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**VOLUME 9**

**SOCIO-CULTURAL DATA**

**BORGOU**



**Multinational Agribusiness Systems Incorporated**

**PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BENIN**  
**MINISTRY OF PLANNING, STATISTICS AND ECONOMIC ANALYSIS**

**VOLUME 9**

**SOCIO-CULTURAL DATA**

**BORGOU**

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROJECT FOR THE  
DEVELOPMENT  
OF  
ONCHO-FREE AREAS**

**CENTRAL BUREAU FOR PROJECTS  
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VOLUME 9  
 SOCIO-CULTURAL DATA  
 BORGOU  
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## VOLUME 9

### BORGOU

#### SOCIOCULTURAL DATA

##### I. ETHNIC GROUPS. SOCIOCULTURAL ASPECTS

BENIN is characterized by great diversity in ethnic groups. There are more than thirty groups, broken down into nine major categories:

1. ADJA
2. FON and related groups
3. BARIBA and related groups
4. DENDI and related groups
5. DJOUGOU and related groups
6. HOUEDA and related groups
7. PEULH
8. OTAMMARI or SOMBA
9. YORUBA and related groups

Whereas in ATACORA one finds primarily OTAMMARI and related groups, YORUBA and related groups, DJOUGOU and related groups, in BORGOU the most important group by far is the BARIBA. DENDI and PEULH groups are to be found in both provinces.

Despite the great diversity of the ethnic groups inhabiting the two Northern Provinces, certain common cultural traits can be found. Thus, a certain social consensus which creates the unity of each group stems around tradition and the ancestors.

Indeed, tradition deeply molds the life of each of these groups, dictating the moral rules to be observed, the standards of behavior to be followed and the ceremonies to be practiced throughout life. Old people, witch doctors, fetishists enjoy great prestige. As the guardians of a social order inherited from the past they assure the link and communication between the living and the dead, a link that is necessary to the survival of the group. The social function of the numerous ceremonies distinguishing the great stages of their lives (birth, initiation process, marriage, death) or tracing the great stages of the agricultural production cycle (planting and harvesting) is to assure the social coherence of the group, consolidating its unity around the ancestors.

Under this perspective, changes can only be accepted if they do not alter the social order established by the ancestors, if they are not contrary to tradition, beliefs, customs or traditional practices. Indeed, no important decision can be reached without consulting in advance with the ancestors, through the witch doctors and religious leaders. The social status of women is not in keeping with the economic and social role they have within each of these groups dominated and ruled by and for men. Thus, women have a very important economic and social role, participating in agricultural production on the same footing as man, while being responsible for the household and for raising the children. Women, however, do not take part in the decision-making process, as they are considered intrinsically inferior to men. Woman is the servant of man and her only recognized social function is that of reproducing.

Furthermore, the groups comprising heavily structured and hierarchical semi-feudal micro-societies are characterized by great inequalities among the persons of standing (old kings, traditional chiefs, fetishists) and the common ordinary people.

The more detailed descriptions that follow on these various groups come from replies obtained from sociocultural questionnaires directed to the Revolutionary Committees of Administration of the district (Comités Révolutionnaires d'Administration du district - CRAD), the Revolutionary Communal Councils (Conseils Communaux Révolutionnaires - CCR) and the Local Revolutionary Councils (Conseils Locaux Révolutionnaires - CRL). In other words, they were addressed to the district chiefs and their advisers, the mayors of the communes and the delegates of the villages. Some descriptions are very complete, others are too brief, depending upon the questionnaires returned to us. The characterization of the ethnic groups presented ahead is important owing to the fact that it is universally recognized today that certain cultural traits play a fundamental role in the success or failure of any development program and that they must be taken into consideration. Development is not only the result of certain economic and organizational behavior, but also cultural behavior, these three components being very closely interrelated and mutually conditional. The role of women is very often minimized since women lack any consideration or prestige in certain societies. This, however, does not prevent them from having a paramount economic and social role in those societies or ethnic groups. It is also important to understand how tradition molds life and the social organization of the group or determines its social structure and to examine the systems of official recognition set up by elderly men, fetishists and witch doctors to sustain and maintain this structure which becomes dysfunctional vis-à-vis the needs of modern agriculture. Lastly, the attitude of each of these groups to changes must be considered, in order not to impinge on their deepest beliefs by opposing certain ancestral practices.

