



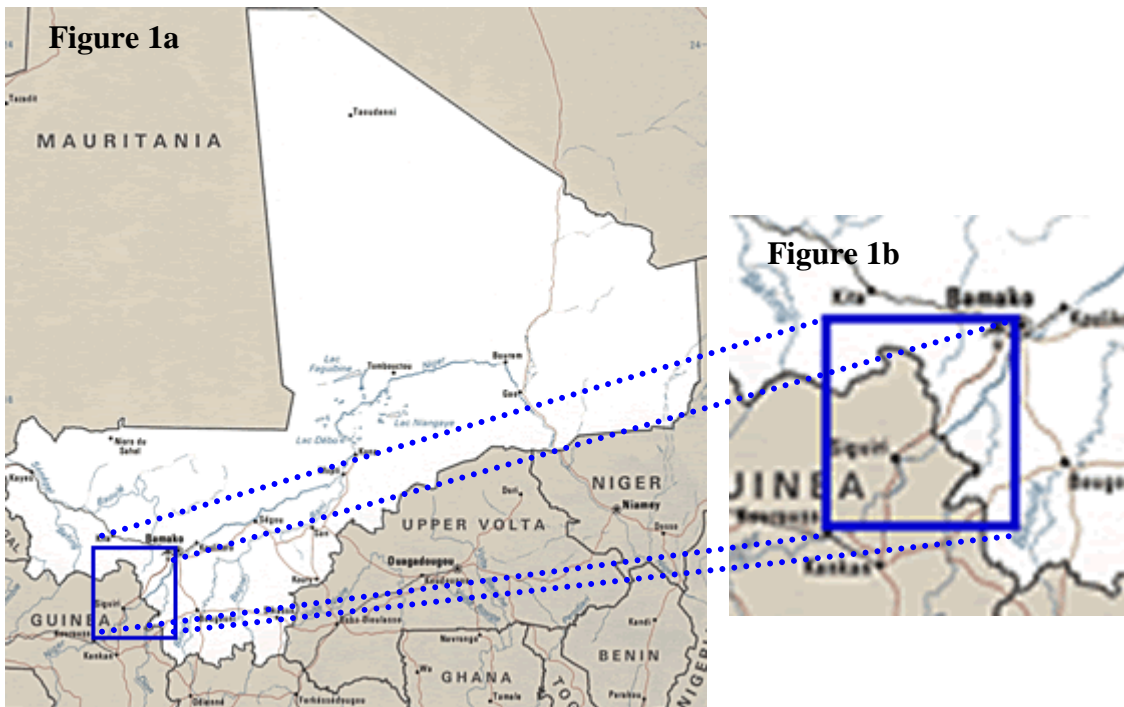
MANDE MUSIC

FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

DESIGNED & COMPILED BY: JESSE NOLAN

INTRODUCTION

The *Mande* are a people located in *Mali*, West Africa. Their empire, traditionally referred to as the Mande or Mali empire, was founded in the thirteenth century by *Sunjata Keita* and his followers. (This epic story is very important to traditional Mande music and it will be discussed later.) The Mande homeland is located along the upper Niger River between Bamako, the Mali capital, and the city of Kouroussa in northeastern Guinea. See Figure 1a & 1b.



When the Mande empire reached its height in the 14th century, it extended from Goa in East Africa and Timbuktu in the north, all the way to the Atlantic coast off of West Africa. Because the empire covered such a vast land area, many peoples dispersed and assimilated into various local cultures. Today, the descendents of these cultures make up the populations of many West African countries. In Senegal, the Mande are known as

The Gambia; in Guinea-Bassau they are known as *Mandinka*, and in Mali & Guinea, they are known as the *Maninka*, which is the traditional Mande sect and is the sect that this handbook will discuss.

Mande societies are characterized by a hereditary class of artisans called *nyamakala*. The *nyamakala* are then divided into 4 different sets of professions which are: blacksmiths/sculptors (*numu*), leatherworkers/potters (*garanke*), musical/verbal artists (*jeli*), & storytellers/orators (*finna, fino*). The interesting thing, however, about these different professions is that the musical/verbal artisans are not the only ones who make music. In fact, music is such a part of Mande culture that it exists in every profession in some form or another.

Music in Mande society is derived from the function that it serves. In other words, music serves a vital role in the historical, cultural, and social spheres of Mande society. It not only preserves Mande history and culture through *jeli* and *fino*, but it also serves a celebration purpose as well as an agricultural and life cycle purpose. The Mande also understand the importance of music as entertainment. Mande music culture encompasses the following 4 different divisions that call for professional musicians:

1. Music related to hunting associations and their legendary epics (such as the Sunjata epic). This music is played on the *simbi* or *ngone*, a seven-stringed gourd harp and is usually accompanied by sung poetic verse.
2. Music associated with rulers, warriors, traders, and other figures in Mande society, as well as special social and cultural events. This music is performed by the *jelis* on *balaphones* (xylophones), the *koni* (lute), and the *kora* (traditionally a 21-stringed harp).

3. Drumming associated with life cycles, agricultural, social, and cultural events.

This music is played on the *jembe* (*djembe*), a hand drum, and the *dundun* (*djun-djun*), a drum struck with a stick.

4. Modern Malian music played by members of the Mande culture. This music is dominated by the guitar, and draws from the other three types of music as well as from various forms of western music.

The first three types of Mande music are, in a sense, sacred because of the purpose that they serve. They are associated with important cultural events such as hunter's association celebrations, agricultural festivals, and oral epics that have been passed down for hundreds of years. These types of music require highly trained professional musicians, whose sole job it is to perfect their specific art of music making. Music is so important to Mande culture that the *jelis* have guarded their profession through endogamy. This means that *jelis* are not allowed to marry another person who is not a *jeli*, so as to guard Mande music and oral traditions.

MUSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Context/Performers

In order to properly discuss the context and performers of Mande music, one must first consider the 4 divisions of the music that have already been laid out in the previous section. Therefore, Mande music clearly falls into 3 different arenas which dictate the context of the musical performance. These are: Hunters associations; cultural, social, and special events; and orchestras and entertainment. Secondly, each sect of Mande music is performed by a distinct group of individuals. These groups are: Hunter's bards, Jeli, Drummers, and orchestras & modern musicians. The next section discusses the 4 groups and the 3 different arenas in which music is performed as well as the musicians involved in these performances.

Hunter's Music

Hunter's associations are perhaps the longest surviving associations in all of Mande culture. Since the Mande empire was founded in the early 13th century by the great hunter Sunjata Keita, hunters and hunters associations have maintained great importance in Mande society, so much so that they have an entire sect of music, as well as special musicians devoted to them. Hunter's music probably represents the oldest surviving Maninka melodic instrumental tradition.

The musicians that perform hunter's music are called *sora*, which roughly translates to "hunters bard." Unlike other artisans in Mande society, *sora* are not born into their position. In other words, the *sora* occupation is not hereditary like *jeli*. In fact

the sora occupation comes in harsh contrast to the jeli. First of all, soras are typically men, whereas jeli can be both men and women. Also, there are virtually no restrictions on becoming a sora and on what a person does once he becomes a sora. He is free to marry outside of the nyamakala, unlike the jeli. His training is also strikingly different. An aspiring sora is commonly a man who fits into another sect in the nyamakala, but this is not always the case. This means that he has another source of income and can casually and freely begin learning the art of a sora. His toil is in many ways like aspiring western professional musicians, and like any art form the more practice the better. Usually the aspiring sora will become the informal apprentice of a master sora, and over time the master will teach the student how to play the simbi or ngoni and also the melodies and texts to the famous hunter's epics, as well as improvisatory techniques. Singing these long epics, which usually take hours to perform, involves not only the skills associated with physical technique and training both vocal and instrumental, but also the skill of improvisation. Finally, an aspiring sora does not become a master sora until he is recognized by a hunter's association and invited to perform at a function, gather, or festival of some sort.

Much like hunters, the bards are an integral part of Mande society as well as Mande music culture. The reason the bards are so culturally significant is because they not only serve a musical purpose but they also act as intermediaries between the human world and the forces of the spirit world, namely a force that the Mande call *nyama*, which, in its most basic sense can be defined as "the energy of action." In other words, it is an extremely power energy force that the Mande believe exists in every aspect of their world. Everything possesses *nyama*, and some have more than others. *Nyama* is a neutral

element of Mande culture. On hand it can be a positive thing; musicians, as well as music, posses nyama, and this nyama is what allows them to perform with the skill that they do. On the other hand, however, too much nyama can be a potentially dangerous threat to a Mande village. Hunter's bards have the power to control and augment this energy force. Thus, the term "musician" is a rather inadequate one for a sora because it does not adequately display the spiritual side of a sora's role in Mande society.

Hunter's music is generally performed for 4 different social functions. A sora's presence is required at the funeral of a hunter. Secondly, sora's play their music at *simbon si (simbon na si)*, or memorial celebrations that generally occur a few years after a great hunters death. Bards also perform at the annual *dankun son* festival which takes place after the harvest and is a symbol of rebirth. A performance will be given by a sora at hunter's association meetings before and after a hunt has taken place. Finally, sora's will sometimes perform their music at various festivals on Malian independence day (September 22), but their performance is not necessary as it is in the other 3 venues.

A sora's presence at a hunter's funeral is significant for many reasons. The first reason has to do with the concept of nyama. Since the Mande believe that nyama is everywhere, it therefore abounds in people, and is released when a person dies. For this reason, as well as others, a hunter's bard is required to appear at the funeral of a hunter in order to properly control the nyama that has been released. Nyama, however, takes tremendous skill and talent to control and therefore a Mande hunter's funeral is traditionally 14 days long. Throughout the entire event, one or multiple soras will commit their minds, bodies, spirits, and talents to controlling the nyama that is released by the deceased. This extraordinary time period is a testament not only to the dedication

of a sora, but also to the power that nyama has in Mande culture. Another important role of the sora at a hunter's funeral is that of a eulogist. The bard will sing the praises of the deceased hunter as well as offering a rendition of hunter's epics including the traditional and extremely important Sunjata Epic. Thus, the term "musician" is a rather inadequate one for a sora because it does not adequately display the spiritual and social roles of a sora in Mande society.

The simbon si memorial festivals arranged by hunter's associations are extremely similar to funerals. These festivals are usually orchestrated a few years after an important hunter's passing. Not all hunters receive simbon si. These festivities typically span 7 days, half the length of a traditional Mande hunter's funeral, and can be characterized more as a celebration of the life of the memorialized hunter. For these types of services, a sora's role remains basically the same, except for one difference, that being the absence of the tremendous nyama that accompanies an individual's death. Therefore, a sora performing at a memorial service can focus more on his own nyama and on his musical performance. The sora performs two important functions at a simbon si. First, he sings the praises of the deceased hunter, and secondly he performs an epic (usually the Sunjata epic). The epic performance dominates his role in the festivities. One important aspect of the simbon si is the inclusion of other forms of music. This type of festival does not solely rely on hunter's bards for musical performance. Jeli and especially drummers are also utilized in order to turn the simbon si into a festival filled with dancing as well as beer drinking.

