Kujaama: Symbolic Separation among the Diola-Fogny

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The Diola-Fogny concept of kujaama represents a complex symbol that defines a set of pollution rules having to do mainly with blood and food avoidance between generations and between husband and wife at the death of one or the other. Analysis of the diverse manifestations of kujaama shows that each represents but one variant of a general principle, that is, the inauspiciousness of mixing separate categories. Further analysis places kujaama in the larger context of Fogny moral life and places the rituals associated with kujaama in the “grammar” of ritual acts and gestures. [Africa, symbolism, religion, pollution]

GOOD FENCES MAKE GOOD NEIGHBORS

This paper explores a concept of the Fogny subgroup of the Diola, a tribe of partrilineal, wet-rice cultivators living in the Basse-Casamance region of Senegal, West Africa. The concept, kujaama, refers to food, blood, and other taboos that obtain between generations, to a short “first fruits” ritual, and to a ritual of separation performed at death. It also refers to a power or spirit that punishes violation of the taboos and neglect of the rituals. Kujaama “catches” violators by acting as a “poison” that causes coughing and diarrhea.

The discussion falls into three sections. The first sets the scene, giving background information on relevant features of Fogny social separation and on the place of kujaama as a supernatural force in the Fogny pantheon. The second and central section presents a structural analysis (in Lévi-Strauss’s use of the term) of kujaama as a distinct concept. It attempts to show that a complex symbol such as kujaama has a clear underlying meaning, with all contextual manifestations being never more than particular expressions (or permutations) of this meaning. Because close structural analyses of such matters as these tempt isolation I have, in the third section, tried to place kujaama in a somewhat larger context. Here, two quite different topics occupy my attention. They are, first, the social and moral place of kujaama and second, the place of kujaama rituals in a grammar of ritual acts and gestures.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. Social Separation

1.1.1. Separation of generations at marriage. From birth until marriage, Fogny children are members of their father’s household. They work, when old enough, in his fields and eat food provided from their mother’s granary. Social separation does not take place until marriage, when a son sets up on his own and a daughter moves off to live with her husband. From his father a married son receives rice fields and his own private living quarters, which may be located within his father’s house or adjacent to it. What is most important, all rice harvested from his own fields go to his wife’s granary, and he is under no obligation, except in time of need, to give any to his father. He is, however, expected to continue to work in his father’s fields, but only in the capacity of a married son and not as a dependent. A father will never work his son’s fields. In other ways paternal control continues to be important.

1.1.2. Separation of spouses at death. All that a widow or widower keeps after the death of his or her spouse is a portion of the common produce, mainly rice, and a number of larger items, such as a bed and certain large utensils. The rest of the movables, especially clothing, are distributed among members of the deceased’s bilateral kindred. A man’s rice fields go to his male children, and if they are still immature, they are held in trust for them by his brothers. If he has no male chil-

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dren, the fields revert to his closest agnates. Immature children remain in the care of one of the deceased’s agnates, who will be expected to marry his widow. The widow, however, may choose to marry elsewhere (leaving her children behind), or if too old, she may simply stay on among her affines under the care of one of her married sons.

1.2. The Place of Kujaama in Diola Cosmology

Kujaama is one of a very large number of spirits that inhabit the Diola world. These are called sinoatti (sg. enoatti) by the Fogny (otherwise bokin by the other Diola). They as well as man and just about everything else were created by a high god called emit (or, with an abstract suffix -ay, emitay). The root -mit also glosses as ‘year,’ ‘sky,’ and ‘rain.’ This term, emit, has been appropriated by both Muslims and Christians to translate respectively 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 sinoatti that man must contend. These forces can be subdivided into two large groups: those represented by a shrine (that have a head, to use the Fogny expression) and those that are not (those that are headless). The latter can be thought of as unattached.

Sinoatti having shrines are generally associated with particular social groups: for example, entire wards or even villages, particular patrilineal compounds, groups of out-marrying female agnates or in-marrying female affines. They may be general in having a representative shrine in each compound or ward throughout an area, or they may be unique, having a particular shrine located in one place. A number, but not all, of the general sinoatti have a place of origin and a central shrine, with the other shrines being offshoots. In terms of a commercial metaphor used by one informant, the central shrine can be thought of as a wholesale outlet, the others as retail shops.

Ownership and control of shrines is inherited by or delegated to certain key elders entrusted with their care and with responsibility for performing sacrifices at appropriate times. Enshrined sinoatti ensure either general welfare or some particular kind of success, as in fighting, fertility, and the plentfulness of rainfall. Their presence is felt, however, especially in the modern Muslim context, less by their beneficence than by the diseases they bring to an individual who has in some way neglected or violated rules governing their rituals or who has destroyed their ritual paraphernalia without due recompense. An enoatti inflicts sickness by entering, or catching, a violator and can be removed only via public recognition of the fault, accompanied by a sacrifice performed by the owning elder. The type of affliction will vary with the spirit. Some produce only one specific kind of illness, such as sore eyes or stomach swellings, whereas others, often the more important ones, bring serious general disabilities that vary in form from case to case. A particularly powerful enoatti, such as the one associated with boys’ initiations, will show itself at one time by inflicting death, at another time by causing paralysis.

To be affected by an enshrined enoatti an individual either must touch (-gor) it or live in its immediate proximity. He touches an enoatti, by being a consanguine (patrilineal or matrilineal) of the group directly responsible for its care. Those other than patrilineal kinsmen who live in its proximity would include in-marrying affines and strangers of long-standing residence. As one informant emphatically put it, “If you step on the courtyard, if you eat the rice and drink the water, they (the local sinoatti) will, at some time, catch you.”

Unattached spirits offer nothing in the way of protection or success. They make their appearance only by catching people with specific sicknesses—cankers, constipation, and the like. Cures are effected by medicines, not sacrifices, and are usually administered by someone experienced in treating the specific illness. Such a person has gained his expertise by having suffered himself on numerous occasions. In the case of most unattached sinoatti there is never much more than the simple association of a particular sickness with a particular spirit. The spirit will catch people at
random and for no reason, though sometimes a rather vague cause is offered. For instance, according to at least one informant, a person is prone to being caught by an ekül enazı (which brings fever and a stiff back) if he has ever seen the corpse of someone who likewise has been caught at one time by this very ekül.

Kujaama is an unattached spirit that stands quite apart from others of this type. Its manifestation is associated with definite causes: the violations of very specific and pervasive taboos and rituals deeply embedded in traditional belief. To these we now turn.

2. **Kujaama as a System**

The rituals and taboos associated with kujaama come into play at certain times and with respect to such items as blood, semen, the body, cooked food, and the new harvest. These substances may be divided into two groups. Food and the new harvest go together as exogenic, for they are external to, or better, something apart from, the person. The other items (blood, semen, and the body) form a part of the person. They are in a sense, and certainly by contrast, internal or endogenic. Though this latter group (more particularly blood) is basic, we begin with a discussion of cooked food, for here kujaama finds its most overt expression.

2.1. Kujaama and Cooked Food

2.1.1. Kujaama at Mealtime. Married generations keep apart at mealtime. It is essential for a man or a woman never to touch, and especially never to ingest, any food or drink that has touched the lips or entered the mouth of any married person he or she would address as “my child.” Thus members of separate generations must never eat from the same bowl nor drink from the same cup. At mealtime an elder eats by himself, in the company of his wife or wives, or with his age mates if they happen to be present. If he is alone, he will often call over unmarried children (especially preadolescent grandchildren) to share from his bowl. The taboo is enforced any time food and drink are served. For example, when a host distributes refreshments during a communal work party where young and old are present he always reserves a bowl and several cups for the elders.

