

DIASPORIC JELIYA AS A COLLABORATIVE TRADE IN NEW YORK CITY

by

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In Mali, Guinea, and Senegal, the term *jeliya* denotes the traditional art of praise singing as practiced by only male and female hereditary musicians (*jeliw* and *jelimusow*). The *jeli* or griot is a verbal artist whose profession or practice requires a specific set of oral skills. Instrumentalists accompany vocalists on hereditary instruments such as the balafon (xylophone) and kora (harp) and play a subordinate role to them. In New York City (hereafter referred to simply as New York), however, *jeliya* has become a collaborative trade with all participants – griot and non-griot – benefiting from their involvement. The practice of the *jeli* has evolved to include styles of presentation and performance that place a greater emphasis upon instrumental playing (*foli*) in order to make *jeliya* more accessible to non-griot musicians and audiences. Above all, like other west African hereditary migrant traders in New York, *jeliw* broker their art as a musical practice in order to reach new sources of patronage. For them, *jeliya* can be commodified in the form of CDs to be bought and sold or inspire various types of collaboration with non-griot musicians, while it retains its original meaning(s) and significance as a verbal art in traditional environments. As a collaborative trade, diasporic *jeliya* embodies varying degrees of innovation and hybridity, which emerge in several types of collaborative relationship and in various contexts.

In this article, I expand upon the work of Tom Van Buren (2001) and Ryan Skinner (2004), which examines *jeliya* within the larger context of Mande music in New York and as a social practice. Informed by current musical practice and a study of repertoire, I outline and describe the nature of various collaborations that recast *jeliya* as a collaborative trade, focusing upon the musical idioms as performed by griots and their non-griot associates. As Van Buren shows, the promotion of *jeliya* as a traditional art and an educational resource continues to be crucial to griots and their success. I provide a brief survey of the various New York groups and other artists that have employed griots as creative resources in highly nuanced innovative projects in which *jeliya* is not the primary focus or concern. Lastly, I discuss griot music-centered groups whose personnel and repertoires are frequently shared and practices embody the idioms of Mande music that have been previously studied by Roderic Knight, Lucy Durán, Thomas Hale, Eric Charry, and others. Analyses of two works “*Allah la ke*” [CD track 2] and “*Nama*” [CD track 1] examine how pieces can be interpreted differently when

considered within the context of previous analytical research. I reflect upon Mande terminology, including *donkili* (song), *kumbengo* (recurrent theme) and *birimintingo* (variation and embellishment), and its relation to this practice. I isolate and discuss the structural features of guitar parts as they relate to issues of temporal organization, pitch-level coincidence, and coordination. As one griot informant explained, “you need to be inside” in order to understand how Mande music is made.

For Mande hereditary professionals, including Malian vocalist and guitarist Abdoulaye “Djoss” Diabaté, Guinean balafon player Famoro Dioubaté, and Malian kora player Yacouba Sissoko, collaboration with non-griot researchers and musicians who have come to understand the griot trade through years of contact with griots has become an integral part of their practice(s). These professionals straddle the boundaries separating their responsibilities as hereditary musicians and aspirations to succeed as commercial artists. In Harlem and the Bronx, they perform at transition rites celebrations and concert parties for Mande patrons and community members, while they play various types of jam music in mixed ensembles for non-African audiences in restaurants, bars, and clubs. Less frequently, griots perform in concert halls, invoking deep *jeliya*, which is for listening (Charry 2000: 90). In some cases, they work as itinerant musicians, bartering their trade on subway platforms for change and small contributions. In nearly all of these widely disparate contexts, non-griot musicians of diverse backgrounds collaborate with griots as a result of their invitation and encouragement, thereby learning the tools of this trade as a shared resource.

While this collaborative trade takes many forms, a core group of players has determined how Mande music is made in New York (see Appendix, list I). Since the mid to late 1990s, non-African and non-griot African collaborators, including Canadian multi-instrumentalist and bandleader Sylvain Leroux, American balafon player and drummer Andy Algire, and Senegalese bassist Mamadou Ba, have come to know and understand Mande practice in terms of *foli* (instrumental playing), which has become a focal point for musicians and audiences. They have initiated short and long term projects, organized concerts and workshops, booked gigs, and moved freely from one group to the next, playing many of the same pieces in different groups. Stock patterns emerging as named pieces serve as the basis of playing and interaction in most contexts, including dance and drum schools and the homes of griots where this tradition was first learned by many collaborators. Parts are frequently adapted, recycled, and recomposed, providing a sense of continuity in these idioms as they continue to evolve in multiple realizations.

