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A PROBLEM OF RITUAL SYMBOLISM AND SOCIAL
ORGANIZATION AMONG THE DIOLA-BANDIAL

Francis G. Snyder

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AMONG THE DIOLA-BANDIAL

Francis G. Snyder

ORGANIZATION

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A PROBLEM IN THE RITUAL SYMBOLISM AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

OF THE DIOLA-BANIAL¹

by Francis G. Snyder⁺⁺

Introduction

In his admirable essay on "Ritual Man in Africa," Horton (1964) argues that in rural African societies religion is an important way of conceptualizing the world. A religious system is an explanatory model designed to demonstrate the principles of order and regularity underlying the flux of everyday life. Horton suggests, but does not pursue, an approach to the study of ritual that bears striking resemblances to such structural analyses as Needham's (1960) note on Meru symbolism. In this paper I want to explore this line of inquiry with respect to some aspects of the relationship between ritual symbolism and social organization among the Diola-Bandial people of Senegal.

It is appropriate first to situate this paper briefly in its broader theoretical context. The empirical data upon which this essay is based are drawn from field research on Diola land law

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in 1970 as part of a long-term research project on law and social change in Diola society. A major objective of this initial field work was to study through Diola categories the acquisition, transfer, and use of land and hence to begin to grasp the relationship between the various forms of social control in this society without imposing foreign concepts or categories. In order to minimize ethnocentric bias I gathered data on all aspects of social life relating to land. In addition to its intrinsic contribution to an understanding of the normative aspects of Diola land law, such a study of the norms concerning an area of life which is centrally important in this agricultural society seemed a precondition to any adequate research on dispute settlement, its relationship to other forms of social control, and the role of norms in dispute settlement processes. However, it cannot be sufficiently emphasized that these two approaches are complementary and not mutually exclusive. This method of research also cast its net widely enough to elucidate legally relevant phenomena in a society strikingly different from our own. Diola-Bandial social structure is relatively undifferentiated, and shrines constitute a principal locus of social control. In such a society an inquiry into the relationship between ritual and social organization is essential for an understanding of legal norms and processes.

The question which provoked this paper is simply stated: What is the meaning of a Bandial pre-cultivation ritual which signals the transference from wife to husband of the responsibility for providing food for the children of the household?

As briefly described by Thomas (1985-59, I:246-47,272) and more summarily by Pélissier (1966:686), the garumo, celebrated annually in late May just before the planting of rice nurseries marks the beginning of the period when the husband in the Bandial household undertakes to feed the children from rice stored in his granary. This obligation lasts until the coming of the rice harvest, usually in October or November (though, according to Thomas [1958-59, I:272], in some villages it lasts until February), when the wife assumes this responsibility until the next garumo. Garumo is apparently limited to those restricted parts of the Lower Casamance region where women, as well as men, "possess" ricefields (Thomas, 1958-59, I:246). The only other, equally brief mention of the garumo in the literature is by Girard (1969:126) in a discussion of royal shrines. Yet when I witnessed the careful preparations for the garumo and the ritual itself, I was struck by the singular importance attached to it by the Bandial. Further, with one exception (Pélissier, 1966:686)², there is no indication in the literature as to the specific point in the year when this domestic responsibility returns from husband to wife. From my data it is clear that this other point of transition is marked by a first-fruits ritual called bowon. Subsequent puzzling over the correlation led to this analysis.

Curiously, except for a notable recent article (Sapir, 1970), little attention has been paid in studies of the Diola (Snyder, 1971a) to the interrelationship between

agriculture, ritual, and social organization. By considering garumo and bawny together, I want here to try, in an admittedly incomplete fashion, to clarify the role of ritual in Diola-Bandial society. Since my fieldwork was particularly concerned with land law, I shall also pay some attention to the consequences of ritual for land tenure and social control. However, for three reasons this paper must be considered as a partial effort. First, I shall be concerned with only one of the aspects of religion dwelt upon by Horton. Leaving aside morphological questions, which Thomas (1958-59, II:581-771) has discussed elsewhere, I shall devote my attention to the relationship of one aspect of religion, viz. ritual, to social organization. Secondly, as my fieldwork did not bear directly on ritual, I do not have complete descriptions of all Diola-Bandial rituals, although I witnessed several agricultural rituals and obtained descriptions of others. Thirdly, of the rituals on which I have some data, I have selected two of them for consideration here. I am well aware that this procedure controverts to some extent a canon of structuralist analysis (Levi-Strauss, 1958:40), and that "no one ritual ... is fully intelligible without reference to the whole series of rituals" (Wilson, 1957:4). Ordering a mass of field data is a large task, and I hope at some later date to consider Diola-Bandial rituals as a whole. For purposes of this paper, however, I think the data presented here is sufficient to stand

alone. Consideration of additional rituals would of course provide an additional wealth of evidence, but it would not, it seems to me, alter the general validity of this argument. After a brief sketch of Diola-Bandial Society, I shall describe bawo and garumo and then show how the symbolism of these rituals is related to Bandial social organization.

