (Sud).

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54 According to Suleyman Sane the people of Thionk selected Sagna to replace an unpopular chief about 1915 or 1920. Perhaps this is referred to in a 1922 report, ANS 2G 22 44 that states, "un chef de village a été élu à Thionk-Essil".
55 ANS 2G 31 73, p. 31.
56 In 1936 the administrator of the Casamance estimated that about one-third of Bignona cercle were Muslims. Administrative reports tended to underestimate the Muslim population; ANS 2G 36 75.
57 Pélissier 1966 suggests peanuts reached Buluf from Carabane.

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THE INTER-WAR PERIOD

Between the two World Wars, the establishment of cash crop agriculture led to far-reaching social and economic changes among the northern Diola. Also during this period, the continued development of urban migration, the development of an overland transportation network, and the establishment of primary schools, all brought the peoples of the Basse Casamance into closer contact with the rest of Senegal. During the 1930s, however, an unprecedented series of calamities afflicted Diola society. The cumulative effect of these disasters and of the continuing socio-economic change was a tremendous acceleration of Islamization among the northern Diola. By the beginning of the Second World War, a majority of the Diola of Buluf and a sizable minority in Fogny had become Muslims.

Until the twentieth century, groundnuts, which had been an important export from the Middle Casamance as early as the 1850s, were grown only in very small quantities in the Lower Casamance. Small amounts were cultivated in Carabane and it is likely that the Diola first learned of the crop while trading there.

According to village elders in Thionk-Essil, peanut cultivation was learned from Manding traders.55 Whether from the Manding, or from the French at Carabane,
By 1907 the crop had spread to the nearby communities of Kartiak and Dianki. The earliest written reference to peanuts in Djougoutes dates to 1911. In that year, the Administrator of the Casamance wrote:

"Peanuts are not cultivated in the Lower Casamance except in a few villages in the region of Djougoutes (Diagoun, Kaniobon, Dianki, Kartiak, Tiobon, Bodé, Affniam, and Diatock)."

Groundnut sales provided the Diola with small amounts of cash to purchase clothes, guns, and other items. The early development of peanut farming may also have been an effort to find an additional source of income with which to pay the impôt. The loss of the rubber market in 1913 made Diola farmers receptive to the new and potentially profitable crop.

By the end of World War One, small quantities of groundnuts were being grown throughout Djougoutes and were then sold to Manding traders and to local Wolof representatives of French trading houses. Ironically, however, the colonial administration seemed to be unaware of this incipient commercial agriculture. Not until 1921 did the Administrator of the Casamance turn his attention to the agricultural development of the Lower Casamance. By that date, the Diola were already growing groundnuts for sale.

Beginning in 1921 the colonial administration made a major effort to encourage the expansion of peanut cultivation in the Lower Casamance. Much of their attention was focused on Buluf. French policy served several purposes. First, peanut oil was needed in metropolitan France. Second, revenue generated by the export of groundnuts and by the higher taxes that could then be levied on the local population would make the Casamance more nearly self-supporting financially. Third, the infusion of currency into the Lower Casamance would create a local market for goods produced elsewhere in the colony or in the métropole. Ultimately, the awakened desire for consumer goods might stimulate the Diola to undertake even more intensive cultivation of cash crops. As the governor of Senegal observed in 1928, French economic policy was to:

"give rise in the remote areas to needs, including essential ones, that would inspire intensive work and would constitute an important element in the prosperity of the colony."

To encourage cash cropping, the French used a strategy common throughout the West African colonies: increased taxation, combined with active propaganda for the new crop. Between 1918 and 1920 the head tax was doubled from five to ten francs and collection was enforced with increased vigor. In 1922 the commandant at Bignona complained that the Diola were still resisting the impôt. Therefore, during the following year an entire company of soldiers accompanied him on tour in the region, compelling the Diola to pay their tax. In addition to collecting all but 300,000 francs of a total assessment of 2.8 million for 1923, the administration gathered back taxes for 1921 and 1922. This campaign stimulated the rapid expansion of peanut farming.

After 1921, in order further to increase production, the administration provided seed nuts to the Diola. To achieve this purpose, Sociétés Indigènes de Prévoyance (SIP) were established throughout the Casamance. These SIPs distributed seed to farmers with the stipulation that the loans be repaid in kind and within a fixed interest of twenty per cent, after the harvest. This arrangement ensured a steady annual growth in the Société's store of seed. The SIP also provided storage facilities for harvested groundnuts. By 1923, 280 thousand kilos of seed had been provided to Casamance farmers.

The campaign to increase peanut cultivation was recorded in official records as an immediate success. In 1921 the 'commandant' at Bignona complained that, without official permission, the Diola had burned several hundred hectares of forest in order to plant peanuts. A year later the acreage devoted to the crop in the Kartiak region had increased by one-third. One wonders, however, whether this immediate and startling success may not have actually reflected a more gradual process. For the Diola had been increasing their groundnut plantings for about a decade before the administration took official note of the trend. To report a sudden and rapid increase in production made the administrators look good. It may, however, have masked the true nature of the commercialization of Diola agriculture. The Diola themselves had taken the initiative in introducing groundnuts, before the Sociétés de Prévoyance were even established.

Certainly the success of the SIP was enhanced by the fact that the Diola were already experienced at groundnut cultivation. The central plateau of Buluf offered vast expanses of uninhabited land which, once denuded of forest cover, were perfectly suited to growing peanuts. With the demise of the rubber trade these forests had lost their commercial value to the Diola, who now rapidly cut them down to convert to peanut fields. The farmers were already familiar with the new crop and thus required no instruction in planting. As they could use the traditional rice-cultivating tool, the kayendo, to prepare the soil and plant the seeds, and as unused

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58 Informants dated the introduction of peanuts in Tiobon to before Thionk's 1905 bukat.
59 Informants in Thionk and Kartiak concurred that groundnuts reached Kartiak before the 1907 revolt against the French.
60 ANS 1G 343 158.
61 As late as 1920 the Casamance administration complained that a paucity of money made the sale of rice difficult, ANS 2G 20 36.
62 ANS 2G 28 8.
63 For a general discussion of the use of taxation to stimulate commercialization of agriculture see Hogendorn, "Economic Initiative and African Cash Farming: Pre-colonial Origins and early Colonial Developments", in Gann and Duignan, 1975.
64 ANS 2G 18 44; ANS 2G 20 36. The administrator who announced the increase predicted peanut sales would rise.
65 ANS 2G 22 33; ANS 2G 23 70.
66 ANS 2G 23 70.
67 ANS 2G 22 33.
land was available at no cost, capital was needed only to purchase seeds. That was provided by SIP loans.