In actual practice, the eating taboo includes only one’s own and perhaps one’s sibling’s married children and grandchildren. The elder decides who else should be included, for it is he, and never the married child, who suffers if the taboo is violated. When caught by kujaama, the violator waits, hoping that the coughing and diarrhea will purge his system of the poison. If the sickness persists, the afflicted elder will drink medicine consisting of water mixed with the pounded leaves of a plant called ebun kujaam. This should neutralize the poison, though persistent cases require help from a specialist.

The cross-generational eating taboo can be waived if a proper ritual is performed. The ritual, called “cooking kujaama,” is referred to as a “defense.” It involves an exchange of rice or millet. The elder gives a handful of rice to the younger, and this is reciprocated. Then the younger reaches himself and takes a handful of rice from the elder; this, too, is reciprocated. Both in the giving and in the taking the younger is always the first to obtain the rice. As I shall presently show, this is important. The exchanged grain, which had originated from the participants’ respective granaries, is now mixed together and cooked along with the ebun kujaam medicine. It is then eaten by both parties. From now on the two may, theoretically, eat together without fear of kujaama, though the defense apparently does not work for all people.

A defense performed between a man and his son automatically extends to the elder’s own parent(s) (any direct lineal ascendants) and to the younger’s spouse. That is, if you cook kujaama with your son, both you and your father and/or mother may now eat not only with your son but also with your son’s wife (or wives). The elder’s wife and all ascendant collaterals require a separate defense.

Nowadays an ad hoc defense may be made between an individual and an elder, usually an ascendant collateral, in which the latter protects himself by placing on his knee a small handful of rice from the common bowl and
keeping it there throughout the meal. A simplified defense of this sort lasts only for the one meal and is performed by only Muslim Diola who have considerable confidence in their new faith. Others insist that the regular defense is the only acceptable one.

2.1.2. Kijaama at funerals. There are two instances of food kijaama at funerals. The first generalizes the eating taboo. As at mealtime, everyone who referred to the deceased as "my child" refrains from eating any of the food cooked and served at the funeral. The taboo, however, now extends further to include the widow or widower. No defense is possible, ad hoc or otherwise, and all Fogny no matter how Muslim, scrupulously adhere to the rule. The second instance specifically concerns the widow or widower. The day after burial the survivor is obliged to go through a series of four ritual acts called in this context the kasabərak kati kijaama "the kijaama ritual" (where the verb -sabor is the general term for all rituals involving any enziti). The ritual is held in the marital compound, which, because the Diola are patrilocal, is the residence of the husband. Such is the case even if the couple had been living elsewhere at the time of death. The four acts are, respectively, kati nen, kalacen 'spitting on,' kokik 'shaving,' and kapso 'washing,' of which the first two and part of the last are relevant to food kijaama. The rest has to do with endogenic kijaama and will be discussed presently. Kati nen serves to purify the marital food products that have become polluted vis-a-vis the survivor. The kalacen and the associated part of the kapso cleanse the body of the survivor from its now polluting past contact with the food products of the marriage.

The kati nen, in the case of a widow, is performed as follows: Stripped to the waist and wearing only a mourning cloth tied around her waist, the widow sits on a palm-leaf mat in the middle of the courtyard. She is flanked on either side and faced by three widows similarly attired who in some way "touch" the courtyard, that is, are either the husband's female agnates (firimen, sg. arimen) or descendants of his female agnates (kusimpul, sg. asimpul). The woman who faces the widow officiates. She places a small lump of moistened millet flour (obtained from the marial granary) in the mouth of each of the women she faces, starting to the right of the widow. The women spit out the lump. A lump is then placed on each woman's open palm; this is thrown by the receiving woman to the ground. Another lump is placed on the back of the hand and is likewise thrown to the ground. The routine, with the exception of the placement on the back of the hand, is then repeated; but this time the lumps are eaten. For the next step each of the three women is given water from a small calabash spoon. The first time around the water is spit out; the second time it is swallowed. The officiating woman then mixes the millet flour with the water to make a viscous liquid that is poured from the spoon onto each woman's open palm. This is swallowed. These steps, carefully followed, comprise the kati nen. Immediately following is the kalacen (spitting on). The officiant takes a large mouthful of millet liquid and, in turn, spits it out on each of the women, primarily on the chest and face and, for the new widow, around the edge of the scalp as well. In the observed instance the third woman took some of the liquid and spit it back at the officiant.

After the kokik 'shaving,' which follows the kalacen, comes the kapso, which is performed outside the compound. Surrounded by firimen 'agnates of the husband' and protected from view by a cloth held up by the onlooking women, she and the other participants are washed with water to remove the liquid that had been spat on them. As a final step, and this concerns primarily endogenic kujaama (blood, semen), the widow alone has her hair washed twice with soap.

A widower's kati nen and kalacen have the same pattern, though with certain significant variations. In this case he is faced by an agnatic widow (orimen) and flanked, on the right side only, by a descendant of an agnate (assimpul), who is also a widow. In contrast to the widow's routine, he goes through each step alone. The officiant places the lumps of millet and serves the water and millet liquid.

Throughout the first step, the asimpul re-
moves the millet lumps. The asimpil serves only here, after which she does nothing.

This concludes kujaama with respect to cooked food. We can sum up by saying that, so far as food is concerned, kujaama asserts symbolic separation. Its two instances, after marriage and at death, are more or less parallel.

Before marriage a child is a functional part of his or her parental home. With respect to food production and consumption the two generations are considered as one. At marriage partial social separation (primarily economic) takes place, and kujaama becomes operative and prevents communal eating. Maintenance of the symbolic separation is in the interest of members of the older generation, for it is they, as already mentioned, who suffer being caught by kujaama. They observe the taboo in order to prevent pollution, until a defense ritual, which is optional and may or may not be performed, takes place and kujaama is neutralized or "cooked."

Throughout married life a man and his wife form a single unit, and the products of their efforts are shared. With final separation at the death of either one all food products from the marriage become polluted. If the purifying acts of kativen and the like are not performed the bereaved will be caught by kujaama.

The parallel can be stated metaphorically as shown in Table 1.

Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marriage Separates Generations</th>
<th>Death Separates Spouses</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cooked food from the common bowl that has touched or has been touched by the younger</td>
<td>Any food, cooked or not, which the deceased has touched or has held in common with the survivor</td>
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</table>

But we must go further, for in two important ways the parallel situations are not the same. First the observance of kujaama between generations is for a duration of time and has to do with the maintenance of separation and hence the prevention of food pollution. With death, however, observance is at a point in time and has to do not with maintenance, but rather with the bringing about of separation, that is, the removal of pollution.

If the funeral kujaama ritual concerned only the prevention of pollution, the survivor could, theoretically at least, dispense with the ritual entirely by simply removing himself permanently from contact with the married couple's joint food products in the same way an elder avoids eating with his married child. This, however, will not do. Regardless of whether the survivor touches or eats the food, he will be caught by kujaama if the funeral ritual is not properly performed. In terms of food, he remains in contact with the deceased and is in roughly the same position as an elder who has broken the food taboo. Both are polluted.