Three types of collaborative relationship have been cultivated in this trade (see Appendix, list II). For researchers and scholars such as Tom Van Buren, different modes of inquiry have inspired and underpinned their research-oriented collaboration with Mande hereditary professionals. For some players, *jeliya* is a compositional resource that they employ in strikingly original and idiosyncratic ways. More frequently, *jeliya* is presented as either hybrid jam music in clubs or as deep *jeliya* in staged concert

performances. For nearly fifteen years, groups, including Tamalalou, Fula Flute, Source, Super Mande, Kakande, and The Mandingo Ambassadors have drawn from Mande hunter's music, praise songs, and modern classics in order to cultivate styles of presentation that vary with context. These griot music-based ensembles have sustained *jeliya* as a commercial trade and art in Manhattan and Brooklyn, creating original works in the process.

Since 2005, I have studied the Mande idiom(s) in New York from each of these vantage points. For my dissertation fieldwork, I began my apprenticeship as the guitar student of Djoss Diabaté who became my mentor and primary informant. Djoss, other griots, and their non-griot associates demonstrated that the Mande tradition is a matter of practice, which involves listening, playing, and imagining. I participated as a guitar player in four Mande concert parties between 2005 and 2007 and have performed as a guest musician with Djoss's group Super Mande and Source on several occasions. I have organized concerts and performances on Long Island and used what I have learned to teach students at Dowling College. Like a griot's training, this collaborative trade is multifarious and all of these things must be considered for an adequate understanding of *jeliya* to be attained.

Research-oriented collaboration

As the director of field research at the Center for Traditional Music and Dance (CTMD), Tom Van Buren has been a key player in this collaborative trade. Between 1997 and 2000, Van Buren organized a series of annual concerts, which marked the culmination of a collaborative project (*Badenya*) between griots, other members of the Mande community, and the CTMD. As Van Buren explains (2001: 209), he aimed to conduct research by documenting these events, while presenting Mande traditional arts and music to a wider audience. His task was to initiate a dialogue between the Mande community and members of the media, sponsors, and government agencies. In 2002, Van Buren organized a CD recording *Badenya: Manden Jaliya in New York* that features many of the musicians in Table 1 (see Appendix), including Djoss Diabaté and his group Super Mande, Keba "Bobo" Cissoko, and members of Fula Flute. Also, the CD contains significant named pieces, including "*Allah la ke*", "*Keme Bourema*", and "*Nanfulen*", that are staples of the Mande repertoire. More recently, Van Buren has helped sponsor Djoss's most recent CD *Sara* (2008), which Djoss refers to as a traditional recording.

From the beginning of the *Badenya* collaboration, Van Buren consulted with and lobbied patrons in the Mande community who helped determine the project's title and the form and content of each concert. Acting as a facilitator in this trade, he contracted griots such as Keba "Bobo" Cissoko and Djoss Diabaté, encouraging them to cultivate a specific style of presentation that would be interesting and accessible to New York sponsors and audiences, while promoting Mande cultural heritage. In these instances of strategic collaboration, anything can happen as long as fairness and mutual benefit

are kept in mind. Although power is rarely equally distributed, *jeliya* is recast as “the art of occupying and performing one’s status position so as to facilitate a common project” (Klein 2007: xxv). Also, *jeliya* serves as an educational resource in these contexts. Griots are portrayed in an iconoclastic manner as reservoirs or compendiums of knowledge, which are valued as a form of currency in this trade.