Unlike rice, peanuts are not labor-intensive, and the two crops are planted at different times. In addition, groundnuts do not grow in the low-lying inundated areas reserved for rice cultivation. The Diola could, therefore, add the new crop without sacrificing their staple food production. Consequenly, peanuts complemented rather than competed with rice production. The people of Buluf were able to develop a dual agricultural system. While rice, cultivated by traditional techniques, remained their basic food crop, peanuts became the primary source of monetary income and the means by which to pay the head tax.

The development of groundnut farming throughout the Basse Casamance is reflected in production statistics. In 1916 only eleven thousand tons were grown in the entire region and of this quantity, practically the entire amount came from the districts (cercles) of Kolda and Sedhiou, in Middle Casamance. By 1922 the growth of cash cropping had already attracted a large number of merchants to the Bignona region. Two years later the Casamance produced twenty thousand tons of peanuts. In 1925 prices rose and production soared to forty-five thousand tons. Poor rainfall caused the following year’s output to drop to twenty-seven thousand tons and in 1927 exports totalled thirty-two thousand tons. In 1928, the last year of pre-Depression prosperity, production climbed to 50,545 tons, of which forty thousand were exported, 10,930 tons from the cercle of Bignona. The latter figure would have been raised entirely in the Basse Casamance.

In 1921 as the French began their efforts to commercialize agriculture in the Lower Casamance, they also undertook the construction of roads through the region. By linking their administrative posts to the more remote areas, they hoped both to facilitate communication and to strengthen their effective control. Coordinated with the growth of cash cropping, the new transportation network permitted the rapid conveyance to market of the crops. In 1924 and 1925 most of Senegal’s credits for transportation development went to the Casamance.

The first road in the Lower Casamance, completed in 1921, connected Bignona to Tobor, which was then the southern terminus for ground transport on the route to Ziguinchor. Early road maintenance, as well as construction, was carried out by prisoners. As the transportation system expanded, however, the administration came to rely on forced labor. All adult men were liable to be called for this corvée, which lasted up to two weeks, often just before the rainy season when they ought to have been preparing their fields for planting.

In 1922 the road system was extended into Buluf. The first path traversable by automobiles ran from Bignona to Tiobon. It was subsequently lengthened into a seventy kilometer route which traversed most of Buluf. By the rainy season of 1923 the administrator of the Casamance reported that this road was nearly completed. By 1924 the essential structure of the present road system that joins Buluf to Bignona had been completed. It was then possible to use trucks to carry the groundnut crop to market. This lowered transportation time and thus served further to stimulate the expansion of cash crop agriculture. In addition, the roads now made it much easier for the Diola themselves to travel.

The completion of a transportation network greatly improved communication between local communities and the outside world. It also encouraged emigration. During the late 1920s and the early 1930s, migration of young people was further stimulated by the introduction of primary education in Buluf. The first school was constructed in 1926 and, during the following decade, elementary education became available throughout the region. By 1936 five schools were in existence with a total enrollment of over eight hundred students.

The French, by introducing primary education, hoped to create a group of young Diola with the training necessary to act as local auxiliaries for the administration. As the Governor wrote in 1927, education was aimed at producing “a level of young students capable of receiving the preparation [to become] the true agents of our decisions and our policies”. The effects of widespread education, however, extended beyond the formation of low level functionaries. Inadvertently, French educational policy fostered the expansion of urban migration.

The generation which grew to maturity during the 1930s was the first to receive primary schooling in the Lower Casamance. Young Diolas who could speak and write French and Wolof — each a lingua franca in the major cities of Senegal — were better prepared to seek jobs in northern Senegal. The movement to Dakar was correlated with the spread of primary education in the Casamance.

Migration to the Gambia, which had received a boost during the First World War, continued to grow after 1918. By the 1920s most of the youths from two communities, Mlomp and Thionk-Essil, are said to have spent the dry season collecting and selling palm produce in the Gambia. With the completion of the road system through Buluf, this seasonal migration became a regular aspect of life in almost all of the villages in Buluf. In 1928 an administrator characterized the population movements between Buluf and Fogny-Conombo on the one hand, and the Gambia on the other, as “a perpetual coming and going”.

The more distant region of Cape Verde did not attract many Diola until a later date. Oral testimony does recall one early migrant from Thionk-Essil who, about

68 This corresponds to the situation described by Berry, 1975 among Yoruba farmers who extended cocoa plantations without sacrificing staple food crops.
69 ANS 2G 18 44.
70 ANS 2G 22 33.
71 ANS 2G 24 4.
72 ANS 2G 26 30.
73 ANS 2G 27 34.
74 ANS 2G 27 34.
75 Bignona’s exports remained constant in 1927 and 1928; ANS 2G 27 and ANS 2G 28 37.
76 ANS 2G 25 43.
77 ANS 2G 23 70.
78 ANS 2G 36 75.
79 ANFOM Affaires Politiques 598 3 45.
1910, travelled to Dakar. Only during the 1930s, however, did this migration assume significant proportions. By about 1940 a considerable number of young men who had received primary education in Buluf and could speak French were travelling to Dakar to seek employment.

THE DEPRESSION YEARS

The Depression which struck the Western economies in 1929 had immediate repercussions in those areas of West Africa that were tied to a cash economy. In Senegal the trading price of groundnuts plummeted, depriving the colony of a large portion of its revenue. The ensuing years brought continued low peanut prices as well as decreased financing for colonial administration and development programs. The economic situation for 1929 was summarized by the Governor in his annual report:

The commercial crisis resulting from the 1929 trade ... the depreciation of peanuts on the export market ... another drop in the price of the principal export commodity. At the present moment these economic and financial problems assume an aura of particular gravity.

In 1930 the situation worsened. Although Senegal exported a record 503,681 tons of groundnuts, the falling prices created a year of severe crisis. In Bignona cercle the crop was large, at least 12,000 tons. Trading, however, began at 25 to 30 francs per 100 kilos, less than half the prevailing level for pre-Depression years. In August 1930 the financial crisis led to a sudden suspension of credit in the Gambia. As a result, the palm oil trade was curtailed. This deprived the Diola of their usual alternative source of income. In addition, in 1930 grasshoppers invaded the Casamance.

During the following year there was no relief from the economic woes. The Governor, in his annual report, lamented the fact that "the value of the peanut ... has fallen to a lower level than [that provided for by] the most pessimistic forecasts". Total exports from the colony dropped by ten percent to 456,732 tons. In Bignona cercle 13,000 tons of peanuts were exported, but at a price so low that the Commandant expected future cultivation to decline.