Diola-Bandial Society

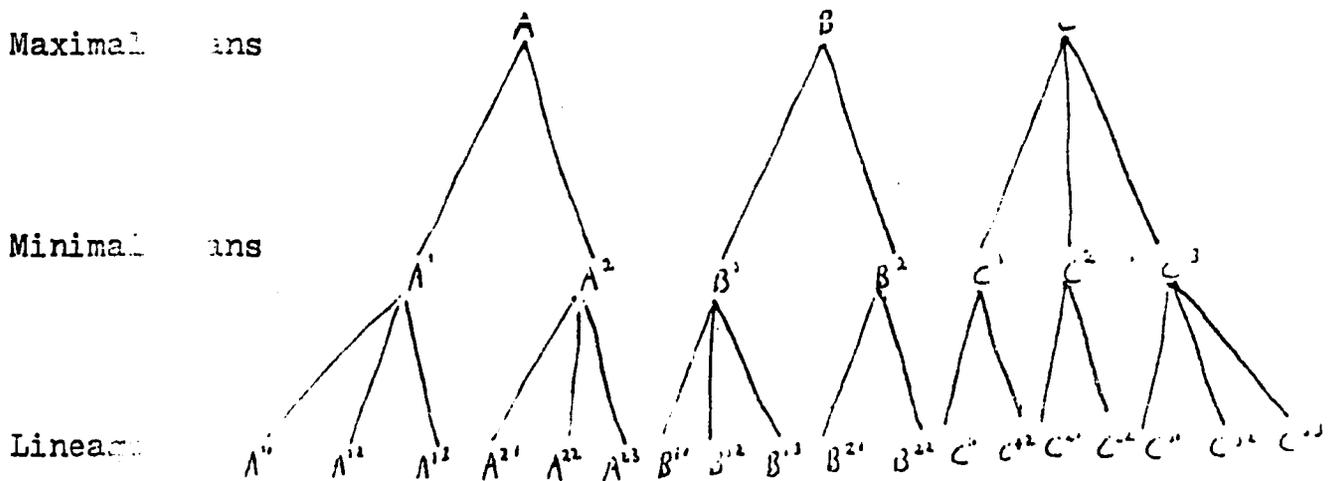
The Diola comprise approximately 150,000 to 200,000 persons in the Lower Casamance area of Senegal between Gambia and Bissau Guinea. Located at 12°15' to 13° north latitude and 16° to 17° west longitude, this region has an area of about 7500 square kilometers and is divided longitudinally by the Casamance River which flows from the Futa-Jalon mountains in Guinea to the ocean. As general studies of the Diola (Pélissier, 1966; Thomas, 1958-59) make clear, north of the river live the predominantly Islamized Diola who combine the cultivation of peanuts, Senegal's main cash crop, with that of wet rice, for centuries the staple diet and basis of Diola life. The area south of the river is inhabited by Diola who in large part remain faithful to the religion of their ancestors and cultivate wet-rice almost exclusively. Though most Diola speak dialects of a West Atlantic language which exhibit common grammatical processes and share a limited number of lexical items, some of the dialects are mutually

incomprehensible. Given the current state of research on this area, dialect remains the most convenient criterion for distinguishing one Diola sub-group from another.

The dialect of the sub-group south of the river with whom this paper is concerned is known as Bandial (Sapir, 1965: map facing p. 1); the people themselves refer to it as gubanjalay ('the language of the Bandial'). According to Sapir (1971 and personal communication), this dialect includes several archaic grammatical and lexical forms. The Bandial region is thought to be one of the oldest Diola areas of settlement (Pelissier, 1966:663).

The Diola-Bandial inhabit the portion of the Lower Casamance lying about half-way between the two towns of Ziguinchor on the east and Oussouye on the west. Comprised of approximately 120 square kilometers, the area is bounded on the north by the Casamance River and on the south by the marigot, or stream, known as the marigot de Kailou ou de Nyassia and is cut by the marigot de Kamobeul. In addition, this region is composed of swampy, salt-water marshlands, with the land rising very gradually to a flat, sandy plain and then to slightly more elevated oil palm forests to the southwest. With the exception of these waterways and foot paths through the forest, the principal axis of transportation linking the Bandial to the outside world is a one-lane dirt road impracticable during the rainy season.

The approximately 4000 Bandial occupy ten sedentary villages, typically located between forest and plain or on slightly elevated areas in the swamps. In either case houses are usually adjacent to ricefields. Their society is patrilineal, although relationships between collaterals play a very important role in social life (Snyder, 1971b:22-27). The Bandial recognize three basic types of patrilineal kin groupings. The most inclusive is the fiil- (breast; pl.: guil) which are three in number. This named unit, which I shall refer to as a maximal clan, includes all patrilineal descendants: male and female, of an unspecified male ancestor. With some limited exceptions which are not relevant here, the maximal clan is of little importance in everyday life. At unknown points in the past these maximal clans fissioned to form units which I shall call minimal clans, or clans for simplicity's sake. According to the context, this unit is referred to as a fiil- or a yan- (house; pl.: sar-). The patronymic clans, of which there are seven, are non-localized and exogamous. They are further subdivided into very shallow localized patrilineages, rarely more than three generations in depth. The patrilineage is, according to context, termed yan- or simply referred to by the name of its eldest living male member. Patrilineages of any given clan may be scattered throughout the nine villages. With one exception, every village includes at least lineages from two different clans. The following diagram represents this structure:

Diagram I: Bandial Patrilineal Groups

Intimately associated with the well-being of the Bandial people and the fertility of their land are the health and religious powers of the king (əwi). Since this personage is today exclusively a ritual figure, the term 'king' is inexact, and it is used here only for convenience. The Bandial area is known to its inhabitants as 'the land, or area, of the king' (məf əwi). The kingship alternates from one generation to the next between two lineages, which I shall refer to as royal lineages. Residing in different villages, the royal lineages belong to the same maximal clan but, as a result of fission, to different minimal clans within it. The king is aided during his term in office by an assistant, normally the eldest son of the former king, hence from the lineage temporarily out of office. Should an interim arise,

as was the case in 1970 since the death of the king several years ago, this assistant fills the office until a new king is chosen. This pattern of ritual superordination in combination with a relatively acephalous political structure is too well-known in African societies (Beattie, 1968; Mair, 1970) to require further description here.

The Bandial share with other Diola (cf. Linares de Sapir, 1970) a highly developed system of rice cultivation including transplanting of young plants from rice nurseries to prepared fields, the use of dikes for water control, fertilization of a fulcrum shovel as the principal agricultural tool, and, in the past, the clearing and desalination of swamp to provide additional riceland. Unlike other parts of the Casamance, in the Bandial area women as well as men receive ricefields at the time of their marriage. The labor of rice cultivation is shared between men and women, each spouse helping on the land of the other from the planting of nurseries in June until fields are harvested in November. The product of each person's fields is typically stored in a personal granary, though married women may store rice from their fields in their father's house.

Two Agricultural Rituals

In this section I shall describe each ritual of interest to us here, first garumo and then bawig.

Garumo is overtly a rain-making ritual, which takes place in late May or early June before the planting of rice nurseries. It originated, informants say, with Atula, the mythological first man on earth.³ The ritual involves two types of shrines. The first is the lineage shrine ufulu, one for each shallow localized patrilineage in the kingdom. In addition to its role in garumo, this shrine is linked with the children which women of the patrilineage have borne after marriage into other lineages. After each child is born, the out-marrying female returns to this shrine of her lineage of origin to offer palm wine and pray for her child's health. Late each spring it is the scene of a simple patrilineage ritual to ask for rain for the next cultivating season. This shrine was putatively established by the members of each lineage when they migrated into the area where they now live.

The second type is the royal shrine buyut, which is unique in the kingdom. I have no data concerning the construction of this shrine. Since a royal shrine is involved in garumo, the overseeing and coordination of the ritual as a whole rests with the royal lineage of the current king, or, as in 1970, of his substitute. According to oral tradition, such has always been the case.

The annual garumo ritual lasts two days. At the end of May the middle brother of three in the royal lineage 'A'

currently in office, a man of fifty, visited each household to announce the dates for the ritual. Then, on the morning of June 7th, the first day of garumo, each lineage in each village of the kingdom met at its lineage shrine. Each group included male agnates resident in the village, usually in adjacent households, and females born into this group who have married into another group. In this respect the royal lineages did not differ from non-royal lineages. Agnatic collaterals from each royal lineage congregated at their particular lineage shrine. Note that membership in these groupings is defined by kinship. At each shrine were offered palm wine and boiled rice, and prayers were said for rain and a plentiful crop in the approaching cultivating season. Only males provide palm wine as an offering; females brought the cooked rice. That afternoon each lineage met again at its shrine for discussions of lineage matters and drinking palm wine.

In two essential respects the activity of the royal lineage 'A' then in power differed from that of other lineages. First, acting in the place of the recently deceased king (who had come from the other royal lineage 'B'), the eldest male of this group went in the afternoon of the first day to the royal shrine buyut located in a clearing in the forest near the households of lineage 'A'. On behalf of the Bandial people, he offered there the culinary delicacy called gatts,

boiled rice covered with a reddish-orange palm oil sauce, followed by palm wine, milk, and water from the royal pond called Baobab pond (Garingabah).⁴ Secondly, having completed these offerings he walked to the village 'Y' of residence of the other royal lineage 'B'. According to oral tradition, village 'B' was the original site of the kingship. 'A' 's lineage shrine in the village 'X' of 'A' 's current residence is an offshoot of its similar lineage shrine in village 'Y'. There the elder offered palm wine and boiled rice to his lineage shrine, located adjacent to 'B''s lineage shrine in the sacred forest, and sat to drink palm wine with elders of the other royal lineage.

In the morning of the following day, men from throughout the kingdom brought palm wine to the household of this royal elder acting as substitute for the king. I could discern no principle underlying the organization of this group except residence in the kingdom, hence ritual allegiance to the kingship, and available palm wine. It included some men from practically all of the nine villages but by no means all males in the kingdom. That afternoon they met in a clearing in front of the elder's house to talk, sing, and drink palm wine. About four o'clock that afternoon women from scattered villages in the kingdom assembled on the veranda of the house to drink, talk, sing, and dance. The gathering terminated about two hours later when most of the men present dispersed into the forest to harvest palm wine.

