

Bodywork: Dress as Cultural Tool

Dress and Demeanor in the South of Senegal

by
Janet Andrewes



BRILL
LEIDEN • BOSTON
2005

CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The Diola	5
. . . their dress	9
. . . and their demeanour	11
Structure of this study	13
The scope of the study: dress as a cultural tool	15
The fieldwork	17

CHAPTER TWO

DRESS: A FORM OF COMMUNICATION OR A CULTURAL TOOL?

1. Introduction	19
2. Dress as a form of communication	20
The language of clothes: the similarities	20
. . . and the differences	22
Dress as a category of material culture: McCracken and Miller	24
3. Dress as a cultural tool	30
Dress in Africa: the experience of the dressed body	30
Mauss, body techniques and body language	34
Douglas, Foucault and Elias	38
The understanding body: Foley and Johnson	41
Bourdieu and the notion of habitus	43
Habitus and practical sense	46
Habitus and the power of dress	49
The flexibility of dress	53
4. This study: Jackson and lighting a fire	54

CHAPTER THREE

THE BASSE CASAMANCE IN CONTEXT

1. Introduction	59
The inhabitants of the Basse Casamance	60
The religions of the Basse Casamance	62
Diola social structure: a basic model	64
Kinship	64
Gender	65
Age	66
The main features of Diola religion	67
2. Historical background: 1500–1800	68
3. The nineteenth century and the origins of Diola identity	72
Trade with the Basse Casamance	74
Christianity in the Basse Casamance	76
Islamic influence in the Basse Casamance	79
4. The twentieth century	81
4a. Political developments	81
4b. Economic developments	84
4c. Religious developments	87
Conversion to Islam on the north bank	88
Conversion to Christianity on the south bank	90
5. Diola identity today	92

CHAPTER FOUR

SAMATITE: BALANCE, CONTINUITY AND THE
WORKING BODY

1. Introduction	95
The villagers: Belle and Mundung	97
2. Worldview in Samatite	101
2a. The relationship with the supernatural world	102
Emitai: harmony and continuity	102
The <i>pagne noir</i> , symbol of continuity	103
The spirit shrines: attitudes to disease and death	108
The body and the invisible world: disease and diagnosis	109

2b. The relationship with the natural environment	110
The sustainable economy: delimited technology and work as vocation	110
The limitation of technology	112
Work as vocation	113
The pivotal role of the body	116
Death, funerals and the experience of time and place in Samatite	117
" <i>La terre est remplis de pagnes</i> "	119
2c. Social relations in Samatite: a system of checks and balances	120
Cyclical supremacy: age, inheritance and polygamy	120
Jealousy and rivalry in Samatite	121
"They're not used to dressing"	123
Politics and ritual: the rain priest	126
Dress and the rain priest	127
Relations between men and women: two separate worlds	128
Dressing for occasions and occasions for dressing	131
Social change in Samatite: migrants and <i>intellectuels</i>	136
Urban habitus	138
2d. The relationship between the individual and the self	139
Individual identity and the body	140
3. Summary: balance, continuity and the working body	142

CHAPTER FIVE

SANTIABA: HIERARCHY AND THE
PERFORMING BODY

1. Introduction	147
The villagers: Jacquari and Bintou	149
2. Worldview in Santiaba	151
2a. The relationship with the supernatural world	154
God without nature	154
<i>Pagnes noirs</i> and <i>les choses anciennes</i>	155
The marabout and the imam	156
The body and the invisible world: <i>propriété</i> and <i>pureté</i>	158
2b. The relationship with the natural environment	160
Trees and cash crops in Santiaba	160

Work and technology in Santiaba	163
The elevated body	165
The experience of time and place in Santiaba	166
2c. Social relations in Santiaba: precedence and submission	167
Relations of political authority	167
Status and the <i>grand boubou</i>	169
Gender relations in Santiaba	174
Gender relations expressed in dress: dressing ' <i>correctement</i> '	176
Other social relationships	179
Dress, rank and unity	180
2d. The relationship between the individual and the self	181
Identity and the body	182
3. Summary	182

CHAPTER SIX

M'LOMP: CHRISTIANITY, EDUCATION AND THE ENCLOSED BODY

1. Introduction	185
The villagers: Brigitte and Patrick	188
2. Worldview in M'lomp	191
2a. The relationship with the supernatural: mediation of the spirit world	192
Pigs and <i>pagnes</i>	196
2b. The relationship with the natural environment	197
Christianity and agriculture in the context of M'lomp	197
The agricultural college in M'lomp	198
Christianity and the body in the context of M'lomp	202
The sewing atelier	204
The experience of time and place in M'lomp	208
2c. The consequences for social relations of conversion to Christianity: education and politics	209
Dressing like Europeans	210
2d. The relationship between the individual and the self	213
3. Summary	214

CHAPTER SEVEN

POSTSCRIPT: DRESS IN THE CITY

Urban dress and the 'expert' body	222
<i>Pagnes traditionnels</i> : a museum article	223
Business suits and <i>boubous</i>	226
Christians and the <i>grand boubou</i>	228
Summary	229

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

Samatite: the 'working' body	231
Santiaba: the 'performing' body	234
M'lomp: the 'enclosed' body	237
Bibliography	245
Index of Authors	253
Index of Subjects	255