The entire kativen specifically dramatizes the act of removal. For each gesture of acceptance (eating and swallowing) there is a previous gesture of rejection (throwing or spitting on the ground). What is rejected is explicitly considered unclean. In Fogny terms, it is "dirty, taboo (niñi) and fit only for dogs and chickens."

One small detail in the act clearly indicates exactly what out of the total food produce is being removed. The second rejection involves lumps of millet flour placed on both the palm and back of the hand, whereas the corresponding acceptance concerns only those placed on the palm. This suggests that the food associated with both the palm and the back of the hand represents the shared marital food products during life. Although our immediate interpretation would then associate the back of the hand with the deceased and the palm with the living, it does not, in fact, turn out this way. To the Fogny the dichotomy is not living vs. dead, but man vs. woman, with the back of the hand assigned to the woman. This is so regardless of who is dead. Therefore, by not eating the millet on the back of the hand, the kativen participants symbolically discard the woman's share of the marital food products. They, of course, do not reject the woman herself, for she is symbolized by the back of the hand, not by the rejected millet. The millet eaten from the palm of the hand and, by extension, all marital food products become
clean, for being separated from its “female” part it is now purely “male.” That the “male” portion is retained and not the “female” is completely consistent with the patrilineal, patrilocal features of Diola social structure. It is also consistent with the immediate fact that it is always the husband and/or his agnates who must distribute the actual remaining produce.6

The second point that makes kujaama between the survivor and his dead spouse significantly different from intergenerational kujaama is that the performance of the funeral ritual is in the interest of both parties. If the ritual is not performed, or if one of its steps is neglected, the deceased would be refused as unclean by the dead (kati tentam ‘those of below’) among whom he must go. He would be caught between the two worlds and would consequently return to the living via an agnic female (in a dream or through possession) to make this fact known. If this happens, the entire ritual must be performed again until it comes out right. Thus, by neglecting the ritual there would be coughing and diarrhea for the living and exclusion from the underworld for the deceased.

2.2.6. Endogenic Kujaama

Endogenic instances of kujaama differ from those associated with cooked food at one significant point. Intergenerationally they are not contingent on the marital status of the younger generation. They operate from birth onward. In other respects they are perfectly parallel. Intergenerational kujaama affects only the older generation and is something to be prevented; kujaama at death affects both the husband and wife and must be removed. Cures are also the same: ebun kujaam medicine for the older generation and the correct performance of the kujaama ritual for the surviving spouse. Unlike food, however, no defense (“cooking kujaama”) is ever possible.

The instances are briefly as follows: An elder, male or female, may never touch his or her daughter while she is menstruating. Further, neither may ever receive anything from her, though the reverse is permissible if contact is avoided. For example, a parent may hand, say, a stick to his daughter, but she may not return it directly but must instead set it on the ground or give it to a child to return. Returning the stick directly from hand to hand is taboo, even if contact is avoided. This same taboo applies when the daughter gives birth, in or out of wedlock. Until she is “dry” (of birth blood) and she and her clothes have been washed (a period of forty days for the traditional Fogny), the parent must avoid direct contact (as with menstruation) with both his daughter and his daughter’s child. Violations bring kujaama.

It is very important that these taboos be maintained, for these instances of kujaama are, according to one informant, the most “dangerous of all.” They occur when the “blood of birth” is present “and any, even indirect, contact pollutes the elder generation.” During these periods the daughter is, for the parent at least, unclean. At other times when blood is present, as when the daughter cuts herself, there is no danger of pollution, and contact, even with the blood itself, means nothing.

The final instance of intergenerational kujaama has to do with semen pollution. This involves incest between parent and child. In the unlikely event that it should take place, kujaama would most surely “catch” the senior partner.

For contrast, two situations where kujaama is irrelevant should be mentioned. First, sibling incest of any sort, though forbidden, has nothing to do with kujaama. Neither does intercourse between husband and wife while she is menstruating or just after she has given birth. Though a husband preparing for war or hunting will avoid contact at such times, it will be for other reasons (mainly pertaining to strength).

At a funeral the endogenic aspect of kujaama is expressed in terms of body contact. Here, the widow or widower may not touch the corpse. This taboo does not seem to apply to the older generation, although one might expect it to do so, considering their avoidance of the funeral feast (see section 3.1.2.5 for further remarks on this kujaama manqué).

As with food, endogenic kujaama actively pollutes the bereaved. Just leaving the corpse
alone will not do, and the survivor must himself be cleansed. It is the third ritual act (shaving) and the last part of the washing, all part of the *kujaama* ritual, that rid the survivor of past and now polluting body, blood, and semen contact with the deceased.

Directly following the *kalacen* 'spitting on,' the widow moves and sits facing the grave, which is located within the courtyard. She is then shaved around the edges of her scalp by one of her widowed classificatory mothers. The shaved hair is later buried, either in the mound above the grave ("to give it, *kujaama*, back to the deceased") or else somewhere outside of the compound.

As a follow-up to the shaving and the spitting on, the widow has her hair washed as the second part of the *kapos* ‘washing.’ As we already saw, this part is also connected, though perhaps only indirectly, with food contact. Actually it terminates a sequence that started with the *kalacen* and continued through the *kokik* ‘shaving.’ Recall that during the *kalacen* the bereaved gets a dose of liquid around the edges of her scalp as a kind of shaving soap.

A widower follows the exact same steps. When his wife is buried at her own patri-lineal residence, as commonly happens, the shaving act takes place independent of the grave, though in some areas of the Fogny it will be done with some dirt from the grave specifically brought in for the occasion. In these cases the hair is disposed of outside the compound.

It is worth noting that the corpse itself is washed by same-sex agnates on two occasions: just before public display and just before burial. I have no information on whether these washings are connected at all with the *kujaama* ritual, but it would make a dramatic parallel if they were. However, the explanation for bathing the body was given strictly in terms of hygiene.

2.3. *The Fogny Theory of Kujaama*

To the Fogny the idea of *kujaama* is explained by their theory of blood flow. Blood passes from one generation to the next and mixes during sexual intercourse (hence the direct equivalence of semen with blood). Blood flow from an older to a younger generation should be irreversible, and all instances of cross-generation *kujaama* are considered as symbolic (or actual in the case of incest) reversals of the flow. The Fogny say that at marriage blood extends to include cooked food. Thus, as a man and his wife mix their blood through intercourse, so their joint labor creates mixed produce.

Mixing blood within the same generation is entirely legitimate. There is no reversal. For this reason *kujaama* has nothing to do with sibling incest nor with intercourse during a wife's menstrual period. To reverse the blood is to mix blood between generations. Where this occurs the elder suffers pollution, for it is he who sustains the mixture: his own blood mixed with blood "returned," that is, blood he has already passed on. Nothing happens to the younger, for he only passes back what he has received. For these reasons to touch or to receive something directly from a menstruating daughter or a daughter who is a new mother and is still "wet" brings back, or reverses, the blood to form the polluting mixture. In the same way, to eat food that has touched the mouth of one's married child brings the same results.

The defense ritual ("cooking *kujaama*") very clearly takes into account the direction of blood flow. In the ritual exchange of rice, each of the two steps, the giving and the taking, starts by following the legitimate flow of blood: elder gives before younger; younger takes before elder. What we have is a step-by-step shift from the most natural (elder gives) to the most unnatural (elder takes).