The third type of gathering that a sora performs at is the annual festival of dankun son. This festival occurs every year immediately after the harvest has occurred. It

symbolizes the rebirth of the hunting season. It is also at this time that new members are initiated into the hunter's association. At this festival, the sora does not sing the praises of any individual hunters, but rather offers his music in celebration of all hunters. Once again, a hunter's epic will be traditionally performed during this festival. This festival is also multifaceted in terms of musical genres. Both drummers and *jeliw* also perform at this festival.

Soras also perform at hunter's association meetings. These meetings are typically held before a hunt and after hunt. The sora's role in these meetings is rather unique when compared to his roles in the other performance venues. The sora deals with large amounts of nyama during these meetings, but the sources of nyama are different between the meetings before and after the hunt. In the meeting before the hunt, the sora's singing and playing is aimed at endowing the hunter with nyama and power to venture out into the *bush*. This nyama is supposed to not only help the hunter in catching his prey, but also to protect him against the dangers of the bush. When the hunter's return, however, the sora praises the hunters with the goal of neutralizing and killing the nyama released from the dead animal and thus ensuing balance in the spiritual world.

Finally, soras will sometimes perform on Malian Independence Day which is September 22. This event has no traditional cultural bearing to the Mande, but the Mande do celebrate Malian Independence. Therefore, a sora may be called upon to perform short pieces or even a hunter's epic. This type of performance is the least strict arena in which a sora will perform. These festivals are also filled with many different types of Mande music, including *jeliw*, drumming, and orchestras & modern Mande & Malian music.

As illustrated, soras carry many different roles in Mande society and it is through their music that they carefully and effectively execute these roles.

Jeliya

Jeli is a Maninka term for a special kind of musical and verbal artist not only because of their profound musical skill, but also because of the deep history involved with the jeli. They first started to appear in Arabic writings in the mid-fourteenth century, in Portuguese writings in the fifteenth century, and the English and French began reporting about the role of the jeli by the seventeenth century. Because of the role of the jeli is highly historical, political, and spiritual their presence in Mande culture has been carefully documented.

The jeli are highly trained professionals who specialize in 3 different areas of music making: speaking (*kuma*), singing (*donkili*), and instrument playing (*foli*). All three areas require different kinds of training, thus resulting in a high degree of specialization among the jeli. Male jelis, or *jelike* (pl. *jeliku*), are usually competent in at least two of these areas, although they almost always specialize in one. Female jelis, or *jelimuso* (p. *jelimusolu*), primarily sing, but some of them are known for their power of speech. The skills required to become a jeli are passed down from generation to generation over a lifetime. In other words, unlike a sora, a jeli is born into his/her profession, and begin training at a very young age. The families that jelis are born into are limited in number, and can trace their lineage back thousands of years over just a few lines of lineage. Jelis also practice *endogamy*, which does not allow jelis to marry outside of their own group.

The path to becoming a jeli is similar to that of becoming a sora. In order to acquire a broad musical education, young jelis become the apprentices of specialists in the different areas of *jeliya*, the art that jeli's practice. These many years of apprenticeship to different jeliya masters is easily accomplished, however, because of the extended family network of the jeli. This apprenticeship, unlike a sora's, begins very young because the jeli inherit their profession. By the time their years of apprenticeship are complete, the jelikelu are minimally competent in speech, singing, and instrument playing, but generally specialize in just one area. As indicated previously, jelimusolu become competent in both speech and singing, and usually specialize in singing.

The jeli have the most roles of any musician in Mande society. They act as instrumental musicians, singers, public speakers, oral historians, praisers, spiritual mediums, advisers, and chroniclers. They not only have the exclusive right to play instruments like the *kora*, *koni*, & *bala*, but they also are the only artists allowed to sing, play, or speak about certain elements of Mande society. Jelis, like soras are also responsible for dealing with nyama during performances. Jelis have always been associated to the leaders of their society, and thus the jeli have exclusive access information that other musicians do not. Jelis also utilize their role of spiritual mediums in their performances. Because they are so in-tune with sacred elements of Mande culture, jeli have the ability to speak to the Gods, and sometimes the Gods choose to take a human form. The jeli have the ability to house a spirit during their performances. The knowledge they retain and transmit through their music is usually historical, social, or political. Through their speech and music, jelis render very detailed political and social histories of their people in the form of genealogies, storytelling, praising, and proverbs.

Because of their vast array of musical knowledge, some believe they have a lock on the whole of Mande musical and verbal arts. This is untrue, although they do guard their music extremely carefully and maintain the highest profiles of any Mande musicians.

Although jelis play many different roles in Mande culture, their performance venues are generally limited to *Konyo*, or marriage celebrations, *Den kun li*, or infant naming ceremonies, and stage concerts. Unlike soras, who devote their efforts to an association, a jeli's duty is focus on learning the art of jeliya and transferring it to the whole of society. This goal can be most effectively accomplished at mass gatherings of people. Secondly, jelis do not have a leading role in ceremonies where drummers are essential because these ceremonies usually involve dancing, and the music of the jeli is primarily for listening, although it can be augmented by drums sometimes, and thus allows for rhythmic movement. Jeli play an integral role in wedding ceremonies. Before the ceremony, a jeli will serve as a go-between for negotiations and arrangements between the parents of the bride and groom. The jeli can also serve as a spiritual advisor for the bride and groom. During wedding celebrations, a jeli will typically sing the praises of the newlywed couple, and offer his/her blessing upon them through a series of orations and music, and sometimes a rendition of *Allah l'a ke*, an elongated religious, social, political, and historical commentary on Mande society. He/She will also channel nyama through the performance and into the collective spirit of the couple. This also serves as a blessing to help the young couple in their lives together. During these performances some jeli perform alone, while others perform together. There exist no set rules for how many jelis can perform together at one time.

At den kun li ceremonies, the role of the jeli is rather specific. After the ceremony, which consists of the infant's name being pronounced for the first time in its life, as well as many sacrifices and symbolic shaving of the head, jelis perform as entertainment for the patrons. A jeli's role at the ceremony is to not only entertain but also to bless the newborn and its parents as well as channel nyama into their lives through performance so that they may live happily and peacefully as a family.

The Mande people do not underestimate the value of music as entertainment, which is why jeli will appear in stage concerts. There is no specific time or place for these performances, and they are much like a modern western musical event. The concert will be announced in the town and people will come to see it at a centralized location, usually a town square or marketplace.

Drumming

Drumming is the oldest form of musical expression in Mande culture, predating the rise of the Malian empire and originating in a prehistoric past. Drumming began in Mande society as a sacred type of music that was played during power and religious society meetings, but as centuries passed, it began to move out of the sacred genre and into the more secular music that has flourished in Mande society for hundreds of years. Mande drummers, much like jelis and soras, encounter many different roles within Mande society that they must satisfy. The history of Mande drumming is closely related to the history of sora, in that they both predate the Mali empire and also by the musicians who play the music and how they are trained.

Drummers are not born into their musical profession. There are, however, certain families/clans that are known to produce extremely talented drummers. This by no means, implies that an individual cannot be a drummer if they desire to be. Much like the profession of soras, drummers must learn how to play their instruments through apprenticing themselves to other master drummers. The art of learning the drum is slightly augmented because drumming is at the forefront of Mande music. It is the most visible and most frequently experienced part of Mande music. In fact, drumming is so important that any observers watching drummers play are expected, and sometimes demanded, to participate in the form of dancing, clapping, and singing. Because drumming is so abundant in Mande culture, young musicians who desire to become master drummers witness it almost on a daily basis, and therefore have many fantastic examples to model themselves after.

Mande drum music exists in the following sectors of cultural events: Life-cycle events, social and religious societies, agricultural events, entertainment, and stage performances. Among the life-cycle events are Den kun li, or infant naming ceremony, *Soli si & Furi si*, circumcision and excision, and Konyo, or marriage ceremonies. At deni kun li ceremonies, the role of the drummer is entertainment. There are no specific rhythms or dances associated with this ceremony. Sometimes, drummers perform with jeli at de kun li. At the soli si and furi si, drummers play an integral role in the spiritual significance of the ceremonies. In the days before the circumcision or excision is performed, a festival begins to celebrate the child's integration into society. Drummers perform at these festivities in order to give the child courage. The exhausting dance that they perform is also intended to entertain as well as spiritual ready the child for their

operation. After the operation is performed, the child is sent into seclusion to heal for a few weeks. When they return from this seclusion, another ceremony called *boloko denu don bo* is staged in order to celebrate the successful operation. This ceremony involves drumming, dancing, and singing by both drummers and jeli. Since this ceremony is important to Mande society, drummers have designated special rhythms that are devoted to and played at *solu si* and *furu si* ceremonies. The final life cycle event that drummers perform at are *konyo*, or marriage ceremonies. *Konyo* ceremonies are by the far the most abundant performance venue for drummers, and they make most of their income performing at *konyo*. The bulk of the musical entertainment at wedding ceremonies, which traditionally last one week starting on the eve of the wedding night, is performed by drummers. The jeli, however, take on a more spiritual role as far as their wedding music is concerned. Weddings are such an important celebration to the livelihood and success of drummers that they not only have special rhythms for the ceremonies, but they also play entire pieces devoted to weddings.

The second arena in which drumming is performed is in the context of social and religious societies. Although there is little information regarding the role drummers play in the societies events, it has been discovered that drummers play an extremely spiritual role in these events. There are 3 societies that are intimately associated with drumming. These are the *Jo*, a power or spiritual association that includes both genders, *Ton*, a social society based on age, and *Komo*, the most powerful secret association that encompasses all aspects of Mande life. In the *Jo*, drumming is confined to encouragement for the collective labor that the society performs. In the *Ton*, drumming is used as entertainment as well as to accompany ceremonies that the society performs. The *komo*, however, is

the society most closely associated with drumming. The drummers in the komo association play a very important role in the events held in komo because they act as musical mediums for the transformation of nyama and they also provide the musical backdrop for spiritual dances that the komo perform. As in weddings, there are specific rhythms and pieces performed by drummers for the komo festivities.

Drumming is also associated with agricultural events. Although they are not a major performance arena for drummers, these events are nonetheless important to Mande culture. Drummers are sometimes called on to encourage the work of clearing the fields and planting or weeding of the soil, as well as general fertility rituals. Drummers also play for women working in rice fields. At the beginning of the fertile season, the Mande stage an important fertility and farming celebration in which the Mande antelope masks, otherwise known as *Ci Wara*, are displayed and paraded to celebrate the initial breaking of the soil, as well as to call upon the Gods to bless the land with fertility. Drumming accompanies this festival in what turns out to be a coming together of musical, agricultural, and spiritual elements.