Unlike garumo, bawaj is not, to my knowledge, mentioned anywhere in the ethnographic literature on the Diola. Bawaj is a first-fruits ritual which takes place at the beginning of the rice harvest in October or November. Each of the nine villages in the kingdom has a bawaj shrine. Each bawaj shrine is located in that part of the village nearest the ricefields so it can "watch over the ricefields," as one informant put it. The establishment of each shrine was ascribed by informants to the men in each village where the shrine is located. I have no information as to whether these separate shrines were created contemporaneously, though this seems unlikely. After the construction of each shrine the men of the village entrusted one elder of the village with its control. This elder is also responsible for coordinating the bawaj ritual. In the case of each shrine the contemporary holder is deemed to be a patrilineal descendant of the original holder. However, in the village where I resided, the current holder of the shrine was able to trace his authority only through his father to his father's father, a fact consistent with the extremely shallow nature of Diola-Bandial lineages. In each instance for which I have data, control of the shrine rests with a non-royal lineage. No single clan controls all of the shrines.

When in late October or early November the first rice begins to ripen in the fields, the person in control of the shrine summons the other men of the village. Each man cuts

a handful of new rice and brings it to the shrine, together with an offering of palm wine. Note that participants in this ritual are determined on the basis of sex and residence rather than kinship. Part of the new rice and the palm wine is poured at the shrine, and prayers of thanksgiving for the harvest and for continued good health are offered. The remainder of the rice is cooked at the shrine and consumed in common, with the palm wine, by those present. Once these ceremonies have been accomplished and the holder of the shrine has symbolically deposited a handful of rice in his granary, each person may, with members of his household, begin to harvest and transport the rice from his fields to the household granaries.

A person who fails to observe bawon and anticipates the harvest is subject to two sanctions. First, since he is deemed to have offended the shrine and the earth, it is thought that next year his fields will lose strength and not produce sufficient rice to feed his family. Secondly, he risks being accused of sorcery and being caught by the shrine. A holder of the bawon shrine described this procedure as follows:

One day you will be caught by the shrine. You will arrive at the shrine where the men are, and you speak to them without drinking the palm wine....You say, 'I did such and such a thing, I did such and such a thing...' No one says anything; they merely watch you and listen. When you have finished speaking, the person in charge of the bawon shrine is called, and he looks for some earth. He pours palm wine in the hole of the shrine; and then he brings the earth and touches you with it. And you say everything that is in your head about what you have done. When you have finished, you stop. That day you will tell everything that you have done in the night as a sorcerer. And when you have finished, you sit down in good health.]

It may be thought that by virtue of the shrine the holder is endowed by a power of making accusations and eliciting confessions. This is not the way the Bandial see it. In their view, once a person has offended the spirit of the shrine, he will inevitably be caught by the shrine sooner or later. My informant vehemently denied that the shrine holder had such powers as a prerequisite for or by virtue of his control of the shrine.

I asked the appropriate ritual specialists and various laymen to interpret the significance of garumo and bawon. Garumo has three basic aspects. First, the senior elder from the royal lineage in the village of my residence explicitly likened it to Easter, saying that it was the most important indigenous ceremony just as Easter was the most important Christian ceremony.

Secondly, overtly a royal rain-making ritual, garumo heralds the approach of the rainy season. To each season corresponds a distinct pattern of economic activity. During the rainy season the bulk of all work related to ricefields is carried on. This includes the planting of rice nurseries, labor on the ricefields, transplanting of young rice plants from nurseries to fields, fertilizing, weeding, and additional required labor in the fields.

Thirdly, in two respects garumo signals a basic change in Diola attitudes toward land. Informants often remarked that one of the purposes of garumo was to remind each man of

the imminent cultivating season and, by extension, the attitudes toward property which were properly its incidents. Thus, as one royal elder admonished:

This celebration is done to remind people that each must remember his ricefields. You occupy a place; it is yours alone. You have your fields, so you know that each person must go to cultivate his fields during the rainy season...That does not mean that you can cultivate just any ricefield...You must not cultivate the ricefields of another person.

In addition to stressing the propriety and indeed the necessity of re-asserting one's claims to fields, used in the dry season for common pasture as well as paths, garumo implicitly re-asserts the distinction between royal and non-royal lineages with respect to land. In practically the same breath, this royal elder made the point that, with the approach of the rains, commoners should remember that during the rainy season they would cultivate the fields of the king and their wives would transplant and harvest these fields.

Thirdly, after the garumo the father of the household assumes responsibility for feeding his children from his granary. From the child's birth until the appearance of his first teeth, when he undergoes the gacinen ceremony, he is completely in the care of his mother and has relatively little contact with his father. Since divorce is fairly frequent in Bandial society, the child may even be physically removed from his father if the mother has returned to live with her own patrilineage or has remarried. According to the rules of filiation, however, he remains the child of the man married

to the mother at the time the child was born. Once the gacingn rite of passage is completed, he is considered a person, though of course not mature. After the next garumo he will be fed with rice from his father's granary. Thus, in effect, though the Bandial did not specify this, the garumo operates as a means of calling in children born into the patrilineage but who may have been transported elsewhere as a result of the frequent divorces. In reinforcing the rules of filiation, it minimizes potential losses of new members by some existing lineages, while preventing potential gains by others.

Turning to bawaz, informants identified three major purposes or consequences. First, bawaz is a first-fruits ritual. It celebrates and expresses thanksgiving for the harvest. Hence, practically speaking, one of its most important consequences is that people are able to replenish their granaries and have newly harvested rice to eat.