## A. The BARIBA

The BARIBA are scattered in numerous villages of BORGOU, where they are the dominant group. They also inhabit some communes of ATACORA, in particular in the districts of KEROU and KOUANDE. They are well known as great cultivators. In the region of BANIKOARA they practice two types of agriculture: industrial farming (cotton) and food farming (yams, sorghum, corn, peanuts). they make much use of draft animals in this region and own large farms ranging from 10 to 20 hectares in size. They also raise animals and engage in small-scale trade in the region of KEROU-KOUANDE.

### 1. The Role of Women

This group practices polygamy for historical and economic reasons, but also because of prestige since it is a sign of being well off. Indeed, in the past the goal was to have "a lot of people to be able to resist the various warlike invasions" (CCR Kérou). The economic reason resides in the fact that "to have a lot of women also gives greater security to a man: if there is only one wife in the house there will be times when the wife is traveling; in that case the household will not be able to eat; and also if there is only one woman in the house she will try to be boss" (Koussou). It is therefore the man who must command, and command effectively in the household, "because it is he who feeds the family". Nevertheless, women help their husbands in farming tasks, in the planting as well as in the harvesting. Also women pick produce, such as Shea nuts, they prepare drinks and food and soap to sell. They also spin cotton. They keep house, do the cooking and take care of the children, but they do not participate in decision making. The woman,

therefore, is below the man in terms of status. She is considered to be inferior to a man, as the "object of man" (DANRI-PEULH), as the "companion of a man" (CRAD GOGOUNOU; CCR of KEROU) or sometimes even as "the pillar of the household", because without the woman the house is never in order. It is the woman who constitutes the village (CRL Kossou). But the woman must be completely obedient to the man.

## 2. The Influence of Tradition

Tradition affects the life of the group by making it possible, to transmit cultural values inherent in the BARIBA, and, by also impeding the evolution of the group through the continuation of feudalism. The old remain faithful to tradition while the young tend to reject it, "which brings about conflict of generation between the two parties" (CCR Kérou). Thus, among the BARIBA one does not cut wood, one does not sell a tree, and one does not pound at night. The reason is to prevent nighttime diseases. The wife must not answer back to the husband. There is no talking while eating. There are no riddles during the rainy season. There are some old people who are not supposed to sleep in a hut made of sheet metal or in a rectangular hut. They must not eat on an imported plate. To sum up, they should not come into contact with imported goods. They can only eat from local plates. They have to perform certain ceremonies before eating the newly-harvested yam" (CCR Kérou). In effect, tradition exercises a genuine constraint on the life of the group, by prescribing the rules of behavior to be followed and the ceremonies to be performed throughout life. As stated by the CRL of Maro: "tradition has great content; it represents the customs of the ancestors and a certain number of principles that have to be followed".

For the CRL of DANRI-PEULH, tradition "slows down economic activity, brings about a lot of expenses. It forces the young and the entire group to submit to its requirements".

Among the most common prohibitions are the fact that women cannot touch certain fetishes (BANIKOARA), that a BARIBA cannot marry a PEULH woman, that direct cousins cannot marry, that certain animals cannot be eaten whose skin has caused diseases and decimated the ancestors, etc. Among the fetishes are trees, mountains, holy stones, convents, the tombs of the old traditional chiefs, twins, "marigots" (small brooks), etc.

For the BARIBA the king is the supreme leader. The people have to respect the laws issued by him and pay respect to him by "greeting him flat on one's stomach".

Lastly, the rules of politeness are very elaborate. Thus, when "a young person sees an old person carrying a load he will carry it for the old person." Also, when greeting an old person "a young person must bow down, and take off his shoes from far away before greeting him" (CRL Maro).

The BARIBA respects fetishes, to which he regularly offers sacrifices. Ancestors are very important in the life of the group, since "they fight against the problems of the village. They are the first to lead the living and to assure their well-being" (SEKOGOUROU). For many the ancestors are the center of the family, they are considered as fetishes, as protecting gods, and they are respected and honored as such. The CCR of KEROU describes their role as follows: "the importance of the ancestors in the life of the BARIBA is paramount.