Although the precipitous drop in peanut prices imposed hardship on farmers, the effects of the Depression were mitigated until 1931 by the fact that the Diola continued to raise enough rice to feed themselves. In the summer of 1931, however, the Lower Casamance was seriously affected when the rains failed. The rice crop was further damaged in July by grasshoppers. Difficulties that resulted from the poor harvest were intensified by the lack of sufficient money from peanut sales with which to buy rice. In earlier famine years, such as 1893 and 1903, the Diola had been able to survive in part by the increased sale of palm produce. With the financial collapse in the Gambia and Senegal, that solution was not available to them. This terrible coincidence of agricultural and economic calamities was exacerbated by an outbreak of cattle plague in Bignona cercle. An estimated 1500 head of cattle perished and Buluf was hit with particular severity. Informants recall that only two animals were left alive in Thionk-Essil. With the exhaustion of the rice stocks, cattle were the one traditional measure of wealth still available to the Diola. Thus, the simultaneous occurrence of drought and cattle plague must have constituted a crisis of unprecedented magnitude.

In 1932 and 1933 local society continued to face extraordinary hardship. Again the rice crop was damaged by insufficient rain. The French, however, continued to impose economic demands on the Diola. The road from Bagaya to Diatock was widened with the use of forced labor, and military conscription was now carried out annually. This stimulated a new tide of emigration into the Gambia. Other Diola, not affected by conscription, crossed the border to avoid paying the head tax.

The 1932 peanut harvest in Bignona was large, as 16,000 tons were exported. Due to a late and short rainy season, however, the rice crop was once again somewhat insufficient for local needs. Not until 1935 did the agricultural situation finally improve. Then, abundant rainfall led to a magnificent rice harvest, thereby ending several years of deprivation. Also in 1935, the long depression in the peanut market began to ease.

It is interesting to note that even during the worst years of the Depression peanut cultivation continued to increase. Apparently, farmers attempted to

80 ANS 2G 29 43.
81 ANS 2G 29 15.
82 This compared with 408,709 tons in 1928 and 393,745 tons in 1929; ANS 2G 31 48.
83 ANS 2G 30 73. Earlier the 'commandant' had predicted that the Diola would refuse to sell their crop at even 50 francs per 100 kilos.
84 ANS 2G 30 60.
85 ANS 2G 31 48; ANS 2G 31 73.
86 ANS 2G 31 14.
87 ANS 2G 31 48.
88 In December 1931 100 kilos sold for 45 francs in Bignona; ANS 2G 31 73.

89 ANS 2G 32 111.
90 ANS 2G 31 73, p. 51.
91 ANS 2G 31 73.
92 ANS 2G 33 64.
93 The use of forced labor kept the cost of public works projects to a minimum. At the height of the Depression in 1932, the administrator of the Casamance boasted that Bignona cercle had run a 750,000 franc surplus; ANS 2G 34 67.
94 In 1931 Bignona, with an estimated population of 72,000, furnished 32 conscripts. In 1932 70 men were called and in 1933, 55 (ANS 2G 33 60). 87 were called up in 1934 (ANS 2G 34 5) and 34 the next year (ANS 2G 35 67), and 44 in 1936 (2G 36 5).
95 ANS 2G 34 67.
96 Bignona's exports were:
1928 11,000 tons
1930 12,000 tons
1931 13,000 tons
1932 12,000 tons
1933 "greater than 1932" (2G 33 138)
maintain their income in the face of falling prices by increasing production. 97 Also, after mid-1930 the curtailment of the palm produce trade to the Gambia had deprived the Diola of their chief alternate source of income and had forced them to expand groundnut production to pay the impôt.

Economic recovery accelerated in 1936. The groundnut market opened at 70 francs per 100 kilos and rose to 85 francs by December. Again the rice harvest was large and by year's end the worst of the crisis was over.

In several respects the early 1930s thus constituted a period of extreme social and economic strain for the Diola. First there was the Depression, which devastated the newly implanted cash section of the local economy. On top of this came the drought, grasshoppers, and cattle plague which, together, struck at the basis of their subsistence and wealth. Finally, the cumulative impact of such developments as increased migration and local primary schooling placed additional strain upon the established social order.

Together these diverse factors served, during the 1930s, to stimulate the more rapid spread of Islam. The most immediate appeal of the new religion was associated with the Diola's almost desperate effort to reestablish what today might be termed an "ecological equilibrium". Traditional shrines had proven unable to end the drought. Now, Muslim marabouts offered alternative ritual expertise.

ISLAM

During the 1920s and 1930s, Islamization passed through three distinct phases. First, the religion spread slowly, establishing core communities among returned migrants from the Gambia — but only among men. During the early 1930s, the extreme economic hardship, coupled with agricultural calamities of unprecedented proportions, caused Islam to attract large numbers of new adherents who sought alternative ritual means by which to end the disasters. The third stage ensued, during the latter part of the decade, as people became Muslims in order to follow their neighbors, in a sort of "snowball effect".

A Muslim, in Buluf and Fogny, is one who has made the profession of faith and who carries out the five daily prayers. To the Diola, marabouts are far less important than they are to the Wolof; indeed, many Diola Muslims have no marabout. Each village boasts several mosques. Aside from the imam, however, few Diola can read Arabic. All Diola Muslims do follow dietary restrictions: they avoid pork and, above all, forswear alcohol. Abstinence from alcohol is the defining characteristic of Diola Muslims; the local word for traditionalist, uruntaw, means "one who drinks". In Buluf, Muslims are generally expected to abandon their traditional shrines. In fact, however, some stnayi survive. In time of illness, many Muslims seek relief from their ailments through visits to the appropriate shrine.

97 This corroborates Hopkins, p. 254, who observes that West African farmers responded to falling prices by increasing production. See also Berry, p. 83.

After World War One, to the core Muslim communities that consisted of returned migrants, were added a small number of other Diola, usually young men, who became Muslims in their home communities. By 1930 the villages of Buluf contained small but growing Islamic communities, but only Tiobon was predominantly Muslim. During the 1930s, however, Islamization was spurred by the calamities which afflicted Diola society. Islam had, for over a generation, been presented to the Diola by travelling marabouts as an alternate belief system with its own ritual experts. Even before any Diola had become Muslims, marabouts were called upon to exercise their spiritual powers. For example, Cherif Mahfouz is said to have dispensed charms among the Diola to protect them from the danger of military attack by the French. These ritual powers were viewed by the Diola as compatible with their own belief system. During the period of hardships, therefore, they were predisposed to accept the alternative source of ritual expertise and control offered by the Muslim marabouts.

In time of drought, non-Muslims had recourse to several forms of ritual assistance. In pre-colonial Thionk-Essil, for example, they could sacrifice to the village shrine; they could hold a rain ceremony under the auspices of the village oeyi or, if these measures proved ineffectual, they could send a delegation to the village of Enampor, south of the Casamance River, to pray for rain. 98 By 1930 there was no longer an oeyi, but the village shrine remained and the community still sent delegations to Enampor. But visits to these shrines brought no respite from the drought, nor from the other problems that beset local agriculture. The inability of indigenous ritual to safeguard the community led some villages to seek the assistance of Muslim holy men. In 1933 the people of Mandegane asked Cherif Chamsedine, son of Cherif Mahfouz, to visit their village and bless the rice fields. Chamsedine came and offered a prayer. 99 When the drought finally ended, many people attributed the rain to Chamsedine.