Secondly, bawaz marks the point in the year at which responsibility for feeding children passes from husband to wife. One informant specified that "when the women have harvested a little and they say that the first rice is in the granary, each child rejoins his mother." Another person described this cycle more fully:

When the garumo ceremony arrives the child rejoins his father; he goes to his father's house. And when the garumo has been eaten and when we have finished cultivating, at the time when the rice begins to ripen, the child returns to his mother. He stays there until another garumo.

Just as garumo reinforces the link between father and child, so bawaz reinforces those between mother's brothers and sister's children.

Together with garumo, bawaz serves to equalize the loss of rice from the separate granaries of the spouses and, by extension, of their lineages of origin.

Thirdly, like garumo, bawaz signals a change of season and corresponding economic activities and attitudes. This ritual indicates the end of the rainy season and the beginning of the dry season. The period of rice cultivation is finished, and, if the harvest is good, hunger gives way to plenty. The intense labor of the rainy season yields to more leisurely activities. Once the matured rice has been harvested and stored in granaries, the dry season is devoted to palm wine harvesting and gathering of oil palm nuts, oysters, wood, and straw. Fences are repaired, and basic tools such as knives, fulcrum shovels, and belts for climbing palm trees are put in order. The repairing of old houses and, if necessary, the construction of new ones also occupy a large portion of time. The dry season is the time for most weddings and funerals. Ricefields revert to use as pasture for cattle and as innumerable paths between villages.

Symbolism and Social Organization

We may now proceed to examine the relationship between the symbolism of these rituals and Bandial social organization. This analysis may conveniently be divided into two parts. The first will concern aspects of social organization which are symbolically reflected by characteristics of the rituals themselves. Secondly, more general symbolic correlations come to light if the rituals are considered as rites of intensification, to resuscitate Chapple and Coon's (1942:398,400,507-08) term.

From the description of garumo and bəwəŋ it is evident that within these two ceremonies one may in fact distinguish three discreet, analytically separable rituals. Each of these is associated with a different type of shrine. The garumo includes two different rituals, one which occurs at each of the separate patrilineage shrines and the other at the royal buyut shrine. Although it is a question of historical interest as to how these rituals came to be associated with each other in what is today considered as a single ceremony by the Bandial, I have no data on this matter and shall not speculate on it here. It will be useful for purposes of analysis to consider these three rituals separately in eliciting their particular characteristics and symbolic correlates, and then later to contrast garumo with bəwəŋ.

Let us consider first the locations of the shrines in each ritual. The bəwəŋ shrine in each village is located adjacent to the ricefields of the village, so it can protect the growing rice from harm. The garumo involves two shrines. The shrine of each patrilineage is typically found near the households of that kin group. The royal buyut shrine is located in the forest.

Secondly, the rituals may be contrasted with respect to the sex of the participants. Only men participate in bəwəŋ. Women do not contribute handfuls of rice, their presence is not necessary for the performance of the ritual, and they are not considered to have any voice in ritual affairs.

On the other hand, the ritual which takes place at patrilineage shrines at garumo includes both men and women, descendants of the same male ancestor at most two generations removed. Similarly, men and women were present at the royal elder's house on the second day of garumo, although, following usual Bandial practice, they congregated at a short distance from each other and mixed only late in the afternoon. Only the ritual king, or his substitute, is present at the buyut shrine. It is significant in this respect that the king is considered a being without physical, including sexual, needs, i.e., that he either has no sex or combines both sexes.

Thirdly, we may contrast the rituals further with respect to the organizational principle underlying the social grouping which in each case constitutes a unit for ritual purposes. The operative principle in the case of bawo is that of residence. The men who participate in this ritual are those resident in the village where the shrine is located. The garumo involves two distinct social groupings, each associated with a particular type of shrine. First are the individual patrilineages, based on kinship. The second is in fact the king, symbol of the kingdom. Like the Iraqw county described by Winter (1966:169-71), the Bandial kingdom is a social unit defined and organized in purely ritual terms. For our purposes we may take ritual as the principle upon which the buyut grouping is based.

We may, however, push this analysis further to elucidate the nature of the Bandial kingdom. Among the Iraqw the result of organization according to a ritual principle is the creation of distinct corporate groups, i.e., county councils of elders (Winter, 1966: 163-64,170). In the case of the Bandial garumo there is no corporate entity (apart from kin groups) which is responsible for ritual. Although I cannot be absolutely certain on the basis of my data, buyut appears to be a royal shrine personal to the king (or his substitute) and not a shrine of either (or both) royal patrilineage(s). I can go no further here than to say that the king, or his substitute, makes offerings and invocations at buyut on behalf of, and as a symbol of, the Bandial people.

Fourthly, the spatial bases of these social units may also be distinguished. The spatial basis of bawaj is the village. That of the patrilineage shrines is the compound or general area where houses of patrilineage members are usually constructed. That of buyut is the kingdom.

Finally, we may compare the offerings presented at each shrine. Palm wine, which is offered and consumed at almost every Bandial ritual or gathering, is common to all three. In addition, freshly cut, uncooked rice is offered at bawaj. During the garumo each patrilineage shrine receives cooked rice and palm wine. Buyut is offered gatɔs (cooked rice with palm oil sauce), palm wine, water from the royal pond, and milk, according to Thomas (1963) a beverage reserved

This discussion may be summarized by arranging the contrasts among the rituals in a table of triadic symbolic classifications in which contrasting triads are analogously related. The contrasts are listed seriatim as they have been elicited.

