

Interview:

Marème Traoré

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Tags:

Senegal, Village: Khor Usine, Village: Ngolo Bougou, Town: Saint-Louis, Bambanan, Bambara, Ngolo Bougou, performance, diémbé, Slavery: Forced Labor, troupe, dance, song

Summary:

Marème Traoré's (nicknamed Faala) father (Siratigui Traoré) is from Diouck Island and her mother is from Toubé-Toubé; it was Marème's aunt who brought her to her current village of residence: Khor Usine (also known as Ngolo Bougou (Bougou meaning 'hut') on administrative papers). Ngolo was a man in the community who settled in this land and built his hut (Ngolo's hut).

- On language, Marème remarks that the Bambanan/Bambara community is strong. She only speaks Bambara with her family and is often contacted to discuss matters of Bambara culture. She establishes that there is clear distinction between Bambara from Khor and Bambara from Sénofobougou even though they often marry each other and speak the same language.
- On performance, Marème discusses her troupe, "Bambara, Humhum" and she is the stage director. The purpose of this troupe is to uphold and pass on Bambara culture from Bambara from Khor; thus, all performances are in Bambara even though most young people do not understand it. Maam Bóoy "sings her praises, talks about her lineage and her blessings." Everyone is welcome in this dance circle which is mainly encompassed by the kirin tradition but they also did Koma at one point. The troupe members dress in white and they dance to the beat of diémbé drummers.
- On slavery (forced labor), Marème mentions her acceptance of inter-caste marriage: "The main thing is that they love each other."

Main Themes:

Reference to the afterlives or impacts of slavery and colonialism: discussions of inter-caste marriage and Marème's acceptance of it.

Social status, social classes, social demarcations, and ethnic groups: discussions of inter-caste marriage and Bambara speakers: the Khor and the Sénofobougou.

Stand-out quote (regardless of theme): Marème explains the importance of her troupe in order to not let Bambara culture dissipate.

Quotes From Interview:

- [00:10:16~00:11:07] Maréme explains the importance of her troupe in order to not let Bambara culture dissipate.
 - Well, I've seen that Khor too, er, if we "kill" this ethnic group in Khor, it will become rare, because when we speak of Bambara, we think of Khor, that's here. Originally, we only played the tam-tam and so on, but as I said, I've always been passionate about theater. I'm a stage director. So when I came here, I got the girls together: those a little older than me, my peers and those a little younger than me. As we used to do theatrical performances during "nawétanes". When we did "nawétane", I was copied to lead the "nawétane" troupe. It was basically because of this that I created the troupe, until it became known and popular. . . In Bambara! in Bambara! but young people don't understand Bambara. Yes! young people don't understand Bambara; young people don't understand Bambara, but if there's a passage in Bambara, I only take those who understand. But you can even do theater in Wolof while dressing up in Bambara, doing Bambara dances, but it's all Bambara! Maybe it's just the words that make the difference, and I'm ready to answer any questions and take responsibility for everything.
- [00:19:40~00:20:33] **Maréme briefly mentions the distinctions between Bambaras from Khor and those from Sénofobougou.**
 - Yes! our relations... SENEFO BOUGOU, sénéfo is an ethnic group like the bambaras, but the sénéfo were distinguished from the bambaras by their long scars. They had scars, long scars. At first glance, you realize that these are Senéfo, these are Bambara. However, they married each other. I have a father who married one of my aunts. He, Pape Demba Coulibaly, was Senefo. He married into SENEFO BOUGOU; as he was an employee of my grandfather, the latter gave him my aunt's hand in marriage. So, through these relationships, they exchanged the names of their children and strengthened their ties. They took part in each other's ceremonies.