The Fogny usually express blood reversal as "taking back blood that has been given" or, for emphasis, as "stealing blood from one's child." The Fogny will go further and say that for an elder to allow himself to "take back blood," that is, to eat his child's food or to touch his bloody daughter, would be like watching his child perform sexual intercourse. In this vein they will even say that a parent runs the risk of *kujaama* pollution by just thinking of his child copulating.

The latter ideas about watching intercourse and the general theory of mixing, flow, and
reversal of flow permit us to infer that all forms of intergenerational *kujaama* pollution boil down to acts of symbolic incest between parent and child. Though none of my informants put it quite that way on his own, each did (separately from the others) readily assent to the analogy when it was suggested.

What about *kujaama* at funerals? The avoidance of the funeral feast on the part of the elders simply continues the notion of intergenerational separation. With reference to the widow or widower, the Fogny change the notion of intergenerational separation to mean separation of man from woman. No attempt is made to extend their theory of blood flow, they simply say that one type of *kujaama* is like the other.

Regardless of the theory, both parties are in a state of pollution and remain so until the *katiñe* purifies the produce, and until the “spitting on,” shaving, and washing of the survivor (and quite possibly the washing of the corpse) cleanse the couple from previous food, body, blood, and semen contact and mixing.

Now if we can say that breaking intergenerational *kujaama* taboos are acts of symbolic incest between parent and child, we can also say, if a bit boldly, that the couple after the death of one are engaged in symbolic necrophilia until the *kujaama* ritual has been properly performed. Here necrophilia is taken as a logical permutation of incest, both being, as they are, based on the concept of blood mixing between separate social categories.

It is precisely this last equation that brings us to the underlying notion that defines *kujaama* in all its forms thus far described. It is the mixing of social categories (generations and husband and wife) with respect to some mediating substance (food, blood, semen, the body) at various points in time.

2.4. Kujaama at Harvest

*Kujaama* at harvest time is something rather different. Its exact relationship to other forms of *kujaama* is not readily apparent. Even to the Fogny, it is considered quite secondary to the others—“something not at all dangerous”;

one takes it into account “just to make sure,” for “*kujaama* is always around.” Briefly, just before the harvest each year, members of a nuclear family as a group drink the *ebun kujaam* medicine either by itself with some milk or mixed with the new grain. Theoretically the only people susceptible to harvest *kujaama* are those who have at some previous time taken for one reason or another the *ebun kujaam* medicine. In practice, this includes everyone, for “one never knows what you drank when you were a child.”

Harvest *kujaama* is actually a further permutation of the idea of separate categories. Old vs. new replaces elder vs. younger and husband vs. wife. This was beautifully summed up by the mother of my principal informant:

The Diola say that before the old and new harvest come together it is like a father and his daughter or a mother and her son. Therefore it is necessary that they obtain the *ebun kujaam* and drink it mixed with milk, saying that the *kujaama* is to be found between the old rice and the new rice. But this is not dangerous. It can be considered as though the rice of this year is living, that of last year is dead—like the body of a man and his widow.

By taking this statement into account and by making a Lévi-Straussian hop, we can find a place for harvest *kujaama*. Logically it can be considered as a perfect inversion (hence lack of danger) of all other forms of *kujaama*. Instead of the separation of social categories with respect to a mediating substance, we now have the separation of two substantive categories (old and new food) mediated by a social category (the individual). Thus, as separate generations are improperly brought together through blood and food contact, so the old and new harvest are (with appropriate medicine) properly brought in contact via the individual who has already eaten from the old and now turns to the new. Unsettling as this might be to our empirical muse (the Fogny have nothing to say on the subject) it does highlight with great force the basic tenet of *kujaama* as an abstract concept, which now can be defined as the inauspiciousness of mixing categories that are somehow thought of as being properly separate and apart.

Combining our original definition of inter-
generational and husband and wife kujaama with the inverted harvest kujaama, our initial metaphor (Table 1) can be enlarged into a paradigm that takes all instances of kujaama into account (Table 2). Here separation of categories is plotted against the manifesting "mediator"; social vs. substance for regular kujaama as opposed to substance vs. social for the inversion.

We must, however, introduce a note of caution. A structural statement of the kind presented in paradigmatic form allows us to assume that each ratio is exactly equivalent to the other, that is, that each permutation implies the other. To do so, however, would neglect the Fogny theory of blood flow that clearly marks the endogenic blood, semen, and body categories as basic. Though the breaking of food taboos might boil down to incest, the reverse is not so. Food can represent blood, but blood never represents food. As I shall discuss again later on, the social facts of kujaama likewise assert the priority of blood. From the point of view of the participants, blood taboos start first, at birth, whereas food taboos start only after marriage.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1. The Social and Moral Place of Kujaama

3.1.1. Kujaama as a complex symbol. As a complex symbol, kujaama is not summed up by an external object, not by something like a Christian cross or a Ndembu mukula or mudyi tree. There is nothing to point to that in any way "tells it all." Instead, at its most general level kujaama is simply designated by a word indicating a supernatural force and conceptually organized by a native theory of blood flow. Otherwise it manifests itself only at particular times and then by one of its specific configurations.

In other respects kujaama fits rather well with Turner's (1965:87) model for complex (his "multivocal") symbols. To what he has called the "physiological" or "oretic pole" are assigned (1) the mediating symbols of blood, semen, the body, and cooked food; (2) bodily functions associated with the symbols (touching, copulation, swallowing, eating); and finally, (3) body actions associated with lack of control over these things (that is, coughing and diarrhea).

Turner's "normative pole" defines a set of pollution rules where several cultural categories, at certain times and with respect to sexual reproduction and economic production, are either kept apart, drawn apart, or brought together. With sexual activity the normative pole associates the mediating symbols of semen, blood, and the body, along with the functions of copulating and touching. With economic production it associates cooked food, touching, eating, and swallowing. At what time and for what categories sexual and economic separation (or mixture) is to be maintained or altered is contingent on kujaama as a system and especially on the underlying concept of blood flow.

If the relationship between categories is to be maintained as separate, the symbolic expression of this separation is via a taboo. The relevant symbols are avoided in order to preserve a status quo and prevent a mixture. If the relationship is to be maintained as joined or mingled, there is no danger, and nothing is done when the symbols appear; kujaama is irrelevant (for example, as between husband and wife when the latter is menstruating). If, however, the relationship requires alteration we have a ritual in contrast to a taboo: symbols are sought out and manipulated in order to create the desired change.

Between generations, where separation is maintained, there are only taboos. When a daughter is menstruating or has just given birth, or when a child is having intercourse, the blood and semen symbols are present. Sexual separation is asserted, and the elder must keep away. Similarly, an elder's avoidance of his child at mealtime in the presence of touched cooked food asserts economic separation.

At death, both the body and the funeral food represent the actual separated state of the deceased, a state that is to be maintained. Consequently, food is taboo to the elders, and both the body and food are taboo to the surviving spouse. In contrast, the person of the survivor and the remaining food products still represent the former and now polluted state of affairs: husband and wife as sexually and
economically joined. To terminate all links with this joined or mingled past, the *kujaama* ritual manipulates as symbols the millet lumps, water, hair, and dirt in order to alter the situation and bring purification, that is, separation.

The defense ritual ("cooking *kujaama*") is quite the opposite. Here, separate categories of person (old and young) are brought together, not drawn apart. The *ebun* *kujaam* medicine combined with the exchange ritual transforms food given into food taken, which in turn permits the elder to take (that is, to eat) food touched by his child. Mingling generations in relation to food becomes possible.