While Van Buren has promoted stylized representations of the griot as a custodian of Mande practices and traditional music, these hereditary professionals embrace a more inclusive idea of what is traditional or what comprises their cultural heritage. At Mande naming and wedding celebrations, the BOSS DR-5 drum sequencer can be a significant resource that allows griots to perform their role of hereditary professional with fewer musicians in each group. In spite of Van Buren’s requests to feature only traditional instruments in Super Mande concerts, Djoss Diabaté has invited other players, including Guinean electric guitarist Ibrahim Soumano and drummer Andy Algire, to perform in his group. His CD *Sara* (2008) features the acoustic guitar playing of Djekorea Mory Kanté, who tracked an accompaniment part and a lead part for the recording, Sylvain Leroux on tambin (Fula flute), and Peter Fand on electric bass. For a collaborative interpretation of the Sunjata epic at Dowling College, we integrated traditional and modern works into the drama. As Waterman and Klein observed in reference to Yoruba practice, griots have a very modern understanding of their tradition, which has allowed traditional practices to evolve. In my case, I hoped that the Mande tradition had changed enough to warrant further study.

***Jeliya* as a compositional resource**

Mande professionals have maintained several collaborative relationships in which they serve primarily as a compositional resource, inspiring a great deal of hybridity and innovation. New York groups such as Dallam Dougou, Group Kelenia, Brewed by Noon, and some jazz artists including Don Byron, Peter Apfelbaum, and Regina Carter, view *jeliya* as a wellspring of ideas, patterns, and phrases, contracting many griots as partners in idiosyncratic projects or as players of other hybrid idioms. These projects stir great excitement among griots and stand in stark contrast to the stylized traditional music of the Badenya concerts and CD. Kora player Yacouba Sissoko who performs with Fula Flute, Super Mande, and Kakande speaks of his collaboration and tours with Regina Carter as if they were the highlights of his career. Djoss Diabaté showcases the posters of Sean Noonan’s group Brewed by Noon on the walls of his apartment. Famoro Dioubaté refers to Raul Rothblatt, who leads the group Dallam Dougou, as his ‘man’. As commercial artists, these hereditary professionals embrace these relationships that allow them to play, perform, and create new music with non-griot musicians for non-African audiences. For instrumentalists, one griot informant explained that Mande events and the idioms of concert party performance are all the same, expressing a view of dissatisfaction shared by many musicians, including griots and their non-griot associates. In general, male instrumentalists accompany female vocalists (*jelimusow*)

who are the unrivaled stars of Mande events in New York as in Mali and Guinea (see Durán 1995: 197-207). While vocalists jockey for position in order to praise and exhort patrons, pieces recur several times in an evening and leave little room for solos and the instrumentalist to be noticed or showcased.

Cellist and bandleader Raul Rothblatt describes his project Dallam Dougou as an 'Afro-Hungarian Jazz Thang'. The group's CD *New Destiny* opens with a Roma gypsy rhythm and riff, a clarinet solo, and a balafon part that anticipate the work's integration of various musical elements. In some cases, pieces make tongue-in-cheek references to European and African sources. "JB meets Mande *Jeli*" commences as a quasi-Baroque chamber piece before it transitions into a groove reminiscent of the griot classic "*Sunjata*". The balafon ostinato supports the cello and flute parts, which are composed in a contrapuntal style, thereby creating an almost perverse parody of a Bach chamber piece. While the group began as a novelty act in 1998, griots and collaborators, including Abou Sylla, Famoro Dioubaté, Peter Fand, and Sylvain Leroux, have been eager to participate. According to Djoss Diabaté and Famoro Dioubaté, projects such as Dallam Dougou would not be possible in Africa where pieces such as "*Sunjata*" are reserved for the praise of the specific patrons. Griots exercise a degree of creative freedom in these collaborative relationships that they do not have as Mande hereditary professionals fulfilling their social obligations at Mande events or working with advocates of traditional Mande idioms. In the case of "JSB meets Mande *Jeli*", the basic instrumental part or *kumbengo* for "*Sunjata*" is recycled in order to create a new work of unique character.

Tenor saxophone and clarinet player Oran Etkin who is a member of The Mandingo Ambassadors draws freely from klezmer, jazz, and idioms of Mande music, cultivating a personal voice in his original works and arrangements. His band Group Kelenia, which has performed at Joe's Pub in lower Manhattan and Barbès in Brooklyn, features griots and other collaborators including Balla Kouyaté, Mackane Kouyaté, African jazz artist Lionel Loueke, and African-American bassist Joe Sanders. In "New Dwellings", Etkin combines his clarinet extemporizations with a balafon and string quartet, thereby straddling the boundaries separating European folk music, free jazz, and Mande idioms. Also, Etkin collaborates with Djoss, featuring him on a recording of the griot classic "*Wassoulou foli*". Etkin adapts parts and phrases for the clarinet in his interpretation of Mande instrumental playing (*foli*), which he combines with techniques of modern jazz improvisation. Like Rothblatt of Dallam Dougou, Etkin employs *jeliya* as a compositional tool in creating a hybrid style in his group and his playing. He features griots on his CD and in live performances in an effort to strengthen his collaborative relationship with them and to deepen his understanding of the various Mande idioms as styles continue to change and evolve.