The final way in which drummers perform is purely for entertainment purposes. These types of performances usually take place in town squares or on stages. This genre of drumming also includes non-professional drumming in general. It is interesting to note that drumming is the only form of Mande music that is appreciated in a non-professional format. Professional drummers and non-professional drummers alike, routinely convene in the center of town and have a drum circle, which is marked by the players standing in a circle and playing traditional rhythms in sync with one another. There is always a leader in these circles, and that person is almost always a professional

drummer. These circles muster up great interest in the town, because many villagers will come and watch the drum circle, always participating with their hand clapping and singing, until the circle dissipates, which is sometimes not until the early hours of the morning. Professional drummers also hold stage shows and concerts that patrons pay to attend. Some of these drummers have even ventured outside of their culture and into the western world. This will be discussed more in the next section.

Modern Mande Music

Over the past 30 years, Mande music, and world music in general, has expanded and spread all over the world. Thus, as one can imagine, there are many different aspects of Mande music that can be discussed, but for the purposes of this handbook only the 3 most important will be discussed. They are: regional and national ballets, djembe drumming, and western influenced Mande music.

In an effort to showcase the inseparable relationship between drumming and dancing in Mande culture, national and regional ballets have been organized all over Mali. The first Mande ballet, named Les Ballets Africains, was created in the 1940s by the great djembe drummer Fodeba Keita. Eventually, Mali and Senegal began forming their own ballets. These ballets combine the talents of drummers and jeli, as well as dancers from Mande culture. Malian ballet troupes have become world renowned for their tours, and have attracted the best dancers and performers from all over the vast landscape of Mali. These ballets are much like the traditional European ballet, except they use Mande dance and music repertoires. One notable difference is that the music for a Malian ballet is performed on the stage with the dancers, because the drummers and

other musicians are just as much a part of the dancing and presentation of the ballet as the dancers are. These ballets serve primarily as entertainment events, although historical and cultural aspects of Mande and Malian culture permeate every aspect of the performances.

The tradition of the djembe drum has erupted all over the world over the course of the past 20 years. The djembe was first introduced outside of Africa in the 1950s when Fodeba Keita's ballet troupe Les Ballets Africains began touring Europe and the United States. Serious interest in the djembe began when Ladji Camara, a lead djembe drummer with Les Ballets Africains, moved to the U.S. in the 1960s. Since the late 1980s international interest in the djembe has taken a sharp upturn. Former members of African ballet troupes have settled abroad in Europe and the U.S. and actively teach classes on the art of Mande drumming. Today, students flock to drum classes and camps, and they even hold the traditional drum circles that are ever-so-important in Mande culture. Major drum manufacturers, like Remo, have also found a huge market for factory made djembe drums. Because of this interest, hundreds of CDs of djembe music have been released over the past 15 years, and for the first time in Mande history, djembe drummers have been recorded by people who are not field researchers. Thus Mande drumming has spread throughout the world through the djembe drum.

Finally, the last type of modern Mande music to be discussed is western influenced music. As Malian ballet troupes have toured the world, some members of these troupes have become interested in western pop music. On many occasions, touring Malian musicians will bring back recordings of pop and jazz musicians. This has sparked a foreign interest in the music of the western world. Two things have happened to Mande

music because of this. The first is that the guitar has been introduced to Mande musicians and has now become a part of their culture as well. Many jeli have learned to play the western guitar, and it has also become the forefront of modern Mande music. Secondly, musicians like Habib Koite and his band Bamada, have taken traditional secular Mande music & rhythms and combined it with their western influences. This is the most recent, and most globally noticed, advancement in Mande music. Bands like Bamada have become popular all over the world, proving that world music does have a place among the western world.

Musical Elements

Hunter's Music

I. Sacred & Secular Genres

Since Mande music is not heavily associated with religion it can be difficult to divide it into sacred and secular genres. For the purpose of this handbook, however, sacred will mean out of the general public's view, and secular will mean within the realm of the general public.

Taking the above into consideration, hunter's music is almost entirely sacred because most of it is performed within the constraints of the hunter's associations, with the exception of the dankun son festival and Malian independence day. Hunter's funerals as well as the simbon si memorial festivals both take place within the hunter's association, and outsiders are not usually allowed to partake in these ceremonies. Hunter's will generally hold a separate ceremony for the deceased hunter at which friends and family who aren't hunters can attend.

Another important reason why hunter's music is sacred is because it deals with the spiritual force of nyama. This energy is particularly heavy at a hunter's funeral and also at the ceremonies following a hunt because of the energy release by the dead animals. It is the sora's job to equalize this energy and institute equilibrium between the energies of the world.

The dankun son festival is a secular performance of hunter's music because the patrons of this festival are hunters as well as farmers and villagers. This festival is a general celebration of the harvest. Finally, the performances on Malian independence day are secular because they bear no direct cultural correlation to the Mande. Sora perform at independence festivals on their own free will.

There is also a social reason as to why hunter's music is partially secular and sacred. This reason has to do with the sora's social status. Since the sora are not born into their position, and don't conform to any marital restrictions, as well as the fact that anyone can become a hunter's bard, this music is not kept guarded and supervised as sacred music generally is.

II. Instruments/Voices

Instruments

The instruments used in hunter's music include 3 different calabash harps: the three or four stringed *balon* played for warriors, the seven stringed *simbi*, and the seven stringed *donso ngoni*, both very similar and both played for hunters. Other instruments used include the *nege*, iron rasp, and the *su fle*, hunter's whistle.

Balon: The balon was the first type of hunter's harp used to perform this type of music. It has 3 or 4 strings, and a curved neck, resembling a hunter's bow. The resonator

is formed from a hollowed out and halved calabash or gourd, and is covered with an animal skin which acts as a sound table, much like the head on a banjo. This skin is tied onto the calabash of the balon. It is played by facing the instrument and plucking the strings with the fingers.

Simbi & Donso Ngoni: The simbi and the donso ngoni are so similar that even Mande cultural experts cannot tell them apart. Both of these instruments have seven strings which are made out of metal. This is one of the distinguishing features of these two harps. Also, the necks of these harps are straight rather than curved like the balon. Both harps are made of the same type of calabash as the balon, but the skin sound table is tacked onto the gourd rather than tied. Also, 2 sticks, one on each side of the strings, protrude out from the gourd. These serve as handles that the sora can hold while playing the harps. The donso ngoni has 2 rows of strings, one row has 3 and one has 4. The simbi's strings are all aligned in one row of seven. This is the only true distinguishing feature between the ngoni and the simbi. Both the ngoni and the simbi are played in the same manner as the balon, facing the instrument and plucking the strings with the fingers.

Nege: The nege is a metal scraper or rasp that is made of iron and scraped with a metal rod. It is usually played by a person other than the sora, and is traditionally used to present counter-rhythms to what the sora is playing.

Su Fle: The hunter's whistle, or *su fle*, is occasionally played with the hunter's harp. Traditionally the su fle is actually worn by a hunter and is used to communicate danger over long distances, when other hunters are out of the range of the voice. It is played by the sora at tense or "dangerous" moments in the music. It is particularly useful in the performance of the Sunjata epic.

Voices

There are commonly two voices used in hunter's music. One is obviously the voice of the sora. Most hunter's music requires both playing of a hunter's harp and singing by the sora. The singing, however, is a combination of both singing and speaking, or narrating a story, such as the Sunjata epic. The other voice is that of another person, usually the individual playing the nege, whose job it is to respond to the singing and narrating of the sora. This is a fundamental feature of much of the music of Africa. The most common interjection is "*naamu*" which means "yes" and is meant as an affirmation to what the sora is presenting in his music. This person is typically called the *naamu tigi*, and he usually interjects vocal support between the phrases of the sora. The *naamu tigi* may also respond with "*tinye*" which means "truth," or even by saying the name of the sora in support of what he has just sung. Occasionally, the sora may play off the responses of the *naamu tigi* by calling out "*naamu namina*" which is a call to the *naamu tigi* to which he will answer "*naamu!*" This call and response relationship is a delicate one because the *naamu tigi* must be careful not to interrupt the flow of the sora.

III. Formal Features

Improvisation: It must first be stated and understood that hunter's music is an improvisatory art form in Mande society. Although a sora's repertoire consists of standard pieces of music, such as the Sunjata epic, there exists flexibility in the music. First of all, the length of a piece of music is "improvisatory." In other words, a sora may emphasize certain sections of a piece of work and elongate them, either by repeating them or playing them at a slower tempo. He may skip pieces of a song if he doesn't feel

the need to perform them, or he may de-emphasize a portion of the music by playing it at a faster tempo, or by elimination repetitions. Secondly, hunter's music relies on improvisation to keep it new, fresh, and interesting. There exists an outline for most songs either in the way of a melody or a vamp, but the songs do not a set form. The sora's job is to improvise over this outline in a complimentary way to the basic melodic idea the piece is presenting. Finally, because hunter's music is generally performed for longer periods of time, the sora relies on his improvisation skills to bridge from one song to the next without stopping.

Form: There exists no standard for hunter's music, but some common elements of form appear heavily. There is usually an introduction to most pieces, which consists of a short improvisation. This is usually followed by a melodic statement of some sort, either played or sung, or even both. This section could be called the A section. Sometimes the A section is followed by new material, which could be called the B section. This section introduces new melodic material, but the basic tune is still recognizable. After the B section, the music will usually return to the A section. Another improvisation may follow this A section, acting as a transition from one song, piece, or movement to the next. A good example of this is the piece "Mbassi" included in the appendices. One important idea to remember, however, is that hunter's music is high improvisatory which means that while the basic outline of a song may dictate some sort of form, a sora may disregard this outline entirely and play a new version, never before heard.

One idea of form that is prevalent among hunter's music is that of movements. Many pieces that soras play are characterized by different sections or movements. These

movements are clearly defined, if played by themselves with breaks in between. The different songs contain contrasting melodic material, tempos, and words. The remarkable aspect about this music however, is that soras somehow find a way to connect one movement to the next by using their improvisation skills. Thus, even the form of a piece with distinctly different songs may be blurred.

Call and Response: Two types of call and response are prevalent in hunter's music. The first is the movement between a hunter's voice and his harp. Many times, a sora will play a song, or part of song on his harp, and then sing it afterwards. He may also trade off between singing a line of music and then improvising a quick idea on his instrument. The second type of call and response exists between the sora and the naamu tigi. The naamu tigi's role is to act as a musical sidekick to the sora. He shouts out responses to what the sora is playing or singing. These are outlined in the instrument/voices portion of this section. Sometimes, however, the sora will then respond to what the naamu tigi is shouting, thus creating a rhythmic and musical call and response. If there exists great chemistry between the sora and the naamu tigi, the sora may even ask the naamu tigi questions, or he may even trade vocal or rhythmic improvisations with him.