The ritual of harvest *kujaama*, on the other hand, associates the physiological pole (here old food eaten and new food to be eaten) with the separated categories, old and new harvest, and not with persons who here function as mediators. Otherwise the ritual follows the pattern of the defense ritual.

Table 3 rearranges the instances of *kujaama* in terms of these dimensions: mixed vs. separated is matched against altered vs. maintained.

### 3.1.2. Kujaama as a pollution symbol.

At this point we might well ask to what extent *kujaama* supports and reinforces parallel moral norms that control sexual and economic activity. Our immediate temptation would be to assume that *kujaama* is simply no more than a direct symbolic reflection of the moral

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#### Table 2. Paradigm taking into account all instances of *kujaama*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Separations</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Husband-wife</th>
<th>Substantitive</th>
<th>Old-new harvest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use:</strong></td>
<td>Maintained to prevent incest</td>
<td>Maintained to prevent symbolic necrophilia</td>
<td>Terminated to make mixture safe</td>
<td>Mediator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affects:</strong></td>
<td>Elder</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time:</strong> From birth to death</td>
<td>At death</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Endogonic** | *koɔik* ‘shaving’ | *kapɔs* ‘washing’ | | *
| **Avoid:** Blood during menstruation | Wash corpse (?) | | Corpse |
| **Exogonic** | Blood during and after childbirth | | | |
| **Time:** From marriage to death | At death | | | |
| **Perform:** | *katiñen* | *kalacen* ‘spitting’ | | |
| **Avoid:** Eating together (unless *kujaama* is cooked) | *kapɔs* ‘washing’ | Funeral feast | |
| **Time:** Each year | Drink the *ebun* | | |
| **Perform:** | | | *kujaam* medicine | |
codes, or at least some aspect of them. This, however, it is not. First, we must not forget that kujaama is primarily a self-contained system of pollution rules. As Mary Douglas so ably argued (1966: Ch. 8), such systems jibe with the more general cultural norms only in part, rarely completely, and occasionally not at all. Second, kujaama is capable of supporting a moral position only when the activity that calls for the position occurs at the same time as one of the kujaama symbols. That is, support can be given only when one or more of the symbols is actually present. Third, and this is one of Douglas's major points, where a moral code is complex and ambiguous there must be room for maneuvering and compromise whenever rules are broken. Satisfactory resolution will always depend on the proper weighing and mutual adjustment of diverse interests. Results will always be in terms of gray, neither right nor wrong, positions. Now, in such a situation, if pollution rules were looked to for support, their mechanical and uncompromising logic would only get in the way and unsettle matters even further. If, however (and here I extend Douglas's point a bit more), the moral rules are on the contrary simple and straightforward (of the hands-off variety), pollution rules, by the very rigidity that makes them otherwise quite useless, would here lend support and reinforcement.

With these points in mind, let us consider each instance of kujaama.

3.1.2.2. In contrast to blood and semen, cooked food as a mediating symbol is present at only one phase of food procurement and disposal: the eating. At other times it is absent and hence irrelevant to actual judgments about economic separation. At best, it serves as a recurrent reminder that the parent and child are to keep apart. The weaker position of this symbol is just as well, for the moral rules enjoining economic separation are harder than sex rules to define and maintain. They are very much a part of a whole range of obligations and rights operating not only between parent and child, but also between these two and other members of the local patrilineal group—rights and obligations pertaining to cultivation, cooperative labor, land tenure, water, and so forth. Resort to a pollution rule that in any dispute would automatically put the blame, no matter what, on the elder, would surely lead nowhere.

3.1.2.3. Kujaama at a funeral, in all its forms, clearly and strongly supports the cardinal moral obligation to separate the deceased from the survivors. It does not, however, act alone; it shares the stage with a number of other rituals that have, from different angles, the same goal.

3.1.2.4. Harvest kujaama is the only instance of kujaama that has no apparent normative correlation. It is quite simply a logical product of the pollution rules qua system. Because the
harvest is not otherwise celebrated by the Fogny, this yearly ritual might be taken as a modest assertion of family solidarity where parents and children come together to mix their agricultural counterparts, the old and new harvest.

3.1.2.5. I might mention an instance of *kujaama* manqué. At a funeral the interdiction against touching the corpse does not seem to apply to the older generation, at least not to the deceased's mother and her sisters. Thus, before burial, the body is put on display before attending women, who perform a slow funeral dance accompanied by muffled drums. Throughout this display the deceased is closely cared for by his mother and his mother's sisters, who brush away flies and generally look after his appearance. They keep his clothes straight and make sure that his mouth remains closed and his eyes open. This is in marked contrast to the widow or widower and, for that matter, the deceased's father. Both of them remain in seclusion.

Unfortunately, I have no normative statement (as I do for the widow or widower) on whether *kujaama* actually does apply in this case. The logic of the system—recall that the elders avoid the funeral feast—would surely have it so. Now if *kujaama* does apply, then we have the deceased's mother openly disregarding the pollution taboos. If, however, it does not apply, then we have instead the adjustment of the logical system to social exigencies. In either case we have a clear example of a normative obligation (the supreme duty of a mother to take care of her child) taking precedence over an opposing pollution rule.

In summary, we can now see that the correspondence of *kujaama* to parallel moral rules varies from instance to instance. There is a strong correlation with respect to sex between generations, and with respect to both sex and food between husband and wife at funerals. Beyond this, there is only a partial correlation between generations when it comes to economic production and an absence of correlation at harvest. Finally, at one point in the funeral there is a strong negative correlation when a mother for the last time takes care of her child.

3.1.3. Cooked food as a pollution symbol. Viewed dynamically and from the angle of the participants, *kujaama* offers yet another quite dramatic parallel with associated norms. Quite simply: as the family adds rules about economic separation between generations at the child's marriage, so *kujaama* adds cooked food as a polluting symbol. By doing this, the new rules (new for the participants) about keeping one's own economic house after marriage are equated via *kujaama* symbolism to the already operating, simpler, and more basic rules about sexual separation. In this one context, *kujaama* serves as a useful device permitting the parties involved to define the new moral relationship as being, in its essentials, something similar to the older one.

3.1.4. The functions of *kujaama*. I do not intend to explore the many functions of *kujaama*. To do so goes quite beyond the scope of this paper, and interested readers can obtain a fine theoretical statement on the general nature of pollution rules by looking into Douglas's important study, *Purity and Danger* (1966). There are, however, two points worth mentioning, one obvious, the other not so obvious.

3.1.4.1. The kind of symbolic fences built up by *kujaama* certainly help structure good neighborliness within the very cramped social space that is every Fogny's lot. Where the major lines of social differentiation within the local group are strictly in terms of age and sex, *kujaama* provides a symbolic statement that separates, in terms of sexual activity and food procurement, the parent from his child.

*Kujaama* is by no means alone. There are many other systems involving pollution rules, primarily associated with various enshrined *sinëtë* that like *kujaama* differentiate one internal group from the next. However, there are some basic differences. First, as I indicated in the background section, *kujaama* is a general, unattached system, applicable to everyone, whereas the other *sinëtë* refer to specific
groups and individuals. Kujaama is everywhere, and everyone is subject to kujaama. In contrast, only certain people are subject to this or that named, localized, and enshrined spirit. Second, kujaama defines a relationship between categories—parent-child, deceased spouse-survivor—whereas the others simply define one group as against all others—for example, the group of out-marrying women vs. all other people. Third, kujaama is specific to activities having to do with sex and food procurement (especially eating). It is perhaps this specific reference with its overtones of incest that makes kujaama so singular and important and so rich in symbolism.