This type of collaboration can be either intermittent or frequent. In Appendix, list II, and discussion I have only included projects such as Dallam Dougou and Group Kelenia that have been sustained over a number of years. Unlike research-oriented

collaboration, which has promoted stylized traditional music, these collaborative relationships are less inhibiting, allowing griots to act as more or less equal partners in their collaborative efforts with non-griot musicians. Since these projects are highly idiosyncratic, griots employ their repertoires and resources in new and inventive ways. As Raul Rothblatt observes, a democratized and participatory approach to composition inspires griots and collaborators to create works of lasting beauty. In many cases, figures and phrases of griot practice are grafted onto a broad musical canvas, creating a varied interpretation of the Mande idiom. As Lucy Durán predicted (1986), collaborations between griots and non-griot musicians have altered *jeliya* as a practice radically in style (quoted in Hale 1998: 273).

Griot music-centered groups

In New York, the most enduring collaborative relationships have been formed in griot music-centered groups, which have played Mande jam music in clubs (for dancing) and a form of deep *jeliya* in concert halls (for listening). In either of these cases, standards of the Mande repertoire, including “*Allah là ke*”, “*Nama*”, and original works, are adapted and recomposed by mixed ensembles, though the non-griot performers outnumber the griots in all groups, excluding Super Mande, at any given time. As Table 2 of the Appendix shows, the same musicians have comprised the ranks of different bands whose line-ups and instrumentation are not and never have been fixed. These players act as members of an extended family who first came in contact with one another in lower Manhattan fifteen years ago.

During the mid to late 1990s, downtown dance and drum schools, including Fareta and Djoniba, served as points of artistic convergence for Mande professionals and their non-griot associates (Van Buren 2001: 172). While these studios were refuges for Mande professionals such as kora player and bandleader Keba “Bobo” Cissoko and balafon player Abou Sylla, they provided an ideal environment for non-griot musicians to learn from griots, while they worked on new material. One of the first groups to emerge in New York was Cissoko’s Tamalalou, which rehearsed at Fareta and performed frequently in local clubs, including The Baggot Inn. Tamalalou served as the training ground for its members who benefited greatly from their apprenticeship with Cissoko and the other musicians, including Djoss Diabaté, Famoro Dioubaté, and Yacouba Sissoko, who passed through its ranks. Once non-griot musicians achieved an acceptable level of competence, Cissoko would acknowledge them by decreeing, “Now, you are Tamalalou”.¹

In 2000 with Keba Cissoko’s health in slow decline, Leroux initiated a recording project with Guinean tambin master Bailo Bah who had recently joined Tamalalou. They began recording flute duet renditions of griot classics, including “*Chedo*”, “*Duga*”

¹ The term *Tamalalou* translates into English as traveler thereby speaking to Cissoko’s vocation as a migrant musician. Leroux, who relocated to New York from Canada in the 1980s, identifies with this designation as well. For him, the group Tamalalou was “a home away from home”.

and “*Janjon*”. Once the other members of Tamalou became involved, the group Fula Flute was formed. Unlike Tamalou, it was conceived as a chamber ensemble whose style is comparable to deep *jeliya*, which intends to inspire reflection before action, rather than to animate dancing (Charry 2000: 90). While Fula Flute evokes a form of Mande traditional music, the Fula flute (*tambin*), which was the focus of the project, is not a Mande or hereditary instrument. Since its inception, Fula Flute has performed at concert venues such as Lincoln Center and Symphony Space and recorded two CDs. The most recent CD *Mansa America* (King of America) (2008) is dedicated to the president of the United States Barack Obama.