Whether it be in the case of production, delivery of a child, or marriage, the ancestors are always consulted during ritual ceremonies. In short, they are able to cause or to stop a disease. Their manifestation is presented by signs that are very well known by old people. They can activate or prevent a child delivery, permit a good or a bad harvest, according to their will. The ancestors are considered as living and participate in all human activities".

The symbols used by the group are gashes on the face. The social class of the person can be determined by where these scars are located. Many other symbols are used by the BARIBA. Thus, witch doctors carry cowries (mollusks used as money in Africa) on the left wrist. A person wearing a bracelet of cowries on the right wrist is a redeemed man: all of his brothers and sisters are dead and he is kept alive only by the grace of the fetishes.

When an animal is found at the end of a stake in the form of a plate, this means the end of an epidemic, which is thus preventing from laying waste to a village. A portion of "seco" (a braid of herbs) obstructing a road means that there is an epidemic in a neighboring village and the purpose of that braid is to prevent the disease from going beyond.

When a pile of branches is found at the edge of the road, this means either that there has been a murder there (and then every passerby throws a branch to say that he does not want to die in the same way) or else that someone has been caught by surprise committing adultery there.

Throwing branches means that the person throwing them does not want to be in the same situation. Finally, a small fragment, a wire or a strip of white paint around the house signifies that there is an epidemic or a seriously-ill person in that house.

The most important moral standards observed by the group are strict respect for the elderly and for the parents. For example: "a child is not supposed to pull the beard of an old man and must not put his hand into the pocket of an old man" (SEKOGOUROU). The shoes have to be taken off in greeting an old person. Secrets must not be disclosed. One must not steal. One must not love a neighbor's wife. As a matter of fact, everyone must be paid the respect due to him by the social rank acknowledged for the person by the group.

The BARIBA is very proud. He considers himself superior to the others and stakes all his honor to respecting traditional moral rules and to doing good around him. For example, "if a stranger arrives, the entire village helps him up to the time that he is established. If the stranger requires work to be done or something to eat, the village supports him" (CRL Kossou). For the BARIBA "it is better to die than to live dishonorably" (CRAD GOGOUNOU). The CRL of Maro writes: "the BARIBA have a very strong sense of honor. Bearing in mind their pride since their birth, their social rank, they love to keep their honor. Thus, the BARIBA can lose his life at a given time to safeguard that honor". The Kérou CRL writes, in turn, "the entire life of the BARIBA is based on honor".

The most important for the group is precisely "prestige, honor and pride, since in all places and under all circumstances the BARIBA considers himself to be superior to the others and master over himself" (CRL Maro). For the CRL of SEKOGOUROU what is most important for the BARIBA is "power, wealth, the wife and the children. This is because with power one guards the family, with wealth one solves family problems and, lastly, with the wife and the children one has a nice house and enough food". Lastly, for the CCR of Kérou what is most important for the group is "to have a wife and children; courage, victory, honor and health".

### 3. The Customary Ceremonies

At the time of birth the ceremonies vary depending upon whether or not the BARIBA is a Moslem, and according to the villages. As a general rule, the Moslem BARIBA kills a lamb seven days after the birth has occurred and covers the baby who is then named. Rice is also prepared to feed everyone. In KEROU, "when a newborn baby arrives in the BARIBA midst, a cry of satisfaction is uttered to draw attention to the arrival of the new human being. One week later the child is baptized. The parents and friends get together in the home of the newborn and chicken are slaughtered to be served to those who came. A name is given to the child and it all ends". In SEKOGOUROU "once a child is born, the people run out to cry that a birth has taken place before the newborn is even washed. The parents of the newborn child look for wood to feed the fire for a week. After that week has elapsed, the mother of the newborn child dresses herself and greets the people of the village".

During the initiation period the child is circumcized in GOGOUNOU. However, in the districts of KEROU and KOUANDE there is no particular ceremony since "once born the child is flung into the world" (CCR KEROU).