3.1.4.2. The second, less central, point is why kujaama pollutes the elder and not the younger generation. In strictly cultural terms the answer is simple enough. The presuppositions on which the entire system is based preclude the opposite; blood flows from elder to younger and, as we have seen, can never pollute the younger with a blood mixture.

A functional explanation would be less obvious. Two dissimilar though not contradictory possibilities come to mind. First, because he (or she) is older and serves as the role model, the elder is expected to take the initiative in maintaining correct separation as defined by the pollution rules. The elder is the victim because he is believed to be the responsible party, the party that should know better.

The other, and perhaps better, interpretation is that by placing the onus of rule maintenance on the elder, the Fogny via kujaama create a kind of inverted oedipal situation that protects the child from parental encroachment. It is a situation where the parent and never the child is the guilty party if things go wrong. In a social world where the child remains, even after marriage, at a political disadvantage with respect to his parents (especially son to father), kujaama offers symbolic protection that permits the child, if nothing else, to eat, copulate, and reproduce in peace and without parental meddling.

3.2. The Place of Kujaama in a Grammar of Ritual Acts

The Fogny respond to kujaama by observing taboos and performing rituals. If these taboos and rituals are neglected, kujaama responds by afflicting the violator. It is through these rituals, taboos, and afflictions that kujaama as an abstract system of religious ideas finds concrete expression and becomes directly relevant to the lives of specific individuals. Turning things around and taking perhaps a rather narrow view, we can say that it is precisely because of these particular kinds of highly formalized acts (rituals) and nonacts (taboos) that kujaama is a religious and not a purely philosophical phenomenon. Certainly it is the reason why the Fogny label kujaama as one of the sinästi spirits.

In back of the response to a spirit is the implied presence of the spirit itself. This presence is defined in terms of either direct or potential contact between spirit and person, a contact that is avoided with taboos and manipulated with rituals. Now, the various types of possible contact are extremely limited. For this reason the kinds of rituals used to handle them are equally limited in variety. (There is only one type of taboo: avoidance or not doing.) Thus, whenever there is contact between spirit and person, a ritual geared to the particular contact will be performed. If a similar kind of contact is made with an entirely different spirit, the same ritual will still be used. We can go further. Each ritual, as we have already observed with kujaama, can be subdivided into a cluster of one or more ritual acts. These acts are highly stereotyped sets of gestures that, subject to adaptive variation, always remain the same. Different rituals are made up of different groupings and permutations of these basic acts. The kujaama ritual consists of katiñê, kalacen, kôkîk, and kapos, in that order. Another ritual might make use of just one of these, say katiñê, but in combination with some different act entirely, perhaps a sacrifice.

Each taboo and each ritual act can be thought of as a meaningful unit (a "bit" of action). The fact that each of these units re-
ceives extensive if not infinite reuse in different combinations and for different spirits compels us to assume that their distribution in one combination or another is determined by a set of rules, or, if you will, a grammar.\textsuperscript{11} The rules will be based on the underlying nature of spirit-person relations. By taking into account the type of spirit as well as the exact manner of spirit-person contact, the rules will select the appropriate combination of units (taboos and ritual acts) that will assure, through gesture and words, the successful handling of the spirit. Patterns like this will be produced: given (1) that \( X \) spirit has (2) caught an individual in a particular way, then (3) \( Y \) procedures, involving acts \( a, b, \) and \( c \), will be performed.

Analysis of this sort warrants formal statement, and I can envisage the entire corpus of possible units being reduced to an either/or grid of distinctive features. However, considering the limitations of the data presently at hand, it would be entirely misleading to attempt such a statement at this time. Future research will, I trust, permit me to do so. Instead, let me present in outline form what I consider to be the main characteristics of spirit-person relations taken as a whole. The outline, which goes beyond the material presented in this paper, is based on the entire range of possible relations. \textit{Kujaama} like other \textit{sin\text{\textsuperscript{o}}t\text{\textsuperscript{i}}} is limited to only one portion of the range.

In order to demonstrate the utility of the outline I proceed, after its presentation, to reconsider, in terms of our present discussion, the defense and \textit{kujaama} rituals and to offer, by way of contrast, a number of other examples of different types of spirit-person contact involving other ritual acts.

\textbf{OUTLINE OF SPIRIT CONTACT}

I. Type of Spirit
A. Enshrined (with "head")
B. Unattached ("headless")

II. Conditions of Contact
A. Mode of Contact
1. Spirit inside person
2. Spirit on the body surface
3. Spirit on some proximate substance
   a. Edible
   b. Inedible
4. Spirit, in some vague way, around person or group

B. Reason for Contact
1. Positive: spirit invoked by or for person for group.
   Individual or group protected.
2. Negative
   a. Pollution of individual by spirit. Individual afflicted
      i. Spirit touched (physical contact)
      ii. Spirit eaten
      iii. Spirit in some way misused: rules governing relationship violated
   b. Pollution of group by spirit, individual, series of individuals, or entire group afflicted; spirit misused

III. Ways of Handling Contact
A. Positive contact: by sacrifice and the like
B. Negative contact
1. Avoid contact: observe taboo.
2. Contact with proximate substance made safe through defense ritual using medicines and/or ritual acts
   a. Edibles
   b. Inedibles
3. Contact removed
   a. From inside of person
      i. With medicines; spirit neutralized
      ii. With sacrifice; spirit returned to its proper place
   b. From the group; with sacrifice, spirit removed to proper place from inside the living area of the afflicted group
   c. Removal from outside substance: removal rituals
      i. From edibles
      ii. From inedibles
      iii. From body surface

3.2.1. Examples:

3.2.1.1. The \textit{kujaama} (I.B. of the outline) defense ritual (III.B.2.a.) makes it possible for an elder to come in contact with otherwise polluted edibles. It consists of two acts: an exchange between two parties and the taking of
a neutralizing medicine. The exchange disassociates two people from the polluting effects of the outside object. The use of the medicine supports (and makes permanent?) the effect of the exchange. What we are dealing with is, precisely, two people vis-à-vis a polluting edible. Recall that the harvest kujaama requires only the medicine, and although it is taken en famille, it concerns only the relationship of each individual (taken in turn) to the pollutant. It is not a matter of the group vs. the pollutant.

Two other exchange acts were observed. Before digging the grave, the two diggers squat facing each other on opposite sides of where the hole is to be dug. They pick up handfuls of dirt from each corner. The first gravedigger throws his right handful of dirt into the opposite lefthand corner (to his left); he then throws his left handful onto the opposite righthand corner. The second gravedigger does the same thing, and the whole criss-cross exchange is repeated two more times. Just before closing the grave, the same act is repeated again. This time, however, before each tossing sequence the gravediggers touch handfuls of dirt across the hole. I would infer that the difference in the two acts is one between an opening and a closing kind of exchange. The touching asserts that the grave is to be closed.

The second instance, also at a funeral, occurs when the body is carried off to a particular shrine, where it is put in contact via a kagomor act (see section 3.2.1.4) with the spirit ewat. Before picking up the body the two carriers simultaneously toss, each to the other, their respective head pads (on which the stretcher is to rest). This is done three times, and when finished, each keeps the other’s pad. During the act they stand at either end, head and foot, of the stretcher on which the body has already been placed.

