

Baye Fall: Senegalese Islam, Mouride  
Anthropologic Research of “Daara Tarbiyya” (Educational Village)

Year: 2015

Fieldwork Location: The Republic of Senegal

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Key Words: Senegal, Islam, Sufi, Movement Mouride, religious ritual, oral history

- Research Background

The Baye Fall is a branch group of the Mouride, the Islamic Sufi movement in Senegal. Ibra Fall, a disciple of the movement’s founder, Ahmadou Bamba, founded the Baye Fall community in Mouride. The community works for their *marabout* (Islamic reader or saint) and shows their submission (*njebbel*) for marabout and work (*liggey*).

Movement Mouride is focused on the history or doctrine of “pray and labor.” Previous researchers have observed the religious rituals of Baye Fall, with most addressing the question: who is the Baye Fall, and what is the Baye Fall religion? No perspectives exist concerning the Mouride and Baye Fall history and how rituals were organized in urban cities and villages.

- Research Purpose

For this research, I observed Baye Fall practices and questioned them about their history. I researched each marabouts and group of Baye Fall. Based on this, I determined the differences among the communities.

I stayed in a village of Baye Fall known as “*Daara Ndiguel*” (the term *daara* means the Qur’an school and the villages), in the Louga region on the north side of Senegal. The village *Ndiguel* was created by the marabout in 1988 and his disciples of Baye Fall came here with their families. I conducted interviews with their families and discovered the reasons for the transfer to Baye Fall. I also observed activities and practices.

For comparative research, I visited a daara in an urban city (a daara in urban cities refers to the location of education and practice), such as the capital city Dakar.

- Results of Fieldwork

In each region of Senegal, religious communities “daaras” exists. Both the disciple Mouride and Baye Fall have appointed the daara for education. On this trip, I discovered that the doctrine of Baye Fall followed not only the Islamic bible Qur’an, but the Amadu Bamba writings of “Xasside.” The doctrine is also based on the oral history of Ibra Fall, which contain differences in the idea of “labor (liggey)” among the marabouts and differences in religious practices. Some daaras in the city were created for maajal (begging on the street) and some were created for agriculture. Each daara has their own practices or rhythms in Sikar (Zikr, chanting, or singing in the name of Allah).

- Implications and Impacts on Future Research

For this effort, I focused on the religious practices of Mouride brotherhood and Baye Fall. I was not able to research the Mouride in the colonial era or the Islamic history of West Africa prior to French colonization. I would conduct research on these historical points and prepare a paper for a Master’s degree.



Picture1: Baye Fall on the streets of Dakar



Picture2: Daara, a location for the education of Baye Fall



Picture3: Sikar (Zikr), chanting in the name of Allah