Tuning: Hunters harps are not always tuned to the conventional heptatonic, 7 tone scale. Only the simbi is tuned in this manner. Sometimes the ngoni is tuned in this manner as well. Thus, it sounds closest to western harmony. In other cases, harps are tuned to either a pentatonic scale, 5 tone scale, or possibly a hexatonic scale, a 6 tone scale. It is really up to the sora to decide how he wants to tune his instrument. Also, the

piece of music being played dictates how the instrument will be tuned, because certain pieces of music are easier to play with the right tunings.

IV. Rhythmic Features

One of the most important features of Mande music is rhythm. This rhythm can be either simple or complex, both in subdivision and difficulty of playing. One feature that is typical of much of hunter's music is a subtle shifting from a ternary to a binary division of the beat, or vice versa. In the course of a performance, the musician may move in and out of these two options, expanding or contracting the space between strokes of the strings. This creates an ambiguity as to the ternary and binary subdivisions of the beat.

Another rhythmic feature of hunter's music is the use of a 2 against 3 feeling. This occurs when one hand is playing in simple subdivision of the beat and the other hand is playing in a complex subdivision of the beat. This rhythmic pattern is very characteristic of Mande music and of African music in general.

V. Melodic Features

Like other Maninka music, hunter's music consists of short melodies that are played over and over on the harps, with slight variations and occasional breaks for extended versions and improvisations. A master sora will carefully weave his improvisations around the basic melodic structure of a song.

The vocal melodies of slightly more complex, and consist of cascades of descending lines. A single vocal phrase will typically end by descending to the third or tonic scale degree. Longer phrases tend to begin higher and descend down to the third or

tonic. Most of the vocal melodies are highly scalar, and tend to make many leaps. Any leaps that do occur are easily singable.

One final aspect of hunters music melodies is the use of pedal points. Pedal points are used in hunters music in both the upper register of the harps as well as the lower register. The pedal point typically consists of an open sonority, such as a fourth or a fifth and it usually contains the tonic scale degree. “Mbassi,” included in the appendices, is a good example of the use of a pedal point.

VI. Texts

Among the pieces traditionally performed by soras are stories and epics that are outstanding among the normal sora repertoire. The most famous and legendary one is the Sunjata epic, which tells the story of Sunjata Keita and his enemy, Sumanguru Kante who, as legend has it, was defeated by Sunjata in 1235. Sunjata then reigned the kingdom of Mali and founded the Mali empire. This text has been performed many times by some of the greatest soras in the history of Mande culture and it has been included here in its entirety along a summary for students.

Jeliya

I. Sacred & Secular Genres

Jeliya is perhaps the most sacred music in Mande society, with exception of the occasional stage concert. Not only is it charged with spiritual and cultural references, but it is highly guarded by the jeli who play it by the practice of endogamy (restrictions against marry outside the jeli). Another way this music is guarded is by the inheritance of jeliya through very direct lines of lineage. These two aspects of jeliya safeguard the music from losing its sacred implications and its importance in Mande society.

Another reason jeliya is sacred is because it is performed at special cultural ceremonies such as marriage ceremonies and infant naming ceremonies. Both of these events are highly spiritual, and demand the sacred music of the jeli. The jeli also acts as a spiritual advisor to both the bride and the groom, and can serve as a go-between for negotiations between the bride's and groom's families. Jeliya is sacred because it acts as a blessing when performed at ceremonies. It is perhaps the most "religious" and spiritual of all the Mande musics.

The only aspect of jeliya that is secular is the occasional stage concert. But even these are few when compared to the vast number of sacred events the jeli perform at.

II. Instruments/Voices

Instruments

The instruments used in jeliya are: the kora, the soron, the koni, the bala, and the modern guitar.

Kora: The kora is another type of Mande harp that is different from the ngonni and the simib in the number of strings and the tuning system. It is a sacred instrument played only by the jeli. The kora traditionally has 21 strings and is made of a calabash resonator with a skin sound table stretched and tacked over it. Handles protrude from the body of the kora. The neck the kora is straight like the ngonni. It is played by facing the instrument and plucking the strings with the fingers. One notable feature of the kora is its vast array of tuning rings. These rings, which hold the strings down to the neck and slide up and down the neck, allow for careful tuning of each string. The bulk of jeliya is music written for the Kora.

Soron: The soron is an instrument very similar to the kora. It differs from the kora in the following ways.

1. The bridge is pierced with holes through which the strings pass, instead of the notches that are on the kora
2. A metal buzzing leaf is inserted at the end of the neck. This creates a buzzing sound everytime a string is plucked.
3. The bridge usually sits on a long, thin wooden platform instead of a square platform wrapped in cloth.
4. The way the skin sound table is wrapped around the resonator forms what looks like a cross instead of being one large circular piece of skin that is tacked onto the outside of the gourd.

Koni: The koni is a 5-string lute that is perhaps the oldest instrument played by the jeli. Lutes are a common instrument all over Africa, but western African lutes, such as the ones used in jeliya can be distinguished in two ways.

1. The bridge is either fan shaped and slips onto the end of the neck in the sound hole, or it is a cylinder and sits on top of the sound table.
2. The resonator is either made of carved wood or an oblong calabash, and in some cases is even made of a sardine can or some sort of metal container.

The koni is specifically played by jeli and therefore it is a sacred instrument in Mande society. It is held like a small guitar and is plucked or strummed with the fingers.

Bala: The bala, or balafone, is a type of xylophone unique to Africa. It dates back several thousand years and has its origins in West Africa. Mande oral history is

very specific about the origin of the bala. It is said that Sumanguru Kante, Sunjata's enemy, played the balafone. Little is known about the bala before Sumanguru. Today, the bala has spread all over Africa wherever Mande people have traveled.

A traditional Mande bala consists of tuned rosewood slats tied to a bamboo frame over gourds that act as resonating chambers. The keys are struck using mallets consisting of rosewood handles and heads made of tire rubber.

The bala is an instrument that is not only associated with jelis, but also with drummers and blacksmiths. Therefore, it is probably the least sacred of all the instruments that the jeli play because people outside the jeli and even the nyamakala are allowed to play the bala.

Voices

There are two types of voices used in jeliya. The first is the singing voice, or *donkili*, and the second is the speaking voice, or *kuma*. Donkili is typically described as beautiful and characterized by youth, therefore women make up the majority of the jeli who specialize in singing. Donkili is defined as recognizable melody and words that are unique to the piece being performed, including the vocal improvisations that accompany it. Song is heard more often than speech in jeliya, but it is often less detailed than its speaking counterpart. *Kuma*, or speech, on the other hand is traditionally performed by men because it is characterized as powerful and wise. It is usually delivered in a kind of chant that is almost a balance between actual speech and song.

In short, kuma is word oriented, whereas donkili is melody oriented.

III. Formal Features

Improvisation: As in all of Mande music, improvisation plays a key role in jeliya. The jeli are not only trained in the technical aspect of playing or singing, but also in the theoretical aspect of jeliya. It is for this reason that the jeli are the best improvisers of all Mande musicians. Of all the types of Mande music, jeliya relies the most heavily on improvisation. A jeli, especially when performing solo has the ability to do almost whatever he/she desires with the music. As discussed with hunter's music, the musician can emphasize certain passages by repeating them or by playing them slower. Other passages may be de-emphasized by skipping over them or playing them at a faster tempo. The true art of the jeli improvisation occurs when more than one jeli are playing together. One would think that in this setting improvisatory decisions would be carefully and conservatively made. The jeli, however, are so skilled that they can use all the same techniques whether alone or in a group.

Form: The form of jeli music is extremely loose. Like hunter's music, a basic melody is outlined for the instrumentalists and the words are written for both the singers and speakers. The singers and speakers, however, can take whatever liberties they want with the words, making up melodies and rhythms as they go along. A song will typically have a beginning and an end, but the middle is left up to the devices of the jeli performers.

Call & Response: The element of call and response is present in jeliya only when one or more jeli are present and performing at the same time. If a jeli is performing by his/herself, no call and response will be present. Unlike hunter's music, no one plays the role of the naamu tigi. Instead, when more than one jeli are playing they respond to

each other's rhythmic and melodic ideas. They also trade improvisations with one another, always mimicking, while expanding, on the improvisatory ideas that the other musicians have presented. The call and response in jeliya is very interesting because it involves a vast array of variables. Not only do musicians interject with words and phrases while others are performing (much like the *naamu tigi*), but melodies and improvisations are passed between instrumentalists, between singers, and between instrumentalists and singers.

Tuning: The tuning of the jeli instruments is rather complicated. The kora, being the largest of all the jeli instruments has 4 different ways of tuning it. These would be too difficult to explain here. Instead a chart has been provided in the appendices.

The koni uses a relatively simple tuning system. The lutes are tuned to have the tonic at either F or G. If the tonic is F, the lowest note on the lute will be an E or a G. If the lowest note is an E, the next note is an A, the next is a D or E, the next is the tonic (F), and the last is a G. If the lowest note is a G, the next note is a C, the next is the tonic (F), the next is a G, and the last is an A. If the tonic is a G, the lowest note will be a G or an E. If the lowest note is a G, the next note is a C, the next is the tonic (G), the next is A, and the last is B. If the lowest note is an E, the next note is an A, the next is D or E, the next is the tonic (G), and the last is an A.

Thus we arrive at the following tunings:

TONIC	TUNING
F	E,A,D,F,G
	E,A,E,F,G
	G,C,F,G,A
G	E,A,D,G,A
	E,A,E,G,A
	G,C,G,A,B

The bala has a relatively standard tuning. It is tuned equiheptaphonically, seven equal intervals to the octave. Here is the proper tuning deviant (from western tonalities) if the lowest note is a C.

C
D minus 30 cents
E minus 58 cents
F# minus 76 cents
G minus 15 cents
A minus 44 cents
B minus 73 cents
C

Instructions on re-tuning Orff xylophones are provided in the appendixes.

IV. Rhythmic Features

For the most part, jeliya is in compound meter and unlike hunter's music, it does not switch back and forth between compound and simple meter. It also uses what some theorists refer to as "rolling meter" which means that there is really no time signature. The reason for this is that when a melody, vamp, or groove is being played many points in the melody can be conceived as the downbeat. This allows jeli to freely switch back and forth between rhythmic ideas and patterns. It also creates for interesting variations of harmony.

One interesting feature of jeliya is that the jeli who specialize in chanting play an important rhythmic role. Since their melodic and harmonic functions are rather limited, they choose complex and ever-changing rhythms that bring out the concept of "rolling meter." Their rhythms can either fit directly into the rhythms of the instruments, or they can act against those same rhythms, as hemiolas. Chanting jelis are experts at switching back and forth between these.