Since 2004, Source has performed three sets at the Zinc Bar in west Greenwich Village the first Friday of each month. This group’s CD, *Tonight’s African Jazz Band* (2004), whose title appeared on a sign hanging at the entrance of the club, showcases a musical hybridity that is a definitive feature of African popular styles and the Mande jam music idiom, which aims to animate dancing. Leroux who leads the group remarked, “Thank God for the Zinc Bar” whose consistent patronage has allowed the band to perform on a regular basis. Since 2008, The Mandingo Ambassadors have performed every Wednesday at Barbès in Park Slope, Brooklyn, making them another band to enjoy steady employment. Famoro Dioubaté’s group Kakande has worked intermittently at Barbès as well.

While the non-griot members of these groups have most frequently performed with griots in clubs and concert halls, they have also worked intermittently with hereditary professionals at Mande events, which have occurred in Bronx banquet halls and community centers and on the third floor of the Adam Clayton Powell State Building in Harlem where a club Shrine and its adjoining room have hosted many celebrations. As one of the female Mande hereditary professionals to relocate to New York, vocalist Tapani Sissoko contracts griots as instrumentalists to accompany her at these engagements, which are organized almost entirely by female patrons or *denbaw* (honorary mothers). Since the hire of disc jockeys has allowed patrons to reduce the cost of concert parties – a cost which escalates considerably when *jelimusow* attend and praise Mande patrons thereby requiring remuneration – opportunities to perform at these events are in a gradual decline. Djoss and others play at these events in observance of their social responsibilities to patrons, though their views of them greatly vary. Above all, Mande griots clearly distinguish between their roles as hereditary musicians and commercial artists, which they fulfill in different contexts.

Shared repertoire of Mande practice in New York

A number of pieces are shared in all of these collaborative relationships. Specific works serve as exemplars, the form, content, and style of which serve as the basis of this practice or as examples of a general aesthetic for Mande music making (Charry 2000: 168). In many cases, instrumental parts and phrases are recycled, while less frequently different grooves with contrasting melodic-rhythmic features accompany the same

vocal phrases. Musicians employ all of these vocal and instrumental parts in lengthy jams that characterize most of the Mande idioms. As one informant explained, pieces are conceived as excuses to solo. In these contexts, even a vocalist's repertoire (*sataro* and *donkili*) is valued for its musical merits in absolute terms with less, little, or no attention to the lyrical content of pieces or the meaning(s) of texts. While griots view instruments such as the balafon, kora, and guitar as a means for channeling a player's voice, non-griot participants and observers consider the voice to be another musical instrument in more or less ordinary terms. Although Knight (1984) describes three types of instrumental phrase – parallel, derivative, and independent – as derivatives of or in relation to stock vocal refrains, these categories seem less relevant if parts are constantly recomposed or if different instrumental phrases can support the same set of vocal parts.

As a staple of the Senegambian kora repertoire, “*Allah là ke*” (God has done it) originated as a named piece during the 19th or 20th century (Charry 2000: 148). However, its basic part or *kumbengo* was most likely recycled from an earlier work of the 13th century, “*Tiramagan fasa*”, which commemorates a main character in the Sunjata epic (the eldest brother of two hunters who slayed the Buffalo of Do) and celebrates the Traoré *jamu*. In his solo rendition of “*Allah là ke*” on the Badenya CD (2002), Keba “Bobo” Cissoko conflates these two different pieces by singing a *donkili* or vocal refrain from “*Tiramagan fasa*” during his performance. As we listened to a recording of “*Tiramagan fasa*”², Djoss Diabaté once demonstrated that it was the same as “*Allah là ke*” by playing his guitar parts against the recording, as in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1. Djoss's three parts for “*Allah là ke*”.

While Charry discusses many characteristics of “*Allah là ke*”, one feature provides the basis of Djoss's first part or *kumbengo*, which I have notated in the lowest staff in Figure 3, allowing him to coordinate his playing with “*Tiramagan fasa*”. A melodic line

² *An bè kelen / We are One: Griot Music from Mali* (1994), Pan Records, B0000036ZZ.

descending from F' to D' to C' and then moving back up to D' (Charry 2000: 175) is evident in Djoss's part, acting as a key phrase or "the point to which all variation must return" (Durán 1981: 186). His two other parts are substitute phrases that include some varied elements of this key phrase. Each part returns to the key phrase at different points of the cycle, including the downbeat of beat 1 and the offbeat of beat 2, while the pitch-levels do not match in other places, thereby creating varying degrees of dissonance, especially at the ends of phrases. As a matter of practice, these parts can either be played simultaneously or in succession, though the first part is most significant and serves as an introduction in many cases. *Birimintingo* or "variation and embellishment" (Durán 1981: 186) occurs when players vary their parts in combination or play extended solos over these basic grooves. The second half of the second part notated on the middle staff of Figure 1 exemplifies *birimintingo* as "a descending melodic run" (Charry 2000: 314) that is formulaic and idiomatic and is most frequently improvised.