Table I: Aspects of Garumo and Bəwəŋ Symbolism

<u>Bəwəŋ</u>	<u>Ufuluŋ</u>	<u>Buyut</u>
fields	household	forest
male	male and female	both or none
residence	kinship	ritual
village	compound	kingdom
palm wine	palm wine	palm wine
raw rice	cooked ric	gats
		royal water
		milk

Like other Diola (Thomas and Sapir, 1967:344-45), the Bandial divide the year (ɛmit; also glossed as sky, rain, God) into four parts: the dry season (fiyɛ; 'egg'); pl. guyɛ) from January to April; the period preceding the rains (bitiiŋar; -tiiŋ; 'to arrive') from May to mid-June; the rainy season (fujam; -jam; 'to hear') from mid-June to early October; and the harvest period (guwəŋen) from October to near the end of December. The year begins with the dry season as one informant suggested in describing the significance of bəwəŋ:

You must wait until your rice is mature, then you go pray at the shrine; and when you have finished you may eat your rice which you have cultivated. You will know that today the year is finished, today I am in the next year, that is why we have this shrine. It was done so that the day when the b₃w₃ŋ is celebrated, you know that today we begin to see the rice of a new year, that which have worked for the next year.

The new rice offering to the b₃w₃ŋ shrine is both the first fruits of the harvest and a symbol of the beginning year.

We may now collapse the distinction between the rituals at buyut and the patrilineage shrines and consider the garumo ceremony as a unit. Additional symbolic correlates emerge if we compare b₃w₃ŋ and garumo as rites of intensification, or points of transition, in the context of the annual agricultural cycle. In this cycle the two rituals, b₃w₃ŋ and garumo, are celebrated at opposite points in time. B₃w₃ŋ takes place during the harvest season: garumo is celebrated during the period preceding the rains. Taken together, these ceremonies divide the Bandial year into two fairly equal parts. Most obviously, one part encompasses the dry season and the other the rainy season. Looking at the agricultural cycle as a whole, we may, symbolically speaking, regard b₃w₃ŋ as analogous to a liminal period (Turner, 1967) separating the rainy season which has just finished from the dry season which is being completed from the approaching rainy season. The converse is true of garumo. This division of the year into two segments has two important correlates in Bandial society, one related to domestic responsibility, the other to the nature of authority.

At the outset of this essay I mentioned Thomas' (1958-59, I:246) remark that the garumo or some analogous ritual in the Lower Casamance occurs only in the limited areas where both women and men "possess" ricefields. This statement is significant, for there is in effect a close correlation between these two facts. Among the Bandial both male and female children receive ricefields from their father, in approximately equal numbers, at the time of marriage. By virtue of the rules of exogamy women marry out of their patrilineage residence group and into that of another such group from a different (minimal) clan. Bandial marriage is a fragile institution. After marriage females retain the patronym (gasaf-) of their lineage of origin rather than assuming that of their husband. Out-marrying females continue after marriage to participate in ritual and legal life of their lineage of origin. For example, in pre-colonial days they acted as intermediaries to obtain the return of lineage members captured during wars; today they are called upon to help settle disputes within the lineage. Agricultural labor is shared more or less equally between spouses. Each spouse has a separate granary where, after the harvest, the produce of his or her fields is stored. Finally, the responsibility for feeding the children of the household is shared equally between spouses. During the dry season rice to feed the children is taken from the wife's granary; in the wet season

cycle of domestic responsibility are garumo and bəwəŋ. Bəwəŋ marks the end of male responsibility and the start of female responsibility; the converse is true of garumo.

Why do men feed the children during the rainy season and women during the dry season? First, men typically have slightly larger ricefields than women and also may more easily acquire additional fields or rice by exchange with well-endowed kinsmen or neighbors. Hence they are better able to assure an adequate supply of food during the frequently difficult period in the late rainy season before new rice becomes available. Secondly, and equally importantly, the responsibility for the provision of food is related to the dual nature of authority. I shall argue that this relationship in Diola-Bandial society may be stated as wet : dry :: man : women :: ritual king : commoner.

Another writer (Girard, 1969:122) mentions an alternation in the locus of authority among the Bandial. He argues that the series of royal shrines, including buyut, are under the control of elders of the kingdom during the rainy season and under the control of the ritual king during the dry season. For several reasons, this statement seems to me to be both misleading and incorrect. First, while this author (1969:12) states that that the series of shrines he describes are "lineage" shrines, the exact composition of this social unit is not clear from his account. Secondly, on the basis of my data it seems to me important to distinguish among the various

shrines he mentions. Some, such as buyut, appear to be shrines personal to the king, perhaps originally associated with the maximal clan from which resulted the two current royal lineages plus a third of yet another minimal clan which formerly shared the kingship. Others, such as the ufuluŋ shrine, are clearly shrines of a specific royal patrilineage; each of the two royal patrilineages has such a shrine, as does each other patrilineage in the kingdom. Thirdly, it seems simply incorrect to say that non-royal elders control, at whatever time of the year, a royal shrine such as buyut. What is, or should be, at issue is not the differential control of a particular shrine but rather which of the dual and complementary aspects of the Bandial notion of authority takes precedence during a particular period. However, if Girard's statement is taken on this level, it seems to be no less incorrect. My data suggest that we must conclude the converse.