V. Melodic Features

Kora melodies are much like the melodies that soras play on their hunter's harps. They are usually characterized by ascending and descending scales that usually end on scale degrees three or 1. The only difference between kora melodies and ngoni melodies is the introduction of the lower register, which allows for more harmonic movement in jeliya. This also allows for a Mande version of double counterpoint. In other words, songs will have a melody in the top register and the accompaniment and harmonies in the lower registers, then they will switch for the repeat, and the melody will be in the low register of the instrument while the harmonies move to the upper register.

Vocal melodies in jeliya play a more dynamic role than they do in hunter's music. Melodies in jeliya can be either fast descending lines, but they can also be simple melodic ideas that mimic what the kora is playing.

Chanting "melodies" are more like melismas and they tend to remain very close to the tonic pitch of a piece. They usually don't go any higher than scale degree three or any lower than seven.

VI. Texts

There aren't many texts that exist for the pieces that the jeli perform. Instead, here is a list of important repertoire pieces of jeliya.

KORA REPETOIRE:

Allah l'a ke: a piece about Islam. It is a Cain & Abel like story.

Masani Cisse: about a wealthy merchant who lived in the early 20th century.

Tabara: dedicated to beautiful Fulbe woman from The Gambia.

Jula faso: dedicated to long distance traders called Jula.

SIMBI REPETOIRE:

Duga: a piece about hunters played on simbi of ngoni

Jeliya: newer arrangement of traditional material (its text is included in the appendices).

BALA REPETOIRE: (Included in appendices)

Sunjata fasa: a series of praise songs and narratives that recount the history of the Mali empire.

Boloba: dedicated to Sumanguru Kante. It is also the only piece of music in Mande culture in which the beat consists of five pulses rather than the usual 2,3, or 4.

Lamban: celebrates being a jeli

Nyama nyama nyama, I bara kala ta, Subaa ni mansaya: important movements of Sunjata fasa.

Mamaya: a bala based dance piece.

Jawura: a popular bala dance rhythm.

KONI REPETOIRE:

Tutu Jara: also called Ba juru (mother's tune) Dedicated to Bamana king. Tells the story of a barren mother who sought help from a snake. With the help of the snake she bore a child who would become king of the Jara dynasty, and she named him Tutu Jara.

Taara: dedicated to the mid-nineteenth century Fulbe jihad leader al Hajj Umar Tal, who conquered much of the Senegalese and Malian sahel.

Drumming

I. Sacred & Secular Genres

Unlike hunter's music and jeliya, drumming is about half sacred and half secular. It is similar to hunter's music in the fact that drummers are not born into their professions. By examining the performance venues of drumming, however, we realize that drumming maintains a balance between secular performances and sacred ones.

The first way in which drumming is secular is in the way people become drummers. Drummers are not born into their professions, and therefore their art form is less guarded than that of jeliya. Secondly, drumming is performed in many secular venues, such as in the fields to help encourage workers reaping or planting a harvest. Drumming is also the only Mande musical art form that encourages amateur players to join in recreational music activities such as drum circles. Drumming becomes even more secular with the many stage shows and ballets that are performed.

Although drumming is highly secular, it also has its balance of sacred genres. The drumming that occurs at secret society meetings, such as Komo, is highly sacred. The Komo are a very powerful and spiritually motivated society, and a great deal is demanded of their drummers. Another kind of sacred drumming is the drumming that is performed at life cycle ceremonies such as weddings and circumcisions/excisions. Although much of the music here is primarily for dancing, it still carries a spiritual and cultural significance because of the venue in which it is being performed. Lastly, a testament to the sacredness of some venues of drumming, are the rhythms and pieces that are specific to certain types of festivals.

II. Instruments/Voices

Instruments

The instruments used in Mande drumming are: the djembe, the dundun, the sangba, the kenkeni, the dundunba, and the tama.

Djembe: The djembe (jembe), is the most important drum in Mande music. The early history of the djembe drum is a mystery, but its association with societies provides clues to its early spread. The djembe is carved from a single piece of wood, with the

upper part of its shell shaped like a large bowl, with the top diameter ranging from 12-15 inches. The lower part of the body is a cylinder that is about 6 inches in diameter and is slightly flared at the bottom. The drumhead is traditionally made of goatskin.

Djembes are commonly played with 3 large metal plaques attached to the drum. These pieces of metal have small metal rings inserted in them so that when the drum is struck the vibration shakes the rings and they jingle. The djembe is played with the palms, fingers, and heels of both hands.

Dundun: The dundun is a double-headed cylindrical drum that is used to accompany the djembe. A cowbell is attached to the side of the drum. It is worn so that the heads, made of goatskin, face to the right and the left. It is struck with a curved stick held in the right hand. The bell, called nege, is held in the left hand and is hung around two fingers by a string and is struck with a ring worn on the thumb. The drum is usually carved from a single piece of wood as is approximately 27 inches long and 13 inches in diameter across the head.

Sangba, Kenkeni, & Dundunba: These three drums are a trio of drums, the sangba being the smallest and the dundunba being the largest. They are fashioned from oil drums ranging from 10 to 55 gallons, but they can also be carved from a very large single block of wood. They have goat skin heads on them and are struck with sticks. The drums also have bells on them that are struck with sticks as well.

Tama: The tama, known in English as the “talking drum,” is a small double-headed squeeze drum in the shape of an hour glass. It can be made from one piece of wood or from as many as three pieces. The heads are made of skin and are held on the drum by a series of strings running along the outside of the drum, connecting the two

heads to each other. The drum is then slung over the left shoulder and held under the arm. Since the middle of the drum tapers in it can be squeezed by the arm, which makes the heads tighter, and thus raises the pitch of the drum; hence the name “talking drum.” It is struck with a curved stick held in the right hand and with the fingers of the left hand.

Voices

There is really no defined role of the voice in Mande drumming. Drummers will sometimes chant or sing while they are playing, but it is purely improvisatory.

III. Formal Features

Improvisation: Improvisation is as important to Mande drumming as it is to jeliya. Drumming is usually performed in a circle with one lead drummer, usually a djembe player. The drummers will begin playing a traditional rhythm and will settle into a groove. Then the lead drummer will begin the improvisations. He will solo and dance and even sing while he is playing, all in an improvisatory format. Then he will settle back into the groove of the rhythm and another drummer will solo. This continues until all of the drummers in the ensemble have soloed. Another important aspect about drum improvisation is that the changing of rhythms is improvisatory. The drummers do not know what rhythms they will play in what order. They are just expected to know all of the rhythms of Mande drumming. When the lead drummer decides he wants to change the rhythm he will just begin playing the new one and all the other drummers are expected to catch on and play their specific part. Tempo is also an improvisatory element in Mande drumming. The lead drummer decides all of the tempos. He will change

tempos when he changes rhythms, and he expects the other drummers to feel his change and to change with him. He may also rush and drag tempos to add intensity to the music.

Form: The form of Mande drumming is both rigid and free at the same time. Most Mande drumming is done with a concept of form in mind, that form being a rhythmic vamp and solos over that vamp, then a change of the rhythm. Therefore, the drummers playing the music know that the rhythm is going to change when the last soloist is done playing, but they don't know what rhythm will be next. The form of solos is extremely free. Drummers are not required to take a measured solo. They may begin and end at any time when it is their turn to play. They also do not have to remain "in the pocket" of the rhythm at all times. They are allowed the freedom to play over the top of the rhythms. Thus, form in Mande drumming is somewhat defined, but at the same time it maintains its freshness in its freedom of movement.

Call & Response: Like improvisation, call and response plays an extremely important role in Mande drumming. The lead drummer is responsible for making the "calls," which are rhythms he plays on his drum, and the ensemble is responsible for responding and playing it back to him. This type of exchange is typical at the beginning and ends of a drum performance. These calls and responses can last for a few seconds or an hour, and the rhythms that are played can be extremely complex. Call and response ideas are also used behind solos. If a drummer is soloing and he plays something that catches the ear of another drummer, that other drummer may play it back to him or may play a rhythmic compliment to it. These interjections are much like the *naamu tigi's* role in hunter's music.

Tuning: The tuning of the drums in a Mande drumming ensemble is very important to the clarity of sound of the ensemble and also to the rhythms that are played. Generally, the dundunba is the lowest sounding drum, followed by the kenkeni, and the sangba, respectively. The next highest instrument is the dundun, followed by the djembe and then the tama. The djembe and the dundun can overlap, as can the djembe and the tama. The reason for this is because the djembe has 3 fundamental pitches. The highest is the slap, which is achieved by placing one hand flat on the head near the edge and slapping the edge with the fingers of the other hand. This pitch can sometimes cut above the tama if the tama is playing in its lower register. The middle pitch is an open palm hit on the edge of the drum, and the lowest pitch is a flat-handed or heel of the hand hit in the center of the drum. This low pitch can sometimes go below the pitch of a dundun.

IV. Rhythmic Features

About 75% of Mande drum rhythms and music are in compound meter, leaving 25% to duple meter. One important characteristic of Mande drummers is that they switch between duple and triple meter all of the time. They sometimes do it every other measure! In general, no more than two drummers are playing the same rhythm at one time. Each traditional rhythm has at least 2 parts to it. Thus, when rhythms are played by Mande drummers, they create a series of interwoven rhythms that include 2 against 3 polyrhythms, hemiolas, and “rolling meter.” The rhythmic ideas presented in a Mande drum circle can become rather intense, but everything is based off of the traditional rhythms that the drummers learn as apprentices. (Some of these rhythms are included in the appendices).

V. Melodic Features

The melodic features represented in Mande drumming are very few. But, as stated earlier, the tunings of each of the drums is very important. When tuned properly, the drums created interwoven “melodies” because of their differences in pitches.

VI. Texts

No texts for drumming exist because it is not a verbal art form. Here are some names of important Mande drumming rhythms. (These are presented in the appendices). Agaya, Ashiko, Coucou, Djole, Dundunbar - the most famous of Mande rhythms-, Kpanlogo, Kundabigoya, Liberte, Mbaba, Menjani, Odundi, Sabu, Suli, Triba, Wolof, Yamana.

Modern Mande Music

I. Sacred & Secular Genres

All of modern Mande music is secular. The modern music movement in Mande culture is remarkable because it marks a transition between sacred and secular music. Many types of sacred instruments, such as the kora, the koni, and the bala have become instruments that are being played around the world by many people. These instruments are also being played by Mande musicians in touring national ballet companies. Mande musicians have also begun to play western instruments and incorporate western music into their budding style of modern world music.

II. Instruments/Voices

Instruments

The instruments used in modern Mande music are: the simbi, the ngone, the nege, the kora, the soron, the koni, the bala, the djembe, the dundun, the sangba, kenkeni, & dundunba, the tama, the djembe, the drumset, the bass, and the guitar.