As a piece of shared repertoire, griot-music centred groups, including Source, Super Mande, Kakande, and The Mandingo Ambassadors, frequently perform "*Allah la ke*" either as an instrumental or with vocals. In 2006, as a participant-observer I played "*Allah la ke*" as "Tiramagan *fasa*" at a Mande concert party with Tapani Sissoko, Djoss Diabaté, and Famoro Dioubaté. Between 2006 and 2007, Famoro recorded "*Kakande*", which recycles the basic parts for "*Allah la ke*" and invokes a praise of God in its first vocal refrain (*donkili*). Djoss performed "*Allah la ke*" with Sean Noonan and members of Brewed by Noon during their collaboration, while Yacouba Sissoko has performed it as a solo piece. In all of these instances, the three parts for "*Allah la ke*", can be or have been adapted or recomposed, thereby providing a basis for socio-musical interpretation. While the *donkili* helps identify songs in the repertoire, these instrumental parts or *kumbengolu*, which act as versions of named pieces (Charry 2000: 314), are more crucial in this collaborative trade, suggesting *jeliya* as a verbal art is reconstituted as an exclusively instrumental practice in these contexts (see Figure 2. "*Allah la ke*" with vocal refrain as performed by Djoss Diabaté). In some cases, musicians learn parts from recordings in order to further enhance or augment their understanding of *foli*, adapting phrases and figures for different instruments, including flute, guitar, keyboard, and drum sequencer (BOSS DR-5). As Djoss and others acknowledged, processes of adaptation and recomposition allow musicians to continuously create from a finite set of resources, which expands as players engage in collaboration.

Figure 2 shows a musical score for the piece "Allah la ke" with a vocal refrain, as performed by Djoss. The score is written in 4/4 time and consists of three systems of staves. The first system (measures 1-4) includes the vocal line "Allah l'aka e ah a mofa ke" and accompaniment. The second system (measures 5-8) includes the vocal line "ko be ke ba le Allah! Allah bara jo" and accompaniment. The third system (measures 9-12) includes the vocal line "to tien la" and accompaniment. The score features a complex rhythmic accompaniment with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes.

Figure 2. "Allah la ke" with vocal refrain as performed by Djoss.

Djoss Diabaté's piece "Nama", the melody of which he learned from his mother as a child, is a highlight of the Super Mande's concert performances. "Nama" is the Mande word for hyena, though the work commemorates the great farmer as a provider in Mande communities. In 2003 Djoss recorded "Nama" on his debut CD *Haklima* where his version of this work juxtaposes two variants of this piece. Source performs a rendition of "Nama" which can be heard at opening of the track, while Super Mande uses the groove that commences once the introduction has concluded. In either version or variant, Djoss sings two refrains, which I have set against the two contrasting instrumental patterns in Figure 3.

While both accompaniments are 16 beats in length, Djoss explained that the Super Mande variant has more tones than the Source groove, which consists of only two tones (D in mm. 2-3 and 6-7 and E in mm. 1, 4, 5, and 8). These tones are not emphasized in the accompaniment, though bassist Mamadou Ba plays D and E against Djoss's part when Source performs "Nama" at the Zinc Bar. The Super Mande groove, which I learned from Famoro, is comprised of six tones, which are paired with their respective fifths and octave duplications in a manner comparable to many balafon (and guitar) accompaniments. This pattern follows a cycle of descending thirds (C-A-F-D-G-E), which is interrupted by an ascending fourth between the roots D and G.

The figure displays a musical score for the piece "Nama". It consists of three systems of staves. The first system includes a vocal line and two instrumental lines labeled "Super Mande" and "Source". The second system continues the instrumental parts, with a measure number "5" at the beginning of the Super Mande line. The third system shows further instrumental development. The vocal line features two distinct refrains, each consisting of a melodic phrase followed by a rest. The instrumental parts are written in a style that suggests a 16-beat structure, with various rhythmic patterns and melodic lines.