Several factors suggest that ritual authority is paramount during the rainy season, while secular power takes precedence during the dry season. First, during the rainy season the ritual king, the ultimate symbol of religious authority in Bandial society, is especially in evidence. Beginning with offerings and prayers at buyut during garumo, he may, depending on the amount of rainfall, accomplish periodic sacrifices and invocations of rain. Secondly, the royal buyut shrine is considered by the Bandial to be particularly sensitive

during the rainy season. Located in a clearing in the forest, this shrine is a hole in the ground about a foot square and approximately a foot and one-half deep. Periodically during the dry season the king offers palm wine to the shrine, and members of his patrilineage may help to clear away accumulated leaves. During the rainy season, however, no one is permitted to clear away these leaves. It is believed that such an interference with the shrine at this time would cause the rains to stop.

Thirdly, certain types of human intervention in the workings of natural forces are strictly prohibited during the rainy season, though they may be permitted during the dry season. The forest in which buyut is located in a sacred forest of one of the royal patrilineages. During the dry season no person except a member of this patrilineage may cut branches or trees or clear land in this forest. During the rainy season this injunction is extended to members of this group also. If they cut, clear, or take any natural growth from this forest during that time, the rains will stop. In these days of raincoats should anyone, royal or commoner, protect himself from the rains by anything more substantial than palm fronds, he may cause the rain to stop and be liable for a substantial fine, such as a cow, imposed by the king. Finally, to these ritual prohibitions which serve to emphasize the paramountcy of ritual authority during the rainy season are added important material supports

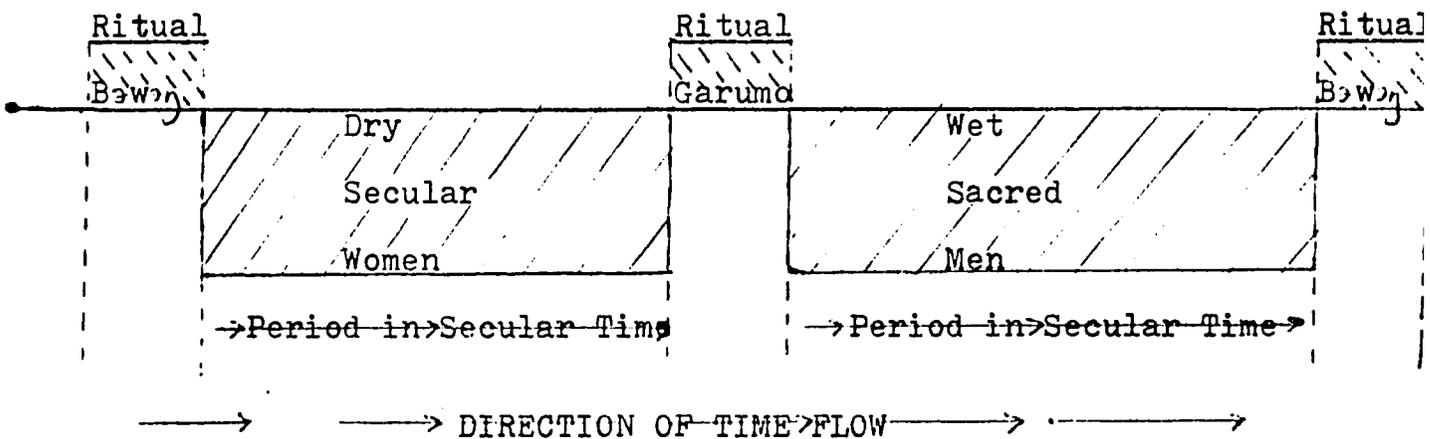
During this time commoner lineages transplant and cultivate the ricefields of the king. Any non-royal ricefields which are touched, however accidentally, by a fulcrum shovel used that same day in cultivating royal fields become immediately and irrevocably lost to their previous holder and belong to the king. In significant contrast, during the dry season these prohibitions, obligations, and dangers are inoperative.

According to Chapple and Coon (1942:507) one of the major characteristics of rites of intensification is that "they provide a dramatic representation of the habitual relationships of the individuals in the sets of which the system is composed." The dramatized relationships may be those relevant to, that is, operative during, the period just completed or which is about to begin. Those of bəwəŋ clearly refer to both of these times. Thanks are given for the successful harvest. The shrine holder symbolically transports some rice to his granary, as the other residents of the village will do in the days to come. The ritual king plays no special role, nor does either royal patrilineage. The social relationships, those based on residence, which are revealed in bəwəŋ are those operative primarily during the dry season. On the other hand, in garumo the relationships which take precedence during the rainy season are evident. The complementarity of ritual authority is reasserted. Kinship ties, which lie at the basis of the holding of riceland, are reaffirmed, as agnatic collaterals

assemble at the patrilineage shrines and children are recalled to the men who are the basis of the patrilineage. Male domestic responsibility and, consequently, economic influence take precedence over that of women during the season, just as royal ritual authority dominates in principle the secular authority of the elders at that time.

We may borrow from Leach (1968:134) and summarize these points in Table 2.