A comparison of these exchanges brings up three points:

(1) In each of the three acts, association with the polluting object is made by exchanging something connected with the object: some rice, dirt from the grave, and the head pad. The latter, along with the stretcher, is associated closely with the corpse. They are destroyed after burial.

(2) In both the kujaama and gravedigging exchanges the manner of exchange has meaningful content. The former reverses the “food (qua blood)” flow; the latter opens and closes the grave.

(3) The kujaama protects the exchangers from an object. In contrast, the funeral exchanges apparently protect both the object (grave and corpse) and the participants from each other. The grave, which is part of the world of “below,” and the corpse (when it is associated with the spirit, and only then) must both be kept separate from the living. Because the grave must be dug and the corpse must be carried, that is, there must be contact; a defense act is performed instead of an unworkable taboo. (One cannot avoid and dig a grave at the same time!)

Ritual exchange is only one kind of defense (kaben), one that could amply be described by the Fogny verb: kalainen 'reciprocally to cause to return.' Other types of defense, where amulets or medicines are used, either protect an individual from outside dangers (usually witches) or protect objects (fruit trees and the like) from people (thieves).

3.2.1.2. At a funeral contact between surviving spouse and kujaama is present in the corpse, the funeral food, the remaining produce and on the person of the survivor himself (II.A.2. and 3. of the outline). Taboos (III.B.1.) keep the survivor away from the funeral food and the corpse. The katiinen removes kujaama from the produce (III.B.3.c.i.), and the spitting on, the shaving and the washing remove kujaama from the body surface (III.B.3.iii.). Katiinen is a common act used on many occasions. Its basic structure is simple: you eat and spit to the right, you eat again and spit to the left, and finally you eat and swallow.12 A Fogny phrase sums it up: panutiinen man busikab bupir 'you will tiinen so that the poison will leave.' The complexity of the kujaama katiinen has to do with the specific nature of kujaama. Katiinen has been adapted to fit the case at hand.

(1) The first part of the rejection, spitting out, and the parallel part of the acceptance, the swallowing of the millet placed in the mouth, both refer to the basic condition.
The second parts of both the rejecting and the accepting break down the general condition to indicate exactly what part is being rejected and what part accepted.

The kalacen uses the now purified (entirely "male") water and millet liquid as a kind of "soap" to "loosen" primarily food, but also blood kujaama, from the surface of the body. The washing, which always takes place outside of the compound, finishes the purification. The shaving removes, by cutting, the endo-genic (sexual) pollution. It, too, is terminated with an outside washing. What we have here are two parallel bundles: kalacen+kapos and kokik+kapos. Both start inside and end outside of the compound. They get rid of the dirt by disposing of it outside. As we shall see, the removal sacrifice and the kasaaten follow this pattern of movement.

3.2.1.3. By way of contrast, rituals that remove from an individual an enshrined (I.A. of the outline) rather than an unattached (I.B.) spirit are based on sacrifice (III.B.3.a.iii.). At a minimum they consist of a core bundle of acts that, certain adaptations aside, does not vary. This core divides into an invocation and a sacrifice. The former takes place at the center of the residential compound and is made up of two acts simultaneously performed: an announcement and a gesture. The announcement invokes the spirit and says what is being done. The gesture associates each item to be sacrificed (chicken, palm wine, and so forth) with the afflicted person. The officiator makes the gesture by rotating (kagomen) each item over the head of the beneficiary of the sacrifice. While doing this he announces something like: "Here is the palm wine (the chicken and so forth). It is from so and so, son of such and such. May you, X spirit, hear and leave so and so in peace (good health)."

The subsequent sacrifice is performed at the shrine. It involves killing the chicken (kəsimen 'draw blood') and another announcement. The announcement tells the spirit to leave the beneficiary. The sacrifice proper requires that the throat of the chicken be cut or throttled, with the blood from the wound spread over the shrine's "head."

Other parts of the removal ritual will vary depending on the particular spirit or kind of spirit contact in question. There might be a washing, a katihen or something like a kasaaten, where some object associated with the sacrifice or with the affliction is placed on the open road leading away from the village, so that "people leaving will pick it up on their feet and take it away."

The entire removal ritual can be schematized as follows:

\[\text{announcement} \quad \text{announcement} \quad + \quad + \quad (\text{other acts})^{13} \]

\[\text{kagomen} \quad \text{kəsimen}\]

3.2.1.4. As a final example, let us consider rituals that are the opposite of the removal sacrifice. Here contact between spirit and individual is sought rather than removed. The basic act, kagomər, is to run three or more times around the invoked shrine. This may or may not be accompanied with a sacrifice. The parallel to the kagomen is obvious. In both cases one object achieves association with another by encircling. In one case we have the victim associated with the sacrificant, and in the other we have the sacrificant associated with the spirit.

A fine case of a kagomər act is the ebuj ewat 'kill the ewat.' It is for this ritual that the male corpse is placed on the stretcher (see section 3.2.1.1.) just before burial. He is carried, on the run, to the shrine for a final association with the ewat 'spirit,' an association that had previously been made at initiation and (in olden times) before each war raid. (Ewat concerns ideas about masculine strength.) During the kagomər a cock is killed (hence the verb -buj) and long guns are fired. Accompanying the stretcher are attending men who brandish knives and proclaim that if the death was unnatural (that is, caused by war or witchcraft), it will be avenged in the name of the ewat spirit.

The ebuj ewat is thus made up of four ritual acts: the central kagomər, which is here done passively (the corpse is carried), revenge
threats and boasting of prowess (*kamag*), a sacrifice, and gunshots.

4. CONCLUSION

My first field encounter with *kujaama* was with the mealtime food taboos. This was followed by a subsequent encounter with the funeral ritual, which immediately brought out an apparent anomaly: why did the Fogny label two seemingly different cultural representations by the same term? The research that followed produced the results that are the main subject of this paper. *Kujaama* is an abstract notion, a self-contained system of pollution rules that receive overt expression in each of its diverse manifestations.

*Kujaama* is one subsystem out of a class of representations concerned with man’s relationship to the supernatural and summed up by the general term *mnoiti*. Other members of the class, in differing ways, define parallel and related ideas. Like *kujaama*, they too are capable of structural analysis.

The affections, taboos, and rituals that the Fogny suffer, observe, and perform are general to the *sinaoti*. They, most particularly the rituals, are systematic and ordered by distribution rules. The rituals present the generalized language of action and expression without which the Fogny would be incapable of relating deeply felt religious ideas to their own particular lives.

NOTES

1 Material for this paper was gathered during two field periods: September 1960 to December 1961 and September 1964 to July 1966. The first tour was supported by the West African Languages Survey and the second by the National Institute of Mental Health (1-F2-MH-21, 745-01 and 5-F2-MH-21, 745-02). The latter grant was administered by the African Studies Center at Boston University. Throughout my entire stay in Senegal I worked under the auspices of the Institut Français d’Afrique Noire (now the Institut Fondamental d’Afrique Noire).