Simbi – Djembe: See appropriate sections for descriptions of these instruments.

Drumset: the drumset is now being used in modern Malian music that draws from western influences. Mande drummers who play modern Mande music have found ways to transfer the traditional rhythms onto drumset so they can be played by one player in an “afro-pop” setting.

Bass: the electric bass is also being used in an “afro-pop” setting in music that draws from western influences. Modern Mande bassists have transferred some of the bass lines of the kora repertoire onto this instrument.

Guitar: the guitar is no doubt the dominant force in modern Mande music. The reason for this is because it allowed Mande musicians to play traditional music on a larger version of the koni. Mande musicians obviously have no problem with playing stringed instruments, and the guitar allowed them to transfer their music onto a modern instrument and incorporate western influences. The guitar has been embraced so much so by the Mande, that it is become an instrument that the jeli use often in performances.

III. Formal Features

Improvisation: Improvisation is still an important concept in modern Mande music, but it takes on different roles in the two forms we are discussing. In ballets,

improvisation plays its traditional role, as it did in Mande drumming. Because the musical troupe of the ballet consists mostly of drummers, their improvisations on traditional rhythm become an integral part of the ballet. These improvisations have now been coupled with dancing. That means that while a djembe drummer is soloing, a dancer will be dancing in reaction to what he hears the soloist play, all the while keeping in rhythm with the basic underlying beat the ensemble is playing. Improvisation takes on a much more conservative role in the western influenced modern Mande music. This improvisation in this music is reminiscent of jazz, wherein each player solos over a set of chord changes.

Form: The form of modern Mande music has become much more strict because of the many added complications. In ballets, a piece of music must have a clear starting and ending point and is usually measure out because the choreography must match up with the music that is being played. Therefore, the improvisational aspect of changing rhythms at random has been lost. A piece of Mande ballet music, takes on a more western form, with A and B sections, repeats, and measured solos. The western influenced modern Mande music also takes on a much more western form. It becomes almost jazzy in a sense, because songs typically have an AABA format, with solos over the form of the tune. One interesting element of traditional Mande music that has been carried over to this style of music is the improvisation that occurs between pieces of music to link them together. Many modern Mande musicians, such as Habib Koite, use these “jams,” as they are commonly referred, in order to make a smooth transition from one song to the next.

Call & Response: Call and response takes on an interesting format in modern Mande music. In ballets, the call and responses generally switch between the music ensemble and the dancers. For example, the ensemble will play some music without the dancers being on stage. The ensemble will get softer and the dancers will come out and give their “response” to what the ensemble just played. This cycle repeats itself a few times until the ensemble and the dancers are in sync. Call and response in its traditional Mande format has almost been eliminated from western influenced Mande music. It only exists in a jazz sense, in that, if a soloist plays something that catches another musician's ear, that musician may play it back or play a complement to it. The other types of call and response that exist in this music are typical of the American art form of Jazz.

Tuning: The tunings of instruments in modern Mande music take on two forms. In ballets, the tunings remain true to the traditional tunings of the instruments. In western influenced Mande music, however, western harmony is used, even on instruments like the bala. Musicians have even begun to make bala that are tuned to the western chromatic scale.

IV. Rhythmic Features

Mande ballets have maintained their traditional drum rhythms and their traditional dances. Triple meter is still used more often than duple. Western influenced Mande music has also kept traditional drum rhythms intact. The only difference is that more often than not, they are transposed into duple meter. 2 against 3 polyrhythms seem to have been eliminated from this type of music.

V. Melodic Features

Once again, Mande ballets have kept melodic traditions intact, and so has western influenced Mande music, for the most part. This type of music still uses the scalar melodies typical of kora music, but it also borrows melodic styles from many cultures from all over the world.

VI. Texts

There exist no texts for Mande ballet troupes, as there are no words in the ballets. The “texts” (liner notes w/ song lyrics) that exist for western influence Mande music are interesting because it marks the first time that Mande musicians are singing in languages other than French and their native Bamana. Both French and Bamana are included in the music, but English, Spanish, and Portuguese appear frequently as well.

Lesson Plan 1

Objectives:

1. Introduce students to Mande music.
2. Have students formulate ideas about Mande music.
3. Listen to hunter's music and discuss their ideas about the music.
4. Read a summary of the Sunjata epic and discuss its cultural significance.
5. Learn how to play the bala part of the Sunjata epic.
6. Discuss 2 against 3 polyrhythmic feel and play an example of it.

Beginning:

- Students will be asked to brainstorm words they think of when the teacher says "West African Music."
- Write their ideas on an overhead or blackboard.
- Display an overhead with a picture of Mande sora (hunter's bards) on it, and at the same time play a clip of Mande hunter's music. Ask the students which ideas they think were true and which ones were false.
- Solicit feedback from the students about the music they just heard.
- Brief introduction of Mande soras and hunter's music (using overheads with photographs of musicians and their instruments.)

High Concentration:

- Introduce the story of the Sunjata epic to the students.

- Have the students give a brief summary of the epic. What do they think about the story?
- Discuss the cultural significance of the Sunjata epic.
- Once the story has been discussed, introduce the musical element of performance of the epic.
- Using Orff instruments with normal tuning, introduce the bala part of Sunjata. (included as #1 in bala appendix) Have some students play the top part and some play the bottom part.

Change of Pace:

- Discuss the difference in tuning between Mande balas and Orff xylophones.
- Using one normal Orff xylophone and one retuned Mande bala, illustrate the differences in the scale.
- Play a recording of a Mande bala player and discuss why balas sound the way they do. (roughly tuned with gourds, way they are constructed, materials they are made from, etc.)

Moderate Concentration:

- Now have students play the same parts on retuned balas (these should be retuned before class in the manner indicated in the appendix.) (If instruments are limited, have students switch off.)

- Teach the students the 3rd bala part on the Sunjata sheet. (This serves to introduce “Mbassi” before the students know what it is.) Have half the class play the top and half play the bottom.

Closing:

- Quickly discuss the 2 against 3 polyrhythmic feel of the accompaniment they were playing.
 - This rhythm is in almost every piece of music in Mande society.
- Inform the students of the next lesson involving Jeli music and singing a piece of music traditionally performed as a sacred work.

Lesson Plan 2

Objectives:

1. Introduce students to jeliya and allow them to formulate and share thoughts on the music.
2. Introduce students to the many instruments that jeli play and discuss how they are different from western instruments.
3. Identify Mande beliefs by introducing the text of “Mbassi.”
4. Sight sing the rhythm and melody to “Mbassi.”
5. Identify characteristics of jeli melodies through the introduction of “Mbassi.”
6. Discuss the use of the pedal point in Mande music through the harmonies in “Mbassi.”
7. Introduce concepts of form by analyzing “Mbassi.”
8. Discuss dissonance in jeliya music.

Beginning:

- When students come in, play them a recording of jeli.
- Ask them their thoughts on the music.
- Brief introduction to jeli and jeliya. (include pictures on overheads of musicians and their instruments.)
- Discuss the different types of instruments with the students and highlight how they are different from western instruments. (compare and contrast).

High Concentration:

- Introduce text of “Mbassi”

- What do these words mean and what might they mean to a Mande person listening to this music.
 - Reminder to help others
 - Warns of dangers in “the bush.”
 - Musicians are rewarded for their music.
- Introduce “Mbassi” with notation.
 - Clap the rhythm if necessary
 - Read the melody slowly (it is assumed the students are familiar with sol-fa)
 - Sing through the song with the text and play accompaniment part on piano.
 - What are the characteristics of Mande jeliya melodies? (stepwise motion, no leaps, downward scales, etc.)

Change of Pace:

- When we sang the melody with the accompaniment, were there any parts of the accompaniment that seemed out of place? (students will likely point to the eighth note pedal in the top voice.)
- Introduce the concept of pedal point in jeliya, and the rhythmic purpose that it serves.

Moderate Concentration:

- Have the students listen to the piece, either by playing it live, or on recording (make a recording from notation software.)

- Does the song fall into definite sections?
 - Yes. There is an into, an A section & a B section.
 - How are the A sections related?
 - They all have the same underlying melody but rhythms are changed to allow for the words to fit.
 - Discuss how B section is eliminated to allow soloing in between melodies.
- Sing "Mbassi" melody through in a canon
- Discuss the dissonances in the music, and how they are common in jeliya.

Closing:

- Introduce the larger work this piece is from on an overhead. (included in appendix.)
- Where and when would a piece like this be played?
- Inform them of the next lesson, involving African drumming.

Lesson Plan 3

Objectives:

1. Introduce call and response to the students through the use of djembe rhythms.
2. Introduce Mande drumming to the students through visual aids.
3. Discuss the way Mande djembe rhythms are noted.
4. Learn how to play the rhythms with correct pitches and transfer them onto the drums.
5. Introduce syncopa by playing rhythm and singing “Mbassi” at the same time.
6. Discuss the challenges of playing and singing at the same time through the added drumming part to “Mbassi.”

Beginning:

- Once students get situated, clap one of the simpler (2 tone) djembe rhythms from the appendix. Keep repeating it until all the students clap it correctly.
- Clap the counter rhythm to the first rhythm. Keep repeating it until all the students clap it correctly.
- Let the students know they performed two important Mande djembe rhythms as well as call & response, an integral part of Mande drumming music.
- Brief introduction to Mande drumming using overheads with pictures.

High Concentration:

- Introduce rhythms with notation to the students?
 - Why are the rhythms notated in this way?

- They are “rolling meter” which means the downbeat can fall in many different places. They are also easier to read than conventional notation.
- Play the first rhythm again, separating the tones between clapping (high tone) and slapping the desk (low tone). Keep repeating until all students play it correctly.
- Do the same with the second rhythm.
- Quickly divide the class into two and have one group play the first rhythm and one group play the second.
- Transfer the rhythm onto drums.

Change of Pace:

- Ask the students if they remember the melody from “Mbassi.”
- Play it for them and then sing it with them.
- Have the students choose a djembe rhythm that would compliment the music. They can either make up their own or use one provided.

Moderate Concentration:

- Once the new rhythms are chosen, have the students echo clap them to you.
- Transfer the rhythms to the drums in the form of call & response.
- Explain the importance of call & response.
- Have the students play the rhythm while you play and sing “Mbassi”
- Once the students feel comfortable with the rhythm have them sing the song and play the rhythm at the same time while you accompany them.

Closing:

- Is playing and singing hard to do at the same time?
 - Discuss this concept in terms of Mande musicians. Many of them play and sing at the same time.
- Inform the students that in the next lesson all of their skills will combine and “Mbassi” will be sung while playing the balas, the drums, and improvising.