Table 2: Bəwŋ and Garumo in the Year



By its characteristics and its representation of the period which it precedes, each ritual implicates and symbolizes different, potentially contradictory aspects of social and political structure. Serving as symbolic and material points of transition or, in a more general sense, as symbolic boundaries between points in a calendar based upon agriculture, they act to order social, economic, and political life and so, if we may extend Douglas' (1966) argument, to minimize contradiction and conflict between of Bandial society.

Conclusion

In this essay I have considered two Diola-Bandial agricultural rituals in an attempt to clarify the role of ritual in Bandial society. The paper began with a paradox. The scanty discussion in anthropological literature of the royal rain-making ritual called garumo contrasted with the importance attached to it by the Bandial; the first-fruits ritual called bawəŋ, garumo's structural counterpoint, was not mentioned. Following a brief introduction to Diola-Bandial social organization, I described and analyzed these two rituals. The rituals were then compared and contrasted from two perspectives, first, with respect to their basic characteristics, where it was analytically useful to consider separately the rituals of the two discreet shrines involved in garumo, and, secondly, with respect to their positions year as points of transition in the agricultural year.

In their basic characteristic bawəŋ and garumo reveal and symbolically express certain basic structures of Bandial social and political organization. Building on ecological types, sexual roles, the principles of social and political grouping, and the basic economic goods of the society, these symbols, when systematically contrasted, form a series of analogously related triads. These relationships may be succinctly stated as

fields : household : forest :: male : male and female :
 hermaphrodite :: residence : kinship : ritual :: village
 compound : kingdom :: (eliminating the common element,
 palm wine) raw rice : cooked rice : gatus, milk, royal water.

As structural counterpoints in the agricultural year, bawu and garumo divide the year both materially and symbolically. These rituals mark the alternation of domestic responsibility between the spouses, the result of the relative equality of the sexes and of the nature of marriage as a link between the people and land of two shallow patrilineages. They also signal the transition between ritual authority and secular power, two complementary aspects of the Bandial conception of sovereignty. This explanatory model expressed in ritual takes as its basis the seasonal alternation between wet and dry. These relationships can be summarized as wet : dry :: male : female :: sacred : secular.

In their characteristics and as counterpoints the two rituals reflect fundamental principles of Bandial society. By giving them separate expression, on one hand, and acting as points of transition or symbolic boundaries between and hence separating periods when they are predominant, on the other, bawu and garumo serve to minimize both material and symbolic contradictions among them. The interesting contrast between the triadic symbolism of the shrines (bawu, buyut, ufulu) and the diadic symbolism of the ceremonies (bawu, garumo) would appear to be related to the development of the kingship. An answer to this question must await historical research.

The intimate material and symbolic association of rice and children in the rituals considered in this paper is not merely fortuitous. As the Bandial consistently and abundantly made clear, children and rice are considered to be the essential "products" and sources of wealth and prestige in Bandial society. The consideration of additional data and other rituals may suggest, perhaps, that these "goods" and their production lie at the basis of Bandial ritual symbolism. Available data do not permit such a conclusion at this point.

The sort of structural analysis which has been attempted in this paper is not of course the only way in which these rituals may be interpreted or understood. In particular, in order to focus on general relationships between symbolism and social organization I have not considered the effects of social change upon the two rituals. I think, however, that this analysis has elucidated some of the material and symbolic aspects of garumo and b>wj in Bandial life. In addition to providing at least a partial answer to the question with which we began, the paper has provided an occasion to examine some basic structures of Bandial society.

NOTES

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²According to Pelissier (1966:686), who as a geographer was more concerned with ecological variables than ethnography, the child is fed by the mother "between the ceremony of Kaffilo, which takes place in December or January, after the harvest, and the ceremony of Garoumo of the king of Elampor, the [descendant of] original head of the [Bandial] clan, which occurs at the end of May, at the end of the dry season". My data allows us to amend this statement as follows: (1) according to my data on the same area, the Gə(p)ilo shrine is not involved in this alternation of domestic responsibility. However, when on the afternoon of the second day of garumo the elders of the two royal lineages meet, they do so in the royal sacred forest called fuya Gə(p)ilo. (2) 'Elampor' should read 'Enampor;' this is the French rendition of the Bandial name 'Enapor'. (3) I have serious doubts that, other than perhaps mythologically, the Bandial ritual king is a descendant of the original clan, if any, from which the contemporary Bandial resulted as a consequence of the processes of fission. I would suggest instead that the kingship is a relatively recent phenomenon and that no satisfactory evidence has been adduced to indicate that in fact the clan, a term frequently used in the literature without being defined, from which kings are drawn was the first to settle in the area.

³Although I have no further information on this point, such a putative origin is evidence of its centrality in Bandial

life and seems to have important mythological referents, as Richard N. Henderson suggested. Further research in this direction would take into consideration the brief account by Tastevin (1934:244) of A-tut-au, of which the Bandial variant would seem to be ʒtula.

⁴Girard (1969:126) describes this offering. Details given there do not coincide with my data, and I have preferred to rely on information from my fieldwork.

⁵Unless otherwise specified, the original version of all quotations in this paper are in the Bandial dialect. All translations into English are mine. My field assistant, Leonard Tendeng, kindly provided the transcriptions of the originals and a first translation into French.

⁵Among the Islamized Fogny sub-group on the north bank of the river, the year begins with the rains (J. David Sapir, personal communication).

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