Until the period of hardships, Islam had spread gradually among the Diola, but in 1931 the commandant at Bignona noted:

The numbers of followers are growing quite a bit, most notably in the west and the northwest of the cercle (Djougoutes, Fogny Combo). 101

Two years later the administrator in the Casamance remarked on the increasing rate of Islamization in Bignona cercle:

The Diola have allowed themselves to be Islamized in large numbers in the cercle and especially in the northwest. 101

98 The people of Thionk-Essil originally migrated from near Enampor, according to local traditions corroborated by the Diola in Kasa.
99 Interview with the elders of Mandegane, March 25, 1975 and with Cherif Chamsedine, June 1, 1975.
100 ANS 2G 31 73.
101 ANS 2G 33 60, p. 40.
Oral testimony corroborates this evidence of accelerating religious change, and indicates that the period 1932–35 was when the most rapid Islamization occurred. The chief of one ward in Thionk-Essil says, “It was in 1933 that the Muslim faith achieved considerable strength.” And the first Muslim in the village called 1934 “the era of important conversion.” Other informants corroborated this date.

Elsewhere in Buluf, the spread of Islam followed a similar course. In Mlomp, when the present imam became a Muslim in the mid-to-late 1930s, most of his village was already Muslim. Similarly in Kartiak where a small Muslim community had grown in one ward during the 1920s, the bulk of the population accepted Islam between 1927 and 1940. In Mancégane, where Chamaisedine’s rice fields, most of the village was Muslim in 1939, when Arfan Kemo Sagna assumed the post of imam. Only in Tendouk and in the southern Buluf communities of Elana and Affiniam did a significant part of the community continue in their accustomed religion through the 1940s.

Thionk-Essil typifies the speed with which Islam attracted followers in Buluf. When, about 1928 one student, who later became imam, left the village to pursue advanced Koranic studies, there were few Muslims. When he returned in 1941 most of the village was Muslim. In the relatively brief span of a decade the Muslim community had grown from a small minority centered among younger men to a majority faith encompassing most of the village except for the elders and the women.

The spread of Islam was also stimulated by urban migration which, along with groundnut cash cropping, brought unaccustomed wealth to the young men who were responsible for these economic innovations. Customarily, the members of the extended family group turned to the elders as a source of ultimate counsel and authority. As increasing numbers of men in their twenties left their villages for extended periods to seek employment, however, they were temporarily freed from the constraints of patriarchal control. Upon returning home, some of them expressed their newfound independence by rejecting the ancestral religion.

Much of the prestige of the elders derived from their status as leaders of local religious rituals. Most shrines were entrusted to older men and a few powerful elders served as priests of the sacred forest. During village initiation ceremonies, these men used their ritual authority, backed by strict discipline of the initiates, to teach traditions and instill respect for authority.

Islam, which valued religious learning and knowledge of the Koran above age alone, offered an alternate value system for younger men who were bent upon establishing their independence from the elders. The sense of the importance of piety and Islamic learning that new Muslims had, would have lessened their de-

102 Interviews with Mamadou Diatta, chief of Daga ward, Thionk, and with Suleyman Sane, the first Muslim in the village, 1974.
103 Informants in Kartiak say Islam spread rapidly after the arrival of Catholic missionaries, which is documented to 1927.
104 In Tendouk followers of indigenous religion include people in their 30s and 40s.
105 Interview with imam Ansouman Sambou, 1975.
106 Interview with Sekou Ansouman Diatta of Tiebon, January 1975.
107 The Diola follow the Maliki school of jurisprudence. The elders still reach consensus on important community matters, but they are now advised by either the imam or a respected scholar.
108 ANS 2G 34 S.
Women often but not always became Muslims to follow the faith of their husbands. Even today, many women are reluctant to accept a religion that denies them any authority and, furthermore, deprives them of the prestigious roles they filled in traditional religion as guardians of some of the most important shrines. Women were among the earliest migrants to the Gambia, yet they were not among the first Diola to become Muslims. This is significant, for it suggests that migrants did not become Muslims simply because they were away from their shrines and their local lineage-based community. In the Gambia, Diola women too were far away from their _ukin_ and from their lineages. Yet they were not attracted to Islam, with its universalist moral code. This suggests that Robin Horton’s theory of African conversion is not entirely accurate.

Horton suggests that those Africans who first adopted religious beliefs centered on the concept of a Supreme Being who is the foundation of a universalist moral order, were people who had the most extensive contact with the world outside the traditional community. He writes:

> The particular position taken by a given individual will depend largely on the degree to which, in his own personal life, the boundaries of the microcosm have ceased to confine him.109

Horton’s theory does not explain the very different experience of women traders and migrant workers. Diola women, unlike men, did not stand to gain status by accepting Islam. Rather, Islam was associated with a loss in social status and so, most women were not attracted to it. It therefore seems that status and the possibility of economic advantage were at least as important as the existence of a universalist moral code, in the decision of Diola men to become Muslims.

Among the Diola, it is not unheard of to find _imans_ whose wives keep pigs. The wife not only refuses to become a Muslim, she also publicly raises the one animal whose flesh is anathema to her husband. This would seem to be more than a symbolic protest against the husband’s religion.

During the 1930s, as the number of Muslims increased, Islamization gained a momentum of its own. Peer group pressure, which had at first served to discourage the acceptance of Islam, now began to have the opposite effect. By the second half of the decade, people were becoming Muslims in order to follow everyone else. This snowball effect was described by Suleyman Sane, himself the first Muslim in Thionk-Essil. Asked why everyone seemed to become a Muslim about 1934, he replied, “Whoever you were, you saw your friends converting.” In 1938 peer group pressure even helped induce the Catholic catechist in one ward to become a Muslim.

The pressure to conform by accepting the new faith was felt most strongly during important Muslim holidays. In order to participate in such celebrations as Tabaski and Mouloud, one had to be a Muslim. Ever since the arrival of Cherif Mahfouz at Tiobon prior to 1900, these religious festivals had impressed the


Diola and had attracted people to Islam. During the 1930s, too, many people were drawn to Islam through its festivals. Once a majority of the village was Muslim, these celebrations assumed the character of community-wide rituals. A non-Muslim would have been an outsider. The need to be a member of the religious “communities” and to participate in its public rituals thus led many people to join the swelling ranks of Diola Muslims.