Lesson Plan 4

Objectives:

1. Introduce Mande improvisation through pictures and sound clips and allow students to formulate their own beliefs.
2. Reinforce playing the drum and singing “Mbassi.”
3. Allow students to improvise on their own, under the context of the “Mbassi” djembe rhythm.
4. Listen to a clip of drummers improvising and discuss what makes their solos so effective.
5. Apply some the concepts djembe drummers use in their solos.
6. Reinforce the 2 against 3 bala rhythm.
7. Put all of “Mbassi” together by drumming, playing the bala, and singing at the same time.

Beginning:

- Ask the students to brain storm what ideas come to mind when they hear the word “improvisation.”
- Call on students and have them give you their answers.
- Introduce improvisation in Mande music to the students through pictures and a few sound clips.

High Concentration:

- Have the students pick a drum that they would like to play.

- Have the students play a djembe rhythm that compliments “Mbassi.”
- Use call and response to teach the 2 parts of the rhythm to two different groups.
- Once the rhythm is grooving, allow each student a chance to improvise over the groove.

Change of Pace:

- Have the students listen to a recording of a djembe player soloing.
 - What makes his solo effective?
- Discuss the ways in which a djembe player solos over a groove.
- Get back in the drum circle and try the improvisation again.
- Have the students to sing “Mbassi” while you accompany them.

Moderate Concentration:

- Split the class into two groups. Half of them should go to balas and half should stay on drums.
- Review the 2 against 3 bala rhythm that was taught in a previous lesson.
- Have the drummers play the rhythm they played earlier.
- Play the song with the bala rhythm and the djembe rhythm.
- Play the song again while singing the melody.

Closing:

- Play the song one more time, singing while playing, and allowing the drummers to improvise between melodies. (Eliminate the B section.)
- Congratulate the class. They have just performed a piece of Mande music in the Mande tradition.

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This website offers an extensive look at djembe drumming, and contains rhythms as well as sound files of djembe drumming

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OT-2350, 71-259-F, Archives of Traditional Music, Indiana University.
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Djembe Rhythms

AGAYA

Rhythm 1

dom dom do ke re dom .dom do ke re

R R L R L R R L R L

Rhythm 2

dom ke re dodom ke do

R R R R L L L

ASHIKO

Rhythm 1

dodom- kedom- ke - dodom- kedom- ke -

R L - L R - R - R L - L R - R -

Rhythm 2

dodom- kedom- ke - domke re kedom - ke -

R L - L R - R - R L R L R - R -

COUCOU

Rhythm 1

KA - KE RE - - KA - KA- KE RE - - KA -

L - R L - - R - L - R L - - R -

Detailed description: This block shows a musical staff with three lines. The top line contains notes for 'KA', 'KA-', and 'KA -'. The middle line contains notes for 'KE RE - -', 'KA -', and 'KA-'. The bottom line contains notes for 'KE RE - -', 'KA -', and 'KA -'. A vertical red line is placed between the first and second measures. A second vertical red line is placed between the second and third measures. A small square with an upward-pointing arrow is positioned above the first note of the third measure. A fermata symbol is placed over the final note of the third measure. Below the staff, the rhythm is indicated as 'L - R L - - R - L - R L - - R -'.

Rhythm 2

DOM - KA - DOM - KE - DOMKA - KADOM - KE -

R - L - R - L - R L - L R - L -

Detailed description: This block shows a musical staff with three lines. The top line contains notes for 'DOM -', 'DOM -', and 'KADOM -'. The middle line contains notes for 'KA -', 'KE -', and 'KADOM -'. The bottom line contains notes for 'DOM -', 'DOM -', and 'KADOM -'. A vertical red line is placed between the first and second measures. A second vertical red line is placed between the second and third measures. A small square with a downward-pointing arrow is positioned above the first note of the first measure. A fermata symbol is placed over the final note of the third measure. Below the staff, the rhythm is indicated as 'R - L - R - L - R L - L R - L -'.

DJOLE

Rhythm 1

- - KA RA - - KE REDOMKA RADOM - - KE RE

- - R L - - R L R L R L - - R L

Detailed description: This block shows a musical staff with three lines. The top line contains notes for 'KA RA - -', 'RADOM - -', and 'KE RE'. The middle line contains notes for 'KE REDOMKA', 'RADOM - -', and 'KE RE'. The bottom line contains notes for 'KE REDOMKA', 'RADOM - -', and 'KE RE'. A vertical red line is placed between the first and second measures. A second vertical red line is placed between the second and third measures. A small square with a downward-pointing arrow is positioned above the first note of the third measure. A fermata symbol is placed over the final note of the third measure. Below the staff, the rhythm is indicated as '- - R L - - R L R L R L - - R L'.

Rhythm 2

KA - - KA RA - KE RE KA - - KA RA - KE RE

R - - L R - R L R - - L R - R L

Detailed description: This block shows a musical staff with three lines. The top line contains notes for 'KA - -', 'KA RA -', and 'KA - -'. The middle line contains notes for 'KA RA -', 'KA RA -', and 'KA RE'. The bottom line contains notes for 'KA RA -', 'KA RA -', and 'KA RE'. A vertical red line is placed between the first and second measures. A second vertical red line is placed between the second and third measures. A small square with a downward-pointing arrow is positioned above the first note of the third measure. A fermata symbol is placed over the final note of the third measure. Below the staff, the rhythm is indicated as 'R - - L R - R L R - - L R - R L'.

DUNDUNBAR

Rhythm 1

KA RA KA RA KE RE KA RA KA RA KE RE

R L R L R L R L R L R L

Detailed description: This block shows a musical exercise on a five-line staff. The top line contains the lyrics 'KA RA KA RA KE RE KA RA KA RA KE RE'. Below the staff, there are two lines of rhythmic notation: 'R L R L R L R L R L R L'. The first two measures are separated by a vertical red line, and the last two measures are also separated by a vertical red line. A small house-shaped icon is positioned above the first note, and a musical note with a tail is positioned above the last note.

Rhythm 2

KA - - KA RA - - KA RA - KE RE

R - - L R - - L R - R L

Detailed description: This block shows a musical exercise on a five-line staff. The top line contains the lyrics 'KA - - KA RA - - KA RA - KE RE'. Below the staff, there are two lines of rhythmic notation: 'R - - L R - - L R - R L'. The first two measures are separated by a vertical red line, and the last two measures are also separated by a vertical red line. A small house-shaped icon is positioned above the first note, and a musical note with a tail is positioned above the last note.

KPANLOGO

Rhythm 1

dom - - - ke - re - dom - - - ke re ke re

R - - - R - R - R - - - R L R L

Detailed description: This block shows a musical exercise on a five-line staff. The top line contains the lyrics 'dom - - - ke - re - dom - - - ke re ke re'. Below the staff, there are two lines of rhythmic notation: 'R - - - R - R - R - - - R L R L'. The first two measures are separated by a vertical red line, and the last two measures are also separated by a vertical red line. A small house-shaped icon is positioned above the first note, and a musical note with a tail is positioned above the last note.

Rhythm 2

dom - ke redom - ke re dom - ke redom - ke re

R - R L R - R L R - R L R - R L

Detailed description: This block shows a musical exercise on a five-line staff. The top line contains the lyrics 'dom - ke redom - ke re dom - ke redom - ke re'. Below the staff, there are two lines of rhythmic notation: 'R - R L R - R L R - R L R - R L'. The first two measures are separated by a vertical red line, and the last two measures are also separated by a vertical red line. A small house-shaped icon is positioned above the first note, and a musical note with a tail is positioned above the last note.

KUNDABIGOYA

Rhythm 1

DOM - DODOM - DODOM - KE RE - - KE RE - -

R - R L - L R - R L - - R L - -

Detailed description: This block shows a musical exercise on a five-line staff. The top line contains the lyrics 'DOM - DODOM - DODOM - KE RE - - KE RE - -'. The staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody consists of quarter notes on G4, A4, Bb4, and C5. The rhythm is indicated by a sequence of 'R' (right hand) and 'L' (left hand) characters below the staff. Vertical red lines separate the measures. A fermata is placed over the final note.

Rhythm 2

DOM - - DOM - - KE RE - - KA RA - - KE RE

R - - L - - R L - - R L - - R L

Detailed description: This block shows a musical exercise on a five-line staff. The top line contains the lyrics 'DOM - - DOM - - KE RE - - KA RA - - KE RE'. The staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody consists of quarter notes on G4, A4, Bb4, and C5. The rhythm is indicated by a sequence of 'R' (right hand) and 'L' (left hand) characters below the staff. Vertical red lines separate the measures. A fermata is placed over the final note.

LIBERTE

Rhythm 1

DOM KA RA - KE RE - KA RADOM - KA

R L R - R L - L R L - L

Detailed description: This block shows a musical exercise on a five-line staff. The top line contains the lyrics 'DOM KA RA - KE RE - KA RADOM - KA'. The staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody consists of quarter notes on G4, A4, Bb4, and C5. The rhythm is indicated by a sequence of 'R' (right hand) and 'L' (left hand) characters below the staff. Vertical red lines separate the measures. A fermata is placed over the final note.

Rhythm 2

DOM - - KE RE KEDOM - - DOM - - DOMKA - KE RE KEDOM - - DOM - -

R - - L R L R - - L - - R L - L R L R - - L - -

Detailed description: This block shows a musical exercise on a five-line staff. The top line contains the lyrics 'DOM - - KE RE KEDOM - - DOM - - DOMKA - KE RE KEDOM - - DOM - -'. The staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody consists of quarter notes on G4, A4, Bb4, and C5. The rhythm is indicated by a sequence of 'R' (right hand) and 'L' (left hand) characters below the staff. Vertical red lines separate the measures. A fermata is placed over the final note.

MBABA

Rhythm 1

dom - ke re ke - dom - ke re ke -

R - R L R - R - R L R -

Detailed description: This block shows a musical exercise on a five-line staff. The lyrics 'dom - ke re ke - dom - ke re ke -' are written above the staff. The melody is represented by black dots on the staff: the first 'dom' is on the first line, 'ke' on the second line, 're' on the second space, and 'ke' on the second line. The second 'dom' is on the first line, 'ke' on the second line, 're' on the second space, and 'ke' on the second line. A downward-pointing arrow is above the first 'dom', and a fermata is above the final 'ke'. Below the staff, the rhythm is indicated as 'R - R L R - R - R L R -', where 'R' stands for right hand and 'L' for left hand. Two vertical red lines separate the two phrases.