The marriage ceremonies vary somewhat from one village to another. There are marriages with a dowry and marriages without a dowry. In the case of marriages with a dowry, the boy's father negotiates with the parents of the girl they have chosen for their son. When the boy and girl have reached the age to marry (18 to 22 years) "the parents of the young man give the parents of the young girl seven chickens, a bundle of sorghum and yams to state that it is time for the marriage to take place. A few days later the parents of the young man bring the parents-in-law a yam tuber and a rooster to establish the date of the marriage. Once the marriage day has arrived, the young people go to find the girl and accompany her to the future husband where she is washed at night by an old woman. At five in the morning she returns to her parents to be picked up at six in the evening by the parents of the young man. An evening of entertainment and a feast are then organized to close the ceremony" (CCR KEROU). In the district of GOGOUNOU the parents of the young man "gather an uneven number of yam tubers (99 or 101) and seven chickens that are offered to the girl's parents. On the day of the ceremony "an old woman who has proven her fidelity in her own home is charged with carrying the newlywed on her back to the house of the girl's husband. The girl must now follow the example of this old woman" (CRAD GOGOUNOU).

In SEKOGOUROU the marriage ceremony lasts two days: Saturday and Sunday. "On the first day of the marriage ceremony, that is to say on Saturday, a chicken's egg

is cut on a crossroads and the bride that has just been married must pass over the egg, invoking the help of God so that she can bear offspring normally. Then the parents-in-law are given sorghum, beef and money (5,000 francs)". In Kossou the boy's father "gets young people who will go to the girl to take her to the husband's house. Then everyone gathers to eat and drink. Minstrels will also come and they will receive their part of the food and money. Then music is played".

In BORGOU, the ceremonies last from 2 to 7 days. In the region of BANIKOARA, after the dowry is handed over, the young girl is led to the home of the newlyweds by the friends of the husband and the friends of the bride. On the 10th day the young girl goes to the home of her parents from where the family of the husband will bring her back at night. This is the end of the ceremonies.

For funeral ceremonies all of the members of the family are brought together, a steer is slaughtered and drinks are prepared. Although the deceased person is buried on the very day of death in the case of a prince, and on the next day for the others, the ceremonies last from one week to a month. After 2 or 3 months there are the sacrificial ceremonies as a last farewell to the deceased person. On that occasion a "pâte" is prepared. The children of the deceased throw that "pâte" onto a path. They turn their shoulders to throw the "pâte", saying that his meals are over. Then they return to the house to eat and drink and old people come to congratulate the children (CRL Kossou).

In KEROU the only ceremonies are for old men and women. "As soon as the person has died, they go out or run to the foot of a tree not far from the house where a drum

is beaten all night long. On the next day a grave is dug in the cemetery and the corpse is placed into the grave without, however, closing it. In the evening, around 5 p.m. the actual burial takes place. Mourning lasts for a week. A few years later the closing ceremony is carried out. This ceremony requires amazingly high expenditures: a refreshment bar, victuals for everyone (3,000 persons at least) for 7 days (CRL Kérou).

The true BARIBA "of SINENDE and GOGOUNOU (by true BARIBA we mean archer-warriors) are buried in a cylindrical grave (just after death the body is folded into a ball shape) in a special place called "yerou" and they are covered by a black loin-cloth. The princes (Wassangaris) are buried in a rectangular tomb and covered by white loin-clth. In BANIKOARA the BARIBA who are not Moslems are half-buried. The ceremonies take 3 days, with dances, and the dead person is fully buried on the third day.

The feast of the Gani can be mentioned in particular among the other important feasts. In the past it had considerable social importance. It was the occasion for princes and important people to meet, around sacred drums and trumpets, the greatest symbols of the unity of the kingdom. This feast is still celebrated with great ostentation in NIKKI. The little princes are baptized and the important people and chiefs are appointed during this feast.

In KEROU, the Gani is celebrated this way: "when the day arrives, work is suspended and people go to the village chief with the horses and the elderly form a caravan around the chief to go to pray to the fetish.

They ask for the fetish's protection, and peace and health for the village. The procession returns to the chief's home, installs him, and the festival continues with horse racing and folklore dances. A reception is held at the chief's home in the evening. On the second day the youth participate with horse racing, dances, and the festival continues (CRL Kérou).