**CONCLUSION**

The spread of Islam among the northern Diola can best be understood against the historical background of Casamance religions. Each of the different peoples of the region, Diola, Bagnun, Manjak, and often even sub-groups, had their own particular religious rituals. All of these systems were, however, quite similar in important respects and none claimed exclusive access to transcendental truth. Rather than mutually exclusive and competing systems, Casamance religions often proved to be complementary. There is abundant evidence of the diffusion of rituals and shrines among various groups. The wide dissemination of the word for shrine, _-chin_, in the seventeenth century may possibly reflect an early example of intergroup borrowings. The prime example of this process is, however, the spread of the Kumpo anti-sorcery masked figure among all the peoples of the Basse Casamance. A ritual of demonstrated effectiveness could readily be picked up and incorporated into different ritual systems. Unlike these earlier borrowings, Islam did require some break with traditional rituals. At least in principle, Diola Muslims were expected, if not entirely to avoid their old shrines, at least to take a low profile if they did continue to visit them. But many Muslims do continue to visit the _ukin_, at least when they fall ill. And it is not unheard of for Muslims to serve as guardians of shrines.

The spread of Islam among the northern Diola then, was not characterized by radical novelty. It would be inaccurate to speak of abrupt change, and even the term “conversion” does not quite accurately describe this process of Islamization. This is particularly true of the spread of Islam in Buluf during the 1930s. In response to the serious ecological and economic problems which afflicted local society at that time, Muslim ritual experts such as Cherif Chamsedine were consulted. This did not initially constitute a renunciation of traditional religious ritual, any more than the arrival of Kumpo had marked the end to alternate means of combatting sorcery.

To the Diola, Islam appeared as another source of ritual expertise, one which promised a measure of control over a suddenly out-of-control world. The complementary nature of different religions in the Casamance provided the framework within which the Diola first related to other religious systems. The early acceptance of Muslim marabouts and of Islam itself by the northern Diola should be understood in this context of complementarity and continuity.
VII. CHANGE AND CONTINUITY IN DIOULA THOUGHT AND RITUAL

Is it possible to understand the thought of an Other? After having traced the outward change in religious orientation among the northern Diola, how does one then approach the religious experiences, acts, and feelings of individuals? This knowledge can only come through observation of the imagery, both ritual and aesthetic, by which that people think about or dialogue with the Transcendent. A generation after the most rapid Islamization one can, by looking at Diola ritual and imagery, assess the impact of Islam upon the Diolas’ conceptions of the universe and of their relationship with the Transcendent.

After the mass Islamization of the 1930s, the following decades witnessed the gradual expansion of the Muslim population. As the remaining traditionalists aged and began to die, a new generation, born into Islam, grew to maturity. By 1950 Fogny, Combo, and northern Buluf were predominantly Muslim.

The progressive implantation of the new religion can be followed by the construction of mosques and the establishment of Koranic schools. By the early 1950s every village in Buluf had built at least one mosque and several communities, including Kartiak and Kagnobon, had also constructed small koranic schools. Kartiak had five mosques and Thionk-Essil had ten. In 1952 Thionk began the construction of a central mosque for the entire community, on the site of the village’s sacred forest.

This process continued through the 1960s and, by the mid-1970s, only the remnants of a non-Muslim population survived, in the form of a few old men who had resisted the pressure to become Muslims and a larger number of women who, if they had accepted Islam at all, did so in only the most nominal and noncomittal way.

At the same time, there was a hint of newly awakening pride in Diola traditions. This may have been little more than the nostalgic and self-conscious renewal that often occurs in a society that has experienced rapid change. Yet, the concern with traditional rituals was apparent within both the educated elite, including the first generation of Diola professional painters, and the rural populace, especially among older women who had never whole-heartedly embraced Islam.

What were the effects of the outer change in religious orientation upon the Diola worldview and upon their understanding of their place in the universe? How, for example, do Diola Muslims conceptualize the relation of the spiritual to the physical? To what extent has their interpretation of the causation of illness and well-being been affected by Islam? These questions relate closely to Diola cosmology, and they get to the heart of ritual contact with the skin. Finally, what has become of the more important pre-Islamic rituals? Do they survive, albeit in altered form, or have they disappeared?

In assessing continuity and change in Diola culture, these issues are more important than simple estimation of the percentage of Diola Muslims or the number of mosques in each community. Yet, the answers to these questions are not readily forthcoming. One can hardly find them by direct questioning of informants. A non-Diola, even if he has mastered the local language, still lacks the familiarity with cultural metaphors and with linguistic subtleties that are vital when entertaining such conversations. A more fundamental problem is that words do not lend themselves to answering these “writing questions”. Through a year of fieldwork, I dutifully tried to include these questions in interviews by asking, for example, “What did you see in Islam that led you to become a Muslim?” The responses, sometimes interesting, nevertheless did not even begin to approach the underlying ontological or cosmological issues. Only during subsequent visits to the Casamance did I realize that answers do exist, but they lie in other, non-verbal texts. These texts include ritual, the arrangement of ritual space, and what the Western world calls “art”.

In these concluding pages, I look at three diverse cultural texts. By concentrating on the evolution of first, the village rain ceremony and second, the bukut initiation, one can trace the changes in these most important of pre-Islamic rituals. The third “text”, the Kumpo anti-witchcraft figure, presents the fascinating example of a masking tradition which thrives in a Muslim society. The reasons for this survival have much to say about underlying continuities in traditional and Muslim Diola thought.

THE RAIN CEREMONY

In Buluf today, there exists a wide range of religious ritual. This variation reflects the different degree to which particular villages have accepted Islamic practices and the extent to which these practices have coexisted, combined with, or replaced local Diola rituals. One of the most important indigenous rituals was an annual sacrifice led by the oeyi or rain priest, which brought together all the adult members of the village just before the rainy season.

The oeyi disappeared from Buluf at the beginning of the twentieth century. According to oral testimony, this was the result of the creation of chefs de village by the French. Since that time, and in spite of the spread of Islam, the annual

1 Touze 1963.
2 These artists include Ansoumana Diedhiu, for whom traditional rituals are an important source of thematic inspiration.
3 This methodology owes much to Clifford Geertz’ concept of “thick description”. The aim of anthropology, he writes, “is to draw large conclusions from small, but very densely textured facts”. “Thick description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture”, (1973: 28).
4 The first chef de canton in Dougoues was appointed in 1906. The first village chiefs were named at about the same time, except in Tiobon where the French had recognized Dianku Diedhiu’s authority by 1894; see ANS 13G 372 70.
rain ceremony has survived in at least three villages. This is particularly significant, for each of these communities, Mlomp, Bagaya, and Tendouk, is now predominantly Muslim.

In pre-colonial Mlomp, when the rains failed to begin by the expected date, it was the duty of the oeyi to convene the entire community to pray at the village shrine, koeyi. Each extended family group would bring palm wine. The oeyi and his assistants then poured libations into large sea shells arrayed around the wooden stake which stood at the center of the shrine. While the oeyi repeated the libation three times, the villagers accompanied him in prayers for rain. The shells were then turned upside down so that the wine flowed into the earth. Towards the end of the rainy season, after sufficient rain had fallen, the oeyi would pull up the stake from the shrine to prevent flooding.