Figure 3. Two instrumental variants of "Nama" with vocal refrains as performed by Djoss.

In "Nama", two different *kumbengolu* are set against the same *donkili* or song melodies, while in "Allah la ke" as with many other works, a set of parts is recycled in order to create a new piece. "Although the concept of harmonic pattern is not explicitly verbalized" (Charry 2000: 168), Djoss indicates differences of tonal progression in the two variants of "Nama". While the Source variant uses a bipartite phrase, which Knight distinguishes from single form parts, the Super Mande accompaniment does

not adhere to either of these categorizations. Most pieces contain melodic-rhythmic progressions of two to four tones, which act as an aural marker in performance. With six tones, Super Mande's "Nama" exhibits a degree of tonal complexity that creates challenges for some musicians, including Djoss who relies upon the instrumentalists in Super Mande to play them while he sings. "Allah l'a ke" and the two variants of "Nama" act as independent *kumbengolu*, which neither replicate nor derive from parts of the *donkili*. Like "Sunjata", since these instrumental parts "bear no melodic relationship to the *donkili*" (Knight 1984: 23), players continue to adapt and recycle them in varied interpretations of the same work or in different pieces.

Conclusion

It is difficult to imagine the stylistic continuums of world music or world beat without Mande musicians. Since the 1980s, these artists, including Salif Keita, Ali Farka Touré, and Toumani Diabaté, have acted as vanguards of African popular music. Their musical pedigree and skill as performers are unparalleled, while their repertoires have embodied a wellspring of resources for them and others. They lie at the center of the debate over the appropriation and commodification of African idioms in the world marketplace. As previously mentioned, griots promote their art as a musical practice in order to reach new sources of patronage. For them, *jeliya* can serve as a commodity to be bought and sold, while it retains its original meaning(s) and significance in traditional environments such as transition rites celebrations and Mande concert parties. In considering contextual restraints, hereditary professionals choose how best to use their resources in different types of collaborative relationships. Above all, collaboration with non-griots in particular has come to characterize diasporic *jeliya* as a collaborative trade, distinguishing it from the *jeli* profession as a strictly hereditary or endogamous practice.

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Toumani Diabaté

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Kasse Mady Diabaté

1994 *Kela Tradition*, Sterns, B000000JQIX

Bembeya Jazz National

2000 *Bembeya Jazz National: Hommage à Demba Camara*, Syllart Productions, 38201-2.

Keba "Bobo" Cissoko

2001 *Tamalalou*, Tamalalou Music.

Various Artists

2002 *Badenya: Manden Jaliya in New York City*, Smithsonian Folkways, SFW 40494.

Fula Flute

2002 *Fula Flute*, Blue Monster Records, BM002.

Dallam Dougou

2003 *New Dwellings*, Jumbie Records, JMB003.

Djoss Diabaté

2004 *Haklima*, Goin' Native, GN0105.

Various Artists

2004 *Mandekalou: Art and Soul of Mande Griots*, Syllart/Melodie, 79663-2.

Source with Abdoulaye Diabaté

2004 *Tonight's African Jazz Band*, Completely Nuts Records, CTN-001.

Various Artists

2005 *Golden Afrique Vol. 1, 2* Compact Discs, World Network, LC 06759.

Various Artists

2006 *Mandekalou: Art and Soul of Mande Griots II*, Syllart/Melodie, 6128672.

Kakande

2008 *Dununya*, Jumbie Records, JMB0008.

Fula Flute

2008 *Mansa America*, Completely Nuts Records, CTN-002.