The BARIBA also celebrate other festivals, such as the festival of fire, and the ceremonies on the occasion of the harvesting of new yams and cereals. Lastly, in Kossou there is also a large festival celebrated in the honor of those who have died in the past five years, totaling more than 100 dead persons. The people from all of the villages, near and far, come to gather. This ceremony lasts one week. During that week they eat and drink. Then, those who have parents among the deceased offer gifts of money and loin-cloth to the witch doctors. To start out they appoint a chief to lead the ceremony".

#### 4. Inequalities in the Group

The inequalities in the group are the result of historical circumstances, the various wars in particular waged by the BARIBA during which they took prisoners, slaves. Thus, one can distinguish "the true BARIBA, the Wassangaris", who are a group of princes, the "Wassangaris" who are superior to slaves but inferior to the true BARIBA (CCR KEROU). Today these inequalities are based on the purity of the race and the social status at birth. This results in "a distrust and a discrimination in the group", a "lack of cohesion which ends finally in poisonings and assassinations among neighbors" (SEKOGOUROU).

There are therefore inequalities of origin: Wassangaris and the common ordinary people; inequalities of sex: women are inferior to men; and inequalities in income. This means that inequalities are very marked among the BARIBA, a group which constitutes a society that is highly structured and hierarchical.

The members with the greatest prestige are the princes, the "Wassangaris", the village chiefs and the elderly, who people fear might draw a curse against them, and lastly the fetishists and the witch doctors, and then the other members of the group.

In the village of Kossou, "the members with the greatest prestige are the healers. They are responsible for the life of the people. They are the ones who take care of all of the sick persons of the village".

##### 5. System of Mutual Aid

The mutual aid system is very developed in the BARIBA. Thus, "in the case of a fire, all other work is suspended until the house that was on fire has been repaired. When a farmer is behind in his agricultural tasks the others come to his aid, and so forth in all fields" (Kérou). The same holds true in the case of disease, death of a member of a household, or even ceremonies.

The system of work in common, known under the name of "Wourou" is used for all important jobs, such as to repair the roofs of huts, tilling and threshing of yams, or even the field work of sick persons.

## 6. Attitude towards Change

The BARIBA are not very prone to accept changes, if such changes run counter to tradition or question their social structure. Thus the CRL in Maro writes the following: "the group is more or less hostile to changes, since they consider outsiders who have come to perform this or that function to be persons who tend to disrupt their social structure". Also, there are "laws that are not suitable for the people" (Kossou) and in this case the BARIBA oppose them and attempt to break them. The CCR of KEROU recognizes, in turn, that with the changes that have taken place and have been imposed upon the people "certain traditional values disappear, creating a generation conflict among the young who have accepted these changes and the elderly who oppose them and who accuse the young of being perverted".

It would appear that the BARIBA are not very open to other ethnic groups, considering themselves to be a superior race. Thus, the CRL of SEKOGOUROU considers that there is genuine racial segregation among the PEULH, the GANDO (BARIBA slaves or black PEULH) and the BARIBA. "A BARIBA is not supposed to marry a PEULH and a PEULH is not supposed to marry a GANDO, but a GANDO can marry a PEULH. The BARIBA consider the GANDO to be like slaves and a BARIBA loses his worth if he marries a PEULH" (SEKOGOUROU). The CRL of Maro shares this opinion when he writes that "the attitude of the group towards other ethnic groups is quite closed. Concerning marriage, there are races that the group considers to be inferior and consequently they should not marry their daughters". These inferior races are the PEULH, and the

OTAMMARI and related groups in particular. But the BARIBA love to live in their company, while exploiting them at the same time (CRL KALALE). The tendency of the BARIBA is to minimize the other groups because of the BARIBA's princely origin, "descendants of the Sounon Sero Kissira ancestors of NIGERIA".

## B. The BOKO

They are farmers who use draft animals mostly (KALALE). They grow food crops and crops for industrial uses (cotton). They work a lot in groups, in the GRVC, and agricultural cooperatives. They are found in BORGOU, primarily in the region of KALALE.