During the drought of the early 1970s, the rain ceremony was again performed in Mlomp. This time, the prayer was led by a non-Muslim elder of the Sambou family, the same lineage which formerly provided the oeyi. At the approach of the rainy season, the entire village again gathered at koeyi. While they prayed for rain, Sambou poured libations of water. This substitution of water for palm wine represents an important concession to the Muslim participants. Buluf Muslims, with few exceptions, strictly obey their religion's prohibition against the consumption of alcohol. Its use in sacrifices is strongly discouraged. Nevertheless, the essential structure of the rain ceremony, with the entire community coming together under the leadership of a descendent of the oeyi to pray and offer libations at the village shrine, remains essentially unchanged from the days of the oeyi.

The participation of Muslims in this ritual is significant. It indicates the willingness of most of the villagers to be identified with elements of indigenous Diola religion. Generally within the Muslim community, visits by individuals to the shrines (sinaati in Buluf) are frowned upon and are therefore performed, if at all, with discretion. The low profile which Muslims maintain in their private visits to the sinaati clearly does not apply to the rain ceremony. Here, Islamic practices have not supplanted the indigenous ritual. Furthermore, the joint participation of Muslims and the few remaining traditionalists indicates that, for this vital community ceremony, the distinction between Muslim and non-Muslim is not significant.

Bagaya, too, formerly held a communal rain ceremony under the leadership of their oeyi. Besides offering palm wine libations, the village priest in Bagaya sacrificed a bull at the communal shrine, which was called simply bekin. The bull was black, the color of rain clouds. It had to be killed at the shrine so that its blood touched the bekin. At the conclusion of the prayers the animal’s meat was divided among the five wards of Bagaya and the people then dispersed.

This ceremony is still observed, with some modifications. If the rainy season is late, or if there is an unexpected dry spell after the rains begin, the entire village assembles at the bekin. There is a prayer for rain and a black bull is sacrificed. Although the animal is killed by a Muslim, only non-Muslims eat the meat. Informants claimed this reflects a strong awareness that the sacrifice is associated with the ancestral religion. It surely also reflects the fact that the animal is not killed in accordance with Islamic ritual. Evidently, Bagaya Muslims are a little more circumspect than their counterparts in Mlomp, when it comes to public affirmation of indigenous religious practices. On the other hand, Mlomp does not sacrifice a bull at all.

Informants were reticent to discuss their rain ceremony in great detail. Nevertheless, in Bagaya, Muslims and non-Muslims — of whom very few remain — do cooperate in this public ritual. The cooperation reflects a perception that, to a degree, the two religious systems are complementary.

The most striking instance of the conjunction of Islamic and local ritual in Buluf is found in the annual rain ceremony of Tendouk. A majority of the inhabitants of Tendouk are Muslims; there is, however, a Catholic ward and, alone among Buluf villages, Tendouk also contains a sizeable group including younger adults in their 30s and 40s, who retain their local religion. Furthermore, some of the shrines in Tendouk are openly cared for by Muslims.

Tendouk’s rain ceremony is closer to the precolonial model than is the corresponding ritual in any other village. Each July, at the approach of the heavy rains, the guardian of the village shrine, Ousman Coudiaby, gathers the entire community at the shrine which formerly belonged to the oeyi. Coudiaby, himself a Muslim, is a direct descendent of the last oeyi. The villagers, dressed in black, the color which portends the desired rain clouds, bring palm wine and a black bull to the shrine. There, Coudiaby pours a libation and recites a verse from the Koran. In the evening, he and his assistants sacrifice the bull. The following morning the community assembles once more to prepare a feast and to spend the day dancing. At the end of the second day everyone disperses and, presumably, the rains begin.

5 As its name ("kata oeyi" = of the oeyi) indicates, this shrine was entrusted to the care of the oeyi. He was also expected to consult it before the village went to war; interviews with traditionalist and Catholic elders of Mlomp, January 20, 1975.
6 Interview with Jean Sambou, Mlomp, January 23, 1975.

7 According to one informant a pig was formerly killed, but bulls are now used in deference to the Muslims. Elsewhere in Buluf, however, the pre-Islamic sacrifice was always a bull. This informant was quite likely confused with the substitution of cattle for pigs at the bukat.
8 Other Senegalese often speak of the Diola as pagans. This prejudice may account for their sensitivity to being labelled poor Muslims.
9 Elsewhere in Buluf an occasional shrine is entrusted to a Muslim, if there are no non-Muslim male members of that lineage. Outside of Tendouk, however, such arrangements are discreetly hushed up.
10 The Catholics, however, pray at their own chapel.
This ceremony expresses village-wide unity. The sacrifice, by bringing together Muslims and followers of local Diola religion, erases any distinction between the two groups. The ritual itself, incorporating as it does elements of Islamic practice within an indigenous structure, illustrates the absence of any precise demarcation between the two religious traditions. Rather, it represents graphically the continuity which exists between them.

Clearly, for the people of Tendouk, Mlomp, and to a lesser extent Bagaya, there exists no inherent contradiction between local religion and Islam. A model of religious interaction and change which posit such a dichotomy would be alien to the Diola perception of the nature and interrelationship of their religious systems, which they see as complementary rather than mutually exclusive.

Unlike European Christians and many orthodox Muslims, few Diola Muslims maintain that practitioners of one religion must forsake all ritual or belief associated with other traditions. This attitude reflects the approach of Jahanké and Mauritania marabouts who first spread Islam in the Lower Casamance, and who did not demand complete and immediate renunciation of indigenous practices. But the Diolas' non-exclusivist outlook may also be the product of an environment in which many different religious orientations have long coexisted. In colonial Basse Casamance, not only did various Diola groups have different shrines and rituals, but there were also Manding who were Qadiryya Muslims, Wolof who were Tijaniyya, French who were Christians, and Bagnon and Manjak who had their own religious practices. In such an environment, it is difficult for any group to claim sole access to ultimate religious truth. Indeed, in Buluf, the ability of Muslim marabouts to accept this outlook was an important factor in the rapid spread of Islam.11

The situation is not, however, everywhere the same. In the villages of Tiobon, Thionk-Essil, and Mandegane, the rain ceremony has been supplanted by a Muslim prayer. In these communities the entire village now gathers at the central mosque to pray for plentiful rainfall. In Thionk the prayer is led by the village Imam. Everyone except members of “Kumanjut” ward and the few local Catholics participates.12

Social and economic factors specific to these three villages have caused them to become more thoroughly Muslim. Tiobon, located on trading routes to the Gambia, hosted itinerant marabouts as early as the 1890s; it became Muslim long before the rest of Buluf. Mandegane is the home of the late Arfan Kemo Sagna, “grand imam” of Buluf and the most prominent Diola religious teacher. Under his guidance Mandegane became a pilgrimage spot and its large mosque is a spiritual center of the region. Thionk-Essil is the most cosmopolitan community in Buluf.