Appendix

I. Griots and Collaborators

Mande Griots in New York

Keba “Bobo” Cissoko (kora and vocals)
 Moussa Cissoko (guitar)
 Abdoulaye “Djoss” Diabaté (guitar and vocals)
 Missia Diabaté (vocalist)
 Famoro Dioubaté (balafon)
 Djekorea Mory Kanté (guitar)
 Balla Kouyaté (balafon)
 Baye Kouyaté (percussion and vocals)
 Ismael “Bon Fils” Kouyaté (vocalist)
 Mackane Kouyaté (djembe)
 Mamadi “Djelike” Kouyaté (guitar)
 Tapani Sissoko (vocalist)
 Yacouba Sissoko (kora)
 Ibrahim Soumano (electric guitar)
 Salieu Suso (kora)
 Abou Sylla (balafon)
 Ibrahim Sylla (guitar and vocals)

Non-African Collaborators

Andy Algire (drums, balafon, and keyboard)
 Peter Apfelbaum (multi-instrumentalist composer)
 John Benitez (bass)
 Shai Bachar (keyboard)
 Robert Bonhomme (drums)
 Don Byron (multi-instrumentalist composer)
 Regina Carter (jazz vocalist)
 Nick Cudahy (bass)
 Sean Dixon (drums)
 Oran Etkin (bass clarinet and saxophone)
 Peter Fand (acoustic bass, electric bass, and kora)
 Avrom Fefer (sax and clarinet)
 Sylvain Leroux (flute, sax, tambin, and guitar)
 Tzafrir Lichtenstein (drums)
 Kalman “Osci” Magyar (fiddle)
 Sean Noonan (drums)
 Raul Rothblatt (cello and vocals)
 Joe Sanders (acoustic bass)

Tom Van Buren (scholar and producer)
 Daniel "Lezardo" Villaneuve (congas)
 Emi Yabuno (piano)

Non-Griot African Collaborators

Azouhouni Adou (keyboard)
 Abdoulaye Alahassane (guitar)
 Mamadou Ba (electric bass)
 Cheik Barry (electric bass)
 Petit Condé (guitar)
 Mamadi Doumbaya (electric guitar)
 Fred Doumbe (electric bass)
 Lionel Loueke (guitar)
 Kewulah Kamara (poet and dancer)
 Emile Soumah (vocalist)
 Bailo Bah (tambin and vocals)

II. Three Types of Collaboration in the Griot Trade in New York

1) Research-Oriented Collaboration

Banning Eyre
 Tom Van Buren

2) Griots as a Compositional Resource

Dallam Dougou:

Abdoulaye "Djoss" Diabaté, Famoro Dioubaté, Avrom Fefer, Sylvain Leroux,
 Tzafrir Lichtenstein, Kalman "Osci" Magyar and Raul Rothblatt (leader).

Group Kelenia:

Oran Etkin (leader), John Benitez, Abdoulaye Diabaté, Lionel Loueke, Balla
 Kouyaté, Mackane Kouyaté and Joe Sanders.

3) Griot Music-Centered Groups

Keba "Bobo" Cissoko and Tamalalou:

Keba "Bobo" Cissoko (leader), Bailo Bah, Abdoulaye 'Djoss' Diabaté, Famoro
 Dioubaté, Peter Fand, Sylvain Leroux and Yacouba Sissoko.

Fula Flute:

Keba "Bobo" Cissoko, Bailo Bah, Abdoulaye "Djoss" Diabaté, Famoro
 Dioubaté, Peter Fand, Sylvain Leroux (leader) and Yacouba Sissoko.

Source featuring Abdoulaye "Djoss" Diabaté:

Azouhouni Adou, Andy Algire, Mamadou Ba, Shai Bachar, Bailo Bah,
 Moussa Cissoko, Petit Condé, Abdoulaye "Djoss" Diabaté, Fred Doumbe,
 Djekorea Mory Kanté, Sylvain Leroux (leader), Daniel "Lezardo" Villaneuve
 and Emi Yabuno.

Abdoulaye "Djoss" Diabaté and Super Mande:

Andy Algire, Cheik Barry, Moussa Cissoko, Abdoulaye “Djoss” Diabaté (leader), Famoro Dioubaté, Sylvain Leroux, Yacouba Sissoko, Ibrahim Soumano and Abou Sylla.

Kakande:

Missia Diabaté, Famoro Dioubaté (leader), Sean Dixon, Peter Fand, Brian Glashow, Avrom Fefer, Sylvain Leroux, Mamadi “Djelike” Kouyaté, Raul Rothblatt and Yacouba Sissoko.

The Mandingo Ambassadors:

Andy Algire, Nick Cudahy, Oran Etkin, Brian Glashow, Ismael “Bon Fils” Kouyaté, Mamadi “Djelike” Kouyaté, Sylvain Leroux, Emile Soumah and Mamadi Doumbouya.