### 1. The Role of Women

The men practice polygamy to obtain labor. This is also a source of prestige, however. The women play an economic role in that they gather the Shea nuts, pick beans and néré. They make Shea nut butter, mustard, jars and pots. They also do weaving. "A woman of good character helps her husband support the family" (CRL Gbessassi). This means that women have an economic role that is significant. The rest of the time "they are busy with housekeeping tasks". However, they have no part in the decision-making process: "a woman has nothing to say concerning decisions" (KALALE). Her status is inferior to that of a man (CRL Liboussou) and she is considered as "man's companion who is ready for reproduction purposes" (CRL KALALE). According to the CCR of Liboussou, she is considered as a domestic to serve the head of the household and the family.

## 2. The Influence of Tradition

Tradition plays a very deep role in the life of the BOKO through its numerous prohibitions and taboos, which have to be followed. If they are not followed then the persons involved are subject to punishment by the gods or can suffer the curse of the ancestors and the traditional chief. Tradition expresses a certain wisdom on community life and is transmitted by the elderly who provide advice to the young, such as for example "do not seek your neighbor's wife" (CRL Gbessassi). This advice is understood even more so because the young do not choose their wives freely; from the earliest age of the children, the parents choose the future spouses for their children and the children must necessarily obey their selection.

A certain number of traditional customs are based on ancestral beliefs. Thus, after a baby is born after two consecutive unsuccessful births it is named "fo". To keep the child alive it must be carried from "tata" (house) to "tata" until a guardian is found for it who will take care of the child in one way or another until the age of puberty.

If it is a breech birth the child cannot live in the family. The same holds true when the child's first teeth grow in the upper jaw.

When a man loses a wife he has to change huts or else transfer the portal to another place.

Some of the most common prohibitions are: a rabbit cannot be brought into the house, because this causes convulsive fevers in the child; domestic cats, turtle-doves, etc., cannot be kept; eggs are forbidden in children's diets otherwise they would be taught to steal; the oldest son must not eat with the father from the same plate.

Trees and pebbles are revered. It is through them that man can communicate with the gods or with the invisible. Deceased twins are represented by statuettes, which prolongs their survival.

When clearing a new field, it is not good to see a doe or a guinea-fowl on the plot because that brings bad luck. The same holds true when a BOKO encounters a chameleon while traveling.

Lastly, a traditional custom is hunting. The round up of small animals takes place right after the harvests.

Hunting for big game is very well organized and is a group activity. The minstrels then praise the best hunters.

The ancestors have a great importance for the group. Thus, a family is proud if its ancestors had heroic victories, if they are of royal lineage, or if an ancestor was recognized as a great buffalo hunter. Before the new yams are eaten, a sacrifice has to be made on the tomb of the ancestors. The little children are given the names of ancestors and they are often told of their great deeds.

The sense of honor is particularly developed concerning virginity in the girls before they get married. Honor in men translates into bending the knees when greeting older people.

The most important moral rules are to take off the shoes when entering a house, taking your hat and shoes off when greeting a superior. Children must not insult adults. Finally, there is a spirit of mutual aid which is very favorable to the development of agricultural cooperatives.

### 3. The Customary Ceremonies

At the birth of a child the mother is confined in the hut for 7 days. On the day that the child is born the entire village goes to greet the mother. On the 7th day all of the women of the village get together to prepare a large quantity of "pâte" which is then distributed to the houses. The baptism occurs and then the mother resumes her household tasks.

For Moslems the sacrifice of a ram is mandatory.

At the age of 7, the young boys get together and organize hunting parties with little bows and arrows and wrestling matches in the moonlight. There are also gatherings around the fire where the old people tell them stories to assure the intellectual maturity of the young children.

Young girls have the clitoris removed (excision) at the age of 4. Boys are circumcized between the ages of 9 and 13. The boys and girls are taken outside of

the village and the operation is performed during a ceremony. After the operation, the boys and girls have to run to return to the village without looking back. As long as the wound has not healed, they are authorized to do anything they want and can use anything they find within their grasp (CRL Gbessassi). Then they are considered as men who can join the group of their ancestors.

For the marriage the young girl is taken hostage at night and brought to the young man's house until the end of the ceremonies, which last two weeks. Then the young bride returns to her parents where her parents-in-law go to get her. She then goes back again to the newlywed's home. For subsequent spouses the ceremony only lasts one week.