In Thionk-Essil a high rate of urban migration together with extensive commercial contact with the rest of Senegal caused greater social and economic change than occurred in communities such as Tendouk, and led ultimately to the more thorough acceptance of Muslim practices and beliefs.

By the 1930s, under the guidance of a Tukulor merchant and marabout named Tierno Amadu Sy, the Tijaniyya tariga had achieved a large following in Thionk-Essil. Tierno Amadu was a disciple of Cherif Bachir, the most important Casamance teacher of the Tivaouane branch of the Tijaniyya.13 Members of this order are more adamant than other Diola Muslims in their rejection of indigenous religious practices. Their strong position in Thionk-Essil is partially responsible for the abandonment of such rituals as the rain ceremony.

The Tijaniyya has also attracted a large following in Tiobon and in Mandegane. The tariga is strongest in those Buluf villages which maintain extensive contact with urban and commercial centers in Senegal and the Gambia. Where the Tijaniyya took hold it became an agent for the abandonment of indigenous ritual. On the other hand, in those communities which remained somewhat more isolated and where the Tijaniyya did not win a wide following, indigenous practices such as the rain ceremony have remained a vital force in the religious life of the village. There, Islam has not proven to be incompatible with even so obviously non-Muslim a ritual as the village rain ceremony.

Perhaps the most important single element in the rain ceremony in Bagaya, Mlomp, and Tendouk relates to the space in which it is performed. In each of these communities the shrine of the oeyi, that is, the central shrine of the entire village, still serves as the locus for the gathering of the population and the sacrifice. The ritual center survives. For the all-important rain ceremony, vital to the rice crop and to the survival of the community, the preferred ceremonial center is not the mosque, but the shrine of the long-departed village rain-priest.

Close observation of the rain ceremony in Buluf shows that a “traditional vs. Muslim” paradigm for contemporary Diola religion is distorting and overly schematic. This model, by presenting a picture of indigenous religion and Islam as opposites, exaggerates the distinction between them. Such a dichotomy also misrepresents the process of religious change as it has occurred among the Diola. Rather than constituting a radical break with tradition, Islamization in Buluf has been characterized by continuity and by complementarity.

THE BUKUT INITIATION

The most important socio-religious institution in pre-colonial Diola society was the bukut, or village-wide initiation ceremony. Formerly the foundation of

11 Christianity attracted far fewer followers, in large measure because missionaries required complete renunciation of indigenous ritual and such practices as polygyny.
12 “Kumanjut”, a predominantly Muslim ward of 300 people, has never attended the central mosque, in protest against the building’s construction on the site of what was originally their sacred forest.
13 Cherif Bachir was the son and successor to Cherif Younous, who first introduced the Tijaniyya in Casamance. In 1931 the French officer at Bignona wrote, “The Tijans have their leader, Cherif Bachir, at Ziguinchor. His principal talibés in the cercle of Bignona are Tierno Mamadou Sy (Thionk-Essil) and Thierno Diallo (Diouloulou).” ANS 2G 31 73.
society, by which traditions were passed from generation to generation, bukut remains important to the Diola sense of ethnic identity. It is possible that bukut is more important today as an instrument for resisting acculturation into Senegalese society, than it was several generations ago.

Held approximately once every twenty years, bukut is the initiation into manhood of an entire generation of young men. After years of anticipation and months of preparatory ceremonies, the bukut brings the entire village together for three days of festivities, after which the initiates enter the sacred forest for a period of instruction. After the retreat, the entire village gathers to welcome them back into society. In pre-Islamic society bukut not only provided the essential means for preserving traditions, it was also a rare occasion for uniting the entire village. In Thionk-Essl the initiation gave concrete expression to the concept of community: a year before the bukut, there occurred a preparatory meeting that was called esuk — "village".

The festivities preceding the entry into the forest were enlivened by feasting and dancing. The accumulated wealth of many years was consumed in the form of rice, pigs, and cattle. The ceremonies included palm wine libations. Central to the bukut was the circumcision. In Fogny and parts of Buluf, however, only a symbolic incision was made on the youths' stomachs. The initiates then entered the forest, where they lived, ate, and slept until all the wounds had healed. Each forest was supervised by an elder who instructed the youths in traditional songs, a secret sign language, and dances, as well as sexual information.

The retreat prepared the initiates, or kambadf, for their role as adult members of the community. By means of harsh discipline, the youths were imbued with respect for authority. To the Diola, bukut was the embodiment of continuity and tradition.

Bukut well illustrates the changes that Buluf society has experienced since the turn of the century. The recent evolution of this institution reflects survival of many ritual elements and the disappearance of only a few component parts. The bukut did undergo important modifications during the colonial period. Formerly, the kambadf remained in the forest for two or three months. The introduction of schools and the growth of urban migration have now limited the time available, and the retreat lasts only two or three weeks.

Until the 1920s, pigs were sacrificed in the bukut. This is not permissible in a Muslim society, so today far more cattle are sacrificed than was formerly the case. Traditionally too, young boys were not permitted in the initiation and even older males could not enter the same bukut as their uncles. Since about 1940, such regulations have gradually been relaxed so that now, virtually all Diola are initiated before their mid-twenties, unless drought forces postponements in the bukut.

During the period of Islamization and for a generation after most of the community has become Muslim, the sacred forest remains in the care of traditionalist elders. In most of Buluf and Fogny this was the situation for the bukuts of the 1950s and 1960s. These elders continue to offer bunuk (palm wine) libations. Muslims simply do not participate in the libations. At subsequent initiations, after the non-Muslim elders have died, leadership of the retreat passes to Muslims. While the general structure of the liminal period remains unaffected, bunuk is no longer publicly poured.

In Tiobon, the sacred forest was under the direction of a non-Muslim minority in 1928. Twenty years later there were only a few traditionalists to offer the libations. In Thionk-Essl, the 1962 bukut was probably the last for these libations. Already the sacred forests in some wards were directed by Muslims. In Mlomp, only one of the non-Muslim guardians was still alive in the mid-1970s. Only in Tendouk will the traditional libations continue for at least another generation.

Yet the initiation retreat, rather than becoming an instrument for social change, has preserved tradition. Even in its altered form, bukut retains the basic structure of the pre-Islamic period. It remains an important instrument for the transmission of traditional knowledge.

During the last fifteen years, bukut may have experienced a resurgence. Two decades ago, Louis-Vincent Thomas felt that the initiation was in the process of disappearing. As late as 1965 he predicted that the bukut in Niomoun might be the last ever in the Karones. Today, however, it is almost impossible to find Diola who wish to discontinue the bukut. Thomas underestimated the continuing vitality of the initiation. In addition, a revival of local pride and sense of identity since independence has contributed to the renewed concern for indigenous customs. This attitude is particularly evident among people living far from traditional society. When the bukut is celebrated, it is functionaries from Dakar, returning to the Casamance to trade their suit and tie for clothing more appropriate to the sacred forest, who most aggressively embrace traditional customs. This trend has certainly contributed to the vitality of bukut.