Rhythm 2

dom - - do ta - dom - ke re ke -

R - - L R - R - R L R -

Detailed description: This block shows a musical exercise on a five-line staff. The lyrics 'dom - - do ta - dom - ke re ke -' are written above the staff. The melody is represented by black dots: the first 'dom' is on the first line, followed by two rests, 'do' on the first space, 'ta' on the first line, 'dom' on the first line, 'ke' on the second line, 're' on the second space, and 'ke' on the second line. A downward-pointing arrow is above the first 'dom', and an upward-pointing arrow is above 'do'. A fermata is above the final 'ke'. Below the staff, the rhythm is indicated as 'R - - L R - R - R L R -', where 'R' stands for right hand and 'L' for left hand. Two vertical red lines separate the two phrases.

MENJANI

Rhythm 1

KA - KA - KE RE KA - KA - KE RE

R - L - R L R - L - R L

Detailed description: This block shows a musical exercise on a five-line staff. The lyrics 'KA - KA - KE RE KA - KA - KE RE' are written above the staff. The melody is represented by black dots: 'KA' on the first line, 'KA' on the first line, 'KE' on the second line, 'RE' on the second space, 'KA' on the first line, 'KA' on the first line, 'KE' on the second line, and 'RE' on the second space. An upward-pointing arrow is above the first 'KA'. A fermata is above the final 'RE'. Below the staff, the rhythm is indicated as 'R - L - R L R - L - R L', where 'R' stands for right hand and 'L' for left hand. Two vertical red lines separate the two phrases.

Rhythm 2

KA - KA RA - KA KE RE KA - KA -

R - R L - L R L R - R -

Detailed description: This block shows a musical exercise on a five-line staff. The lyrics 'KA - KA RA - KA KE RE KA - KA -' are written above the staff. The melody is represented by black dots: 'KA' on the first line, 'KA' on the first line, 'RA' on the first line, 'KA' on the first line, 'KE' on the second line, 'RE' on the second space, 'KA' on the first line, and 'KA' on the first line. An upward-pointing arrow is above the first 'KA'. A fermata is above the final 'KA'. Below the staff, the rhythm is indicated as 'R - R L - L R L R - R -', where 'R' stands for right hand and 'L' for left hand. Two vertical red lines separate the two phrases.

ODUNDE

Rhythm 1

DOM - - DOMKE RE | DOM - - DOMKE RE

R - - L R L | R - - L R L

Detailed description: This block shows a musical exercise on a five-line staff. The top line contains the lyrics 'DOM - - DOMKE RE | DOM - - DOMKE RE'. The staff has two measures. The first measure contains a whole note on the second line (D) and a half note on the first line (R). The second measure contains a half note on the second line (D), a quarter note on the second line (K), and a quarter note on the second line (E). The second measure of the second phrase is identical to the first. A vertical red line separates the two phrases. Below the staff, the rhythm is indicated as 'R - - L R L | R - - L R L'. A downward arrow points to the first note of the first measure, and an upward arrow points to the first note of the second measure. A fermata is placed over the final note of the second measure.

Rhythm 2

DOM - - DOMKE RE | DOM - - DOMKA -

R - - L R L | R - - L R -

Detailed description: This block shows a musical exercise on a five-line staff. The top line contains the lyrics 'DOM - - DOMKE RE | DOM - - DOMKA -'. The staff has two measures. The first measure contains a whole note on the second line (D) and a half note on the first line (R). The second measure contains a half note on the second line (D), a quarter note on the second line (K), and a quarter note on the second line (E). The second measure of the second phrase contains a half note on the second line (D) and a whole note on the second line (K). A vertical red line separates the two phrases. Below the staff, the rhythm is indicated as 'R - - L R L | R - - L R -'. A downward arrow points to the first note of the first measure, and an upward arrow points to the first note of the second measure. A fermata is placed over the final note of the second measure.

SABA

Rhythm 1

DOM - KE RE TA - | DOMKA RA KE TA -

R - R L R - | R L R L R -

Detailed description: This block shows a musical exercise on a five-line staff. The top line contains the lyrics 'DOM - KE RE TA - | DOMKA RA KE TA -'. The staff has two measures. The first measure contains a whole note on the second line (D), a quarter note on the first line (R), a quarter note on the second line (K), and a quarter note on the second line (E). The second measure contains a quarter note on the second line (D), a quarter note on the second line (K), a quarter note on the second line (R), and a quarter note on the second line (A). The second measure of the second phrase contains a quarter note on the second line (D), a quarter note on the second line (K), a quarter note on the second line (E), and a quarter note on the second line (T). A vertical red line separates the two phrases. Below the staff, the rhythm is indicated as 'R - R L R - | R L R L R -'. A downward arrow points to the first note of the first measure, and an upward arrow points to the first note of the second measure. A fermata is placed over the final note of the second measure.

Rhythm 2

DOM - KE RE TA - | DOMKE REDOMKE RE

R - R L R - | R L R L R L

Detailed description: This block shows a musical exercise on a five-line staff. The top line contains the lyrics 'DOM - KE RE TA - | DOMKE REDOMKE RE'. The staff has two measures. The first measure contains a whole note on the second line (D), a quarter note on the first line (R), a quarter note on the second line (K), and a quarter note on the second line (E). The second measure contains a quarter note on the second line (D), a quarter note on the second line (K), a quarter note on the second line (E), and a quarter note on the second line (R). The second measure of the second phrase contains a quarter note on the second line (D), a quarter note on the second line (K), a quarter note on the second line (E), and a quarter note on the second line (R). A vertical red line separates the two phrases. Below the staff, the rhythm is indicated as 'R - R L R - | R L R L R L'. A downward arrow points to the first note of the first measure, and an upward arrow points to the first note of the second measure. A fermata is placed over the final note of the second measure.

SULI

Rhythm 1

DOM - KA - KA RE - DOM KA - KE RE

R - L - R L - R L - R L

Detailed description: This block shows a musical exercise on a five-line staff. The top line contains notes for 'DOM - KA - KA RE - DOM KA - KE RE'. The bottom line contains rhythmic notation 'R - L - R L - R L - R L'. A square box with a downward arrow is positioned above the first 'R' on the bottom line. Two vertical red lines separate the staff into three measures. A fermata symbol is placed above the final note on the top line.

Rhythm 2

KE RE KE - DOM KE - DOM KE - DOM KE

R L R - R L - L R - R L

Detailed description: This block shows a musical exercise on a five-line staff. The top line contains notes for 'KE RE KE - DOM KE - DOM KE - DOM KE'. The bottom line contains rhythmic notation 'R L R - R L - L R - R L'. A square box with a downward arrow is positioned above the first 'R' on the bottom line. Two vertical red lines separate the staff into three measures. A fermata symbol is placed above the final note on the top line.

TRIBA

Rhythm 1

DOMKA RA - KA - DOMKA - DOMKA -

R L R - L - R L - R L -

Detailed description: This block shows a musical exercise on a five-line staff. The top line contains notes for 'DOMKA RA - KA - DOMKA - DOMKA -'. The bottom line contains rhythmic notation 'R L R - L - R L - R L -'. A square box with a downward arrow is positioned above the first 'R' on the bottom line. Two vertical red lines separate the staff into three measures. A fermata symbol is placed above the final note on the top line.

Rhythm 2

DOM - KA RA KA - DOMKE - KA RA -

R - R L R - R L - L R -

Detailed description: This block shows a musical exercise on a five-line staff. The top line contains notes for 'DOM - KA RA KA - DOMKE - KA RA -'. The bottom line contains rhythmic notation 'R - R L R - R L - L R -'. A square box with a downward arrow is positioned above the first 'R' on the bottom line. Two vertical red lines separate the staff into three measures. A fermata symbol is placed above the final note on the top line.

WOLOF

Rhythm 1

CHA - - - CHA - CHA - - DOM - - CHA - - - CHA - CHA - - DOM - -

R - - - R - R - - L - - R - - - R - R - - L - -

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. The melody consists of quarter notes on the G line (C4), quarter notes on the A line (D4), and quarter notes on the G line (C4). The rhythm is represented by vertical lines on a lower staff, with 'R' for right hand and 'L' for left hand. The sequence is R-R-L, R-R-L, R-R-L.

Rhythm 2

CHA - DODOM - - CHA - DODOM - - CHA - - - CHA - CHA - - CHA - -

R - L L - - R - L L - - R - - - R - R - - R - -

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. The melody consists of quarter notes on the G line (C4), quarter notes on the A line (D4), and quarter notes on the G line (C4). The rhythm is represented by vertical lines on a lower staff, with 'R' for right hand and 'L' for left hand. The sequence is R-L-L, R-L-L, R-R-R.

YAMAMA

Rhythm 1

DOM - - DOM - KE RE - DOM - - DOM - KE RE - DOM - - DOM - KE RE - KA RA KA PA KA PA KE -

R - - L - L R - R - L - L R - R - L - L R - R R R R R R R -

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. The melody consists of quarter notes on the G line (C4), quarter notes on the A line (D4), and quarter notes on the G line (C4). The rhythm is represented by vertical lines on a lower staff, with 'R' for right hand and 'L' for left hand. The sequence is R-L-L, R-L-L, R-L-L, R-R-R, R-R-R, R-R-R.

Rhythm 2

DOM KA RA - KE RE - - DOM KA RA - KE RE - -

R L R - R L - - R L R - R L - -

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. The melody consists of quarter notes on the G line (C4), quarter notes on the A line (D4), and quarter notes on the G line (C4). The rhythm is represented by vertical lines on a lower staff, with 'R' for right hand and 'L' for left hand. The sequence is R-L-R, R-L, R-L-R, R-L.

Glossary

Mande
Mali

Sunajata Keita
Gambia
Mandinka
Maninka
Nyamakala
Numu
Garanke
Jeli
Fina
Fino
Simbi
Ngone
Balaphone (Bala)
Koni
Kora
Djembe (jembe)
Dundun (djun-djun)
Sora
Nyama
Simbon Si (simbon na si)
Dankun Son
Jeliw
Bush
Jeliya
Kuma
Donkili
Foli
Jelike (Jeliku)
Jelimuso (Jelimusolu)
Endogamy
Konyo
Den Kun Li
Allah l'a Ke
Soli Si
Furi Si
Boloko Denu Don Bo
Jo
Komo
Ton
Ci Wara
Fodeba Keita
Les Ballets Africains
Ladji Camara
Habib Koite
Bamada
Balon
Simbi
Donso Ngoni
Nege
Su Fle
Naamu

Naamu Tigi
Tinye
Naamu Namina
Mbassi

Allah l'a Ke
Masani Cisse
Tabara
Jula Faso
Duga
Jeliya
Sunjata Fasa
Boloba
Lamban
Nyama, Nyama, Nyama, I Bara Kala Ta, Subaa Ni Mansaya
Mamaya
Jawura
Tutu Jara
Taara

Sangba
Kenkeni
Dundunba
Tama

Agaya
Ashiko
Coucou
Djole
Dundunbar
Kpanlogo
Kundabigoya
Liberte
Mbaba
Menjani
Odundi
Sabu
Suli
Triba
Wolof
Yamana