

Karafa Mambui

Interview part 1

Transcribed and translated to French by: Kassim Diallo with Seidou Denbele

Translated to English by: Brian Nowak

Haya bara non anda tyonube yi bodo bege yay ere benen Lenbon a hin ye tyon be tyiow hin бага si hun e ye a te e jaman tigi gbe hin wobe.	I became a balaphone player thanks to my father Lonbon who played himself for our village chief.
Fiyon a key a van kinen.	He continued to play throughout his older years.
Kape nyen laton gbe kudi e han.	He only had daughters.
Aa byo non kelo susu kemi san dere ton bero kemi ton bero a hi a zani kami tea hi a lonbo bye e hi impe tumu e kan sin.	He had a promise to the land that if he managed to have a son, he would be ready to renounce his life to be replaced by me. <i>*promise to the land – an animist expression signifying a pact between one or more Earth spirits.</i>
Ta bye hunu enda duro kani.	He died when I was nine years old.
A pe tyonu gboshi mun do ban yuru naha engo ve mihe enban batka ban beka.	On his funeral day, I played his balaphone and I continued to play around with it.
A ke lolun do me nadon a va momi bwabe kon goro,	Our chief came in person to our home to bring me a boubou in order to commemorate my role,
A me ne zo niami a e key a a bebe jamana tigi gbe,	since my father had sung the praises of the chieftom,
e la lalo a huru e pe a djo zu a koni minie a mope tyonu e gbe.	he understood that I was a boy that would be able to fulfill the role.
A mi kakaw a mi nene pon koro wo e kye ni me bye ho keya.	He presented me to the other griots as the one he preferred.

<p>Kumo konhun lulu kani a pe tyonu ani ban beke a ban ju lulu kirwo wa bonbon holosi ene nihin fe.</p>	<p>So at nine years old I took my father's place but I was nothing but a beginner.</p>
<p>Dawo be ke minye lulo piriw wa bonbon hosi en de wo gbe en wo zo ni kinhen.</p>	<p>It was at the age of fourteen that I mastered the balaphone.</p>
<p>Hun da ba hari ke mi we keyn mya bge.</p>	<p>It was then that I had the authorization to play among the elders.</p>
<p>Yo te ken miyan ke fin a guwo gbe wabe haho pe enda fyanw laro en pe tumu lo ada mene sye.</p>	<p>Even when there is travel involved, they call on me for different ceremonial occasions.</p>
<p>E ne nin yo gaye em mene sye nin yo kaye bomin em pe e kakaro herele.</p>	<p>Then I was counted among the principal griots of the village.</p>
<p>Hoyi bore en keni kawé key a te min kyen en mo an ne zin tyan hen.</p>	<p>It was a skill that remains an inheritance and a part of our cultural heritage.</p>
<p>En mo a kelo hun en ne biro le debe pomin min nep tumu pe handi.</p>	<p>I am currently the most respected balaphone player in my village.</p>
<p>Ne donu kabe wi barahun leyuru lo hohe yamulo a zintya le ton.</p>	<p>I am the one that animates funeral ceremonies, naming ceremonies and weddings.</p>
<p>Kenbeyi vey an e hen biro sin wo we min fo kan be van pli tyonu a bebe kuli a tyenoe.</p>	<p>If I do not play at any one of these ceremonies, people aren't happy. When I started, I would play without singing.</p>
<p>En hin wobe le tyonu hye ho gayin ya kooni.</p>	<p>People would really criticize me saying there's that player that doesn't sing.</p>
<p>E be nin biro e fi (et pourquoi) a ho wye enda ya kooni.</p>	<p>In the beginning it really bothered me a lot to sing in front of people and that's why I would go to practice in the bush.</p>
<p>En wo zo kooni ka be nen kooni fo envema yaa zondo en gno ho nyemu entu en ben konye.</p>	<p>The first time that I sang in front of people, I was drunk and it just came to me naturally.</p>

<p>A ebe nim biryo yaa ken dan san en bye wo (kuma ce) e wo be kenin kooni.</p> <p>Fiyon menen don nikye nin ken pewo kooni he di kelo hun kebele zin tyan hen le kenika le.</p> <p>Wi nin mahun ken tite en neban a bebe kenin kooni.</p> <p>Sinon Boomin en peke lohun enme biro domin le pomini.</p> <p>En min we ho npe ni doonu peni yire ebenen Memwe Kerefe key a yere e bene lonbo ken in yere ebene hetaata.</p> <p>Si bore domin ban lohun ya he pi kekero e temin balon en hinamon.</p> <p>Hayi bore kenikawe hoke kyen en hinamon kenin dinyan ke gnonchi.</p> <p>Ke bono do wi en pio me dyo wa min a dyo.</p>	<p>There, people appreciated it and that was when I just kept on singing.</p> <p>In my village, I've been able to train a lot of other griots.</p> <p>Whenever I want I can ask my students to play the balaphone and sing.</p> <p>But still, I continue to be the most respected in the village.</p> <p>My name is Mambui Kerefe, my father's name is Lonbon and my mother Hetaata.</p> <p>My father was the one that initiated me and I continue to carry on his work.</p> <p>This music is a heritage and I'll stop in case maybe you have some questions.</p> <p>Of course, if you something else you could add we are ready to listen to more.</p>
---	---