While most Muslims accept the bukut, a minority have refused to permit their sons to participate in the retreat. In 1962 about 100 Tijaniyya initiates in Thionk-Essl were kept out of the sacred forest by their parents. They remained together in a separate compound. A similar situation arose in Diatok in 1974. A few adults kept their sons away from ceremonies tinged with "Soninke" rites. These are, however, but a small minority. Outside of Thionk, Mandegane, Diatok, and Tiobon, there are few Tijaniyya Muslims in Buluf. Even the local spiritual leader of that community, Arfan Kemo Sagna of Mandegane, publicly favored the continuation of the bukut.

In its contemporary, partially secularized form, bukut continues to imbue the participants with a sense of Diola identity. This role could become even more important in the 1980s, given the situation of sectionalism and some ethnic unrest in the Casamance.

Bukut represents tradition. Respect for tradition is shared by most Diola, including Muslims. As one imam stated, "Bukut is a ceremony of our ancestors which must never be ended." Although the initiation has changed over the last decades, the bukut remains as an institution that has remained a central part of Diola identity.
fifty years, there is little likelihood it will soon be discontinued. This balance between tradition and the demands of contemporary Muslim and urban culture typifies the ability of the Diola to adapt to the present without sacrificing their identity.

KUMPO

The third pre-Islamic institution whose survival indicates continuities in the Diolas' worldview is the Kumpo masked figure. Although it is of non-Diola origin, Kumpo has served throughout the Lower Casamance as an agent of social control and to protect against witches, for probably 200 years. Kumpo today regularly appears in Muslim communities.

At the Muslim New Year, Kumpo and his horned acolyte Samai appear by night in the public square. One such manifestation took place in Niaganan ward, Thionk-Essl, during the New Year festivities in 1978. In the vibrant expectation of the mask's appearance, groups of young men swayed rhythmically in the center of a ring of observers. Occasionally, soloists would break away from them and dance to the hard, punctilliar notes of drums and flutes. Even the spectators participated. The women clanged pieces of metal and the men sang chants to accompany the three drums whose beats intertwined in constantly changing rhythms.

When Kumpo arrived, electrifying the night air with his mass of swirling raffia, the excitement was tangible. And when Samai's silver-horned form rushed to the center, people scattered in only half-simulated fright. The finest young dancers responded to Samai's acrobatic challenge; they vied with each other to show off their twirling, gyrating expertise. The dance swept in pulsating patterns: men, then women, then soloists, then Kumpo, again the group, and finally Samai, then the entire pattern repeated, over and over into the night.

Kumpo's swirling, raffia-covered form is the embodiment of electrical energy. He is the focal point for the music and the dance which, together, weld the community into a whole. There are no disinterested bystanders. Metaphorically, the unity which derives from this performance represents the idealized unity of the community. That ideal oneness is the surest protection against the selfish and anti-social forces of the kussay.

Under the guise of spectacle, the Kumpo dance holds the most serious of meanings. The fight against the omni-present danger of the kussay is a life and death issue for the community. Muslims do not hesitate to take part in the ceremony. Perhaps the aura of fun-and-games which attends the dance protects them from accusations of participation in non-Muslim rituals. But Kumpo's true role as protector against the kussay reflects the traditional Diola view of the universe. As the immediate cause of human suffering and illness, cannibal-witches reflect the continuum which exists in traditional Diola cosmology between the realms of the physical and the spiritual. The visible and invisible worlds continue to form an interacting, interdependent whole in contemporary Diola thought, even among Muslims. Neither this unity, nor the immanent power of the kussay to affect people's health and well-being, has been materially altered by the spread of Islam. For this reason, Kumpo remains important throughout the Muslim region of the Basse Casamance.

CONCLUSION

Among the northern Diola, as these examples show, Islam has resulted in modification rather than destruction and loss of important social and religious rituals. The bukut initiation has undergone marked changes during the past two generations. The initiation retreat has been substantially shortened and the initiates are now subject to less severe discipline. These changes are, however, due to urban migration and the expansion of primary schooling, rather than to Islam itself. Islam, on the other hand, has been directly responsible for changes in the accompanying libations and sacrifices.

Meanwhile, the basic structure of the bukut, including the liminal period in the sacred forest, has experienced very little challenge, and that only from the minority who follow the Tijaniyya tariqa. Bukut then, while altered, has not changed radically. It remains central both to the transmission of cultural traditions to each new generation, and to the Diola sense of identity.

The popularity of Kumpo among the Muslim Diola bespeaks a continuing need for protection against nefarious forces from the invisible world. The kussay or cannibal-witches remain an important element in the Diola conception of the world. Part human, part spirit, they profoundly influence events in human society. This understanding of the causation of illness, good and bad fortune, comes from indigenous Diola cosmology and has not been fundamentally altered by the spread of Islam.

While Islam has caused a drastic reduction in the number of traditional shrines and the frequency of sacrifices to them, it has not obliterated the most important communal ritual, the village rain ceremony. In several predominantly Muslim communities in Buluf, this annual libation and the immolation of a black bull continue, although under the ritual leadership of a Muslim. Frequently now combined with prayers from the Koran, this survival reflects the way in which the Diola see Islam as complementing their local rituals. It is especially significant that, with the continuation of the rain ceremony in three villages, the community's traditional ceremonial center survives.

People everywhere tend to reject radical breaks with their past. In Buluf, it was the continuities which permitted the integration of Islam and local religion and which facilitated the acceptance of Islam.

What, then, happened in Diola villages where the central rain shrine was not preserved? In Thionk-Essl the sacred forest associated with that shrine was chopped down to make space for the central mosque. But the one tree which was the actual abode of the community's protective spirit was not touched. The pivot of
the ceremonial center remains. Vine-bedecked and venerable, this tree stands beside the mosque, living testimony that the traditional center was not to be trifled with. For no one would assume the responsibility - and the risks - for cutting it down. In this most thoroughly Muslim of Diola communities, the old and the new coexist, side by side.16

16 Additional information, of a confidential nature, further demonstrates that the traditional ceremonial center survives in Thionk-Essil. This information is to be placed by the author in the archives of the Frobenius-Institut, where it will be available to researchers in twenty years.

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3. Diola initiation mask, Haus Volker und Kultur, St. Augustin, West Germany

4. Diola 'ejumbi' mask from Thionk-Essil, 1978 (tourist version)

5. Mundinka leaf figure, type called "Red Spear". Photographed in 1963 by David Gamble


10. Drawing of Ziguinchor, made by Hyacinthe Hecquard in 1850