A short version of this paper was read at the 1967 meetings of the American Anthropological Association (Washington, D. C.). At that time Professor Victor Turner (n.d.) as discussant made a number of valuable comments, several of which have been integrated with section 3.1 of the present paper. Professor Thomas Beidelman has kindly read, corrected, and commented on the final version. My wife’s field observations serve as the basis for my description of the *kujaama* funeral ritual. My sincerest thanks to my wife and to Professors Turner and Beidelman.


I term the Diola “patrilineal” with some hesitation. Although a man lives in his father’s place of residence, the Diola have only shallow lineages that are reckoned back three generations at most. They are hardly more than extended families with precise degrees of relationship being forgotten within a generation after the death of the common ancestor. These groups are casually designated by the name of the eldest or most prominent living member. The Diola will say “Aliyu and his bunch, Indaw and his” (for example, *Aliyuu*, literally “their Aliyu”). Outside of these minimal units and extensive exogamous patronyms, the Diola conceive of their social space in terms of locality rather than lineality. People are members of named compounds, wards, and villages. A compound is made up of several shallow lineages. The relationship between the lineages is vaguely described by such phrases as “our forefathers were brothers.” To the Diola the exact degree of relationship and the names of linking ancestors are completely irrelevant. What is crucial is that the members of a compound (the “compound brothers”) live together “as their fathers did before them.” It is important to distinguish this form of structure from the various well-known types of unilineal descent associated with the Nuer, Tallensi, and Tiv. (See, for example, Bohannan 1963:140, where he describes systems similar to that of the Diola by the phrase “agnatic collateral groups.” The term “patrilinal” could also be used.)

3 Orthography for Diola departs here from my earlier usage (Saper 1965) in using the accent (‘) instead of underlining to represent tense as distinct from lax *i* and *u*. Thomas (1959:590 ff) gives a general outline of Diola spirits (ukin). He shows (1959:604–609) how many specific spirits have distributions covering wide areas.

4 With the exception of occasional Catholic pockets, the vast majority of the Fogny are Muslim. They are recent converts and practice a version of Islam common to the western Sudan and based on various Sufi movements that have their origin in the Maghreb (see Tringham 1959). The majority of the Fogny make no effort to integrate their traditional beliefs with those of Islam. As one said: “When I have done the sacrifice, I will go out and pray to Allah. That is all there is to it.” The major influence of Islam has been to place traditional ritual more in the background, to undermine the power of shrine owners, and to emphasize the negative rather than positive aspects of traditional belief. See Thomas (1965) for an interesting discus-
sion of the demise of traditional religious beliefs and ceremonies.

5 -sabər has the literal meaning of ‘reciprocal asking,’ though the root -sab is used only with the sense of ‘asking a corpse (the cause of its death),’ as in the passive construction buyigab busabisab ‘the corpse is questioned.’ Other Diola use the verb wasen, literally ‘to cause to distribute’ (see the common word -wəsr ‘to distribute amongst’).

6 The central position of the patrilineal group comes out when we recall that women who “touch” the compound participate in and officiate throughout the entire kujaama ritual (though not at the kskik; see Note 7). When it is performed for a widow these women even go through the part devoted to food kujaama. By duplicating step by step the entire act they, as much as the widow, terminate the marriage. In doing so they also recognize that it was a proper marriage and that, as an old lady put it, “the widow took care of, especially gave food to, the women agnates of her husband and their children.” We can also say that because the produce goes to the patrilineal group for distribution, the “compound sisters” (firimən), by doing the ritual, act in their own interests.

When the deceased is a woman, the widower himself represents the patrilineal group. No one performs for the deceased or the deceased’s patrilineal kin. This is not surprising, for in terms of residence and food production she was a stranger and represented only herself.

I might further add that it is particularly appropriate for the husband’s firimən to take a leading role in the kujaama ritual. It is they who are responsible for the behavior of the women their brothers and brothers’ sons marry. In traditional times a sister had the right to discipline and even to eject a man’s wife without his consent. Today, despite Islamic law, which considers the husband and wife bond more important than the brother and sister relationship, a man’s sister can still make life miserable for a thoughtless wife. (My commercially minded assistant put it this way: if a man had only twenty-five francs, and if both his wife and his sister had need of it, he would, as a Muslim, give it to his wife, but if he were a good Diola he would give it to his sister.)

The husband’s kusəmpil (descendants of firimən), because of their obligation to adjudicate disputes at their mother’s brother’s place of residence, are likewise appropriate participants.

7 The fact that it is the bereaved’s classificatory mother, and not an agnate of the husband, who does the shaving emphasizes the private quality of the endogamic kujaama. It is with reference to one’s matrilineal ties that an individual defines his unique position in his patrilineal group (see Note 10).

8 Queries brought from one informant the interesting equation whereby fəslim “blood” was said to be used euphemistically for matuj ‘semen,’ “in the same way that we (the Fogny) use kafintə to lie down (together)’ for kasakər ‘to copulate.’” The word matuj, however, is frequently used in a figurative sense to mean ‘vanity, pride.’

9 Lurking here are certain parallels with witchcraft, for it is the practice of witches to steal and consume the soul (yut) of their victim. Now because the soul is located in the blood, it is the latter that gets consumed. This is further linked to general sacrifices where the victim’s blood (soul) goes to the spirit, while its meat (body) is eaten by the participants. Thus the notion of blood reversal as a form of “blood theft” has considerable supernatural meaning.

10 I might mention in particular two very interesting systems that are both based on matrilineal affiliations and that serve to differentiate between patrilineals of the same age. One, having a shrine (bulunt), marks full siblings as a distinct group. Thus, at the birth of her first child, a mother will set up a bulunt shrine that will “protect” and also afflict this and subsequent children. Bulunt is associated with fertility. It ensures many pregnancies and, when improperly treated, will bring sicknesses associated with enlarged genitalia. (When “caught,” a man’s penis may swell to 50 cm in length.) Cows that calve twins and goats that kid triplets (they usually have twins) will be given a bulunt shrine. Women who bear twins have, incidentally, special powers enabling them to cure bulunt illness. At a funeral the widow, in the name of bulunt, has her late husband’s penis (represented by a slate from the marital bed) removed from her vagina. If she remarries she must then set up another shrine for any new children.

The other system, which does not involve sinat at all, is a belief in animal doubles, that is, individual totems that distinguish an individual from other agnates (each has his own double). Because the double lives near the home of one or another uterine kin (usually father’s mother’s home or mother’s mother’s home), it, too, represents uniqueness by way of matrilateral ties. (A paper on these animal doubles is currently in preparation.)

11 Two recent studies discuss ritual in somewhat similar terms (Rosaldo 1968; Kilson n.d.).

12 When an old lady was presented with an auspicious looking American sandwich she performed, just to be sure, the basic katiñen. The sandwich was unfamiliar, and it was handed to her by the ethnographer, her “son.”

The ad hoc defense act performed while eating, in which the elder places a small handful of rice on his knee, can be thought of as a highly modified variant of katiñen. With this gesture kujaama is removed from the rice bowl.

13 The parentheses indicate variability.

14 One important topic has been neglected by this paper: why do the Fogny equate, via the notion of kujaama, sexuality with alimentation and birth with death? Inasmuch as these equations are
repeatedly, if not universally, made by cultures throughout the world, any adequate explanation falls within the domain of psychology and comparative ethnology. It is a problem of the universal categories of symbolism that cannot be properly analyzed in the context of the belief systems of one isolated example. All I can say here is that the Fogny make the equations, and I hope that the detailed presentation of just how they are made brings usable grist to future discussions of this larger topic.


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