

# Soli / Donba / Soukou (& Woimafoly)

WAP-pages / Paul Nas / Last updated on 25 March 2015

Söli (Soli rapid, Soukou, Donba) and also the Wassolon Söli, is a rhythm of the Malinke-people from Guinea. It accompanies the rite which precedes initiation (and circumcision) of boys and girls. Playing this rhythm occasionally starts about three months before the ritual. The frequency of playing rises uptill ongoing during the last night before initiation. This night the man and women dance all night long. Even though circumcision is practised more often in the hospital than in the village these days, (and carried out before 40 days of age instead of around the age of seven) the significance during the transition-period remains. Apart from Conakry, the capitol of Guinea, in the countryside you will never hear the rhythm without the appropriate rites. There is a slow version of söli, the söli -lente (see also Balakulanya), where also the elderly people can dance, and a quick söli; the söli-rapide of which you can find notation below. Although circumcision is considered to be mutilation nowadays (and I, Paul Nas agree with that) the rhythm söli is to beautiful not to play it for that reason.

The song below can be heard in the Sousou-language or (as you will find here) the Malinke-language. The lyrics are about Sangba (or Samba) an orphan boy who is raised by near family. The child is treated badly and has to do the most unpleasant jobs in the house. One day the child walks through the woods and comes to a cabin. It bangs on the door and begs to die here as it don't want to go home. The first line sung by the solist is answered by the choir. The solist breaks this repeating by singing the second line that is answered by 'aya'.

*Sangba, sangba dyidan dabidé n' kassou Baba woulou kiridi ya, aya*  
(in Sousou first line: *Sangba, sangba kinda nabiya aya*)

Call	djembé	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T
	sangban							■	
	doundoun						■	●	●

Call / Intro	T	T	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	B	T	B
long		r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r		

	T	T	S	S	S	B	T	B	T	T	T	T	B	T	B
	r	r		r		r	r			r	r	r	r		

Kenkeni	high			●	●					●	●
	low	●	●				●	●			

Sangban	●		○	○		■			
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Doundoun	●	●				■	●	●
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Djembé 1	S	T	S	S	T	S
	r		r		r	

Djembé 2	S	S	T	T	S	S	T	T
	r		r		r		r	

Djembé	T	T	S	B	B	T	T	S
solo accomp.1	r		r		r		r	

Djembé	T	T	S	t	S	B	S	B	S
solo accomp.2	r		r		r		r		



Combi kenkeni				●	●							●	●			
sangban	●					●		●							●	
doundoun		●				●		●		●					●	●
bell	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Wassolon Soli:

Sangban	●	●			●	●	○		●	●			●	●	○
Wassolon Soli	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Djembé solo 1	T	T	S		S		S	S	T	T	S		S		S	S
phrase 1	r	l	r		l		r	l	r	l	r		l		r	l

	B		T		S		T		S	B		T		S		T	S
phrase 2	r		r		l		r		l	r		r		l		r	l

	T	T	T	T	T		B		B		B		B			
phrase 3	f	r	l	r	l	r	l	r	l	r	l	r	l	r	l	r

	S		S	S		S	S		S	S		B		B		B		B
phrase 4	f		r	l		r	l		r	l		r		r		r		r

	T	T	S	S		T	T	S	S		B		B		B		B	
phrase 5	r	l	r	l		r	l	r	l		r		r		r		r	

	S	S	S	S		S	S	S	S		B		B		B		B	
phrase 6	r	l	r	l		r	l	r	l		r		r		r		r	

	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
phrase 7	f	r	l	r	l	r	l	r	l	r	l	r	l	r	l

	T	T	T		S	T	T	T	S	B	S				
a	f	r	l	r	l	f	r	l	r	l	r	l			

	T	T	T		S	T	T	T	S	B	S		B	S		B	S	
b	f	r	l	r	l	f	r	l	r	l	r	l	r	l	r	l	r	l



ending	S	S	S	S	T	S	T	S	
	2	r	l	r	r	l	r	l	r
sangban	●	●	●	●	●	●			and
bell	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		back
doundoun	●	●	●	●	●				to
bell	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		loop

### Sources

Lessons: Martin Bernhard, Mamoudou 'Delmundo' Keita, Ponda O'Bryan, Momo Touré, Jaco Benders.

Dance lessons: Bebe Youla, Danielle van Son.

Written material: , Famoudou Konaté, Serbe Blanc, Mamady Keita, Åge Delbanco, Ponda O'Bryan, Paul Janse, Larry Morris, Rafaël Kronberger.