As concerns the Moslem BOKO, the young girl is confined in a hut the night before the marriage. On the day of the marriage she is baptized, washed and remains finally with her husband in his house.

When a death occurs it is customary to shroud the corpse in a white linen cloth. The ceremonies last for a week. The neighbors come to give their contribution to the family of the deceased person: money, yams or meat. One year later, tribute is paid once again to the deceased person. This is when the distribution of his estate is considered.

The fetishists organize ritual dances periodically during which the old initiate the new followers.

There is also the ceremony of assignment of the fetishes after the death of the woman who is the guardian of the fetish. "The women of the clan are confined in a hut for 3 months. During that period everyone comes to play and dance. Sometimes cattle are slaughtered. Then a day is set for the ceremony and a woman from the group is selected by the fetish to become its guardian". The woman selected by the fetish is recognized by the fact that she falls into a trance during a given time of the ceremony.

There is also the feast of the Gani which is celebrated in all of the villages. On the day of the feast the entire village assembles to dance and express their joy.

One of the customs practiced by the group is that the young girl has to keep her virginity right up to her marriage to safeguard the honor of her family. Then the married woman wears a streamer on her scarf to distinguish herself from an unmarried girl.

Another custom is that the youngest have to bow down and take their shoes off to greet their elders.

The head of the household is the sole master of the family, even of a very large family. Everyone has to follow his orders and must respect and obey him.

The children are generally brought up by their uncles (Gbessassi) because a father cannot speak to his eldest son.

#### 4. Inequalities in the Group

The inequalities noted in the group are based on wealth, the supplies that are owned, and the feudal lineage, so that the rich and the poor, the princes and the slaves are distinguished from one another. Furthermore, inequality occurs within the families through the superiority of men over women and then over the children, who can be expelled at any time (CRL Liboussou).

The members of the group with the greatest prestige are the village chief (the feudal chief) and the heads of household.

#### 5. System of Mutual Aid

The system of mutual aid in the group is quite developed, in particular in the cooperatives. There is also mutual aid, however, in the construction of buildings, some agricultural tasks such as the clearing of new fields and the ridging of ground for drainage purposes. Likewise, when someone gets sick the work on his fields is done by the entire group.

#### 6. Attitude towards Change

The group is unwilling to accept change and innovation and quite closed to other ethnic groups (KALALE); in Liboussou the CCR considers that they have an attitude favorable to change, although they remain quite closed in their relation with the other ethnic groups, each considering itself superior to the other.

### C. The DENDI

In the region of SINENDE, the DENDI are basically merchants. This trade is carried on by men as well as women.

In the region of KARIMAMA the DENDI are engaged primarily in agriculture.

#### 1. The Role of Women

Polygamy is the rule. It is a sign of living well and being self-sufficient. Women's status is way below that of men. The man is in charge in the household. Women are not consulted when decisions are made. Women spend their time essentially doing housework and taking care of the children. Their participation in field work is limited to planting and harvesting. Otherwise "they serve to make a lot of children" (KARIMAMA). They also engage in small-scale commerce.

#### 2. The Influence of Tradition

As concerns legends, prohibitions and taboos, the DENDI of SINENDE do not follow other traditions because they are Moslems who observe their religion strictly. Their faith in God gives them honor and pride. The same is true in the region of KARIMAMA, where a legend explains the foundation of the village of Kargui: "Kossoukoe Dambo is the founder of the village of Kargui with his little brother Galamon. Both are migrants from a small village where the inhabitants grew the okra plant. People who ate the sauce made from that plant died. The inhabitants therefore abandoned the village to go and live in another village which was called Saïgaïko. Even in that village

there was no remedy to the death rate among the inhabitants. A foreigner, GOURMANTCHE, who came from UPPER VOLTA, discovered that the places were not fit for human habitation. He also proposed to them a place that was favorable to their environmental needs if they could remove the thorny brush found there. Having done this, the GOURMANTCHE returned to his native country to prepare things and when he returned he created the village of Kargui, which means thorn, denoting that a brush of thorns had been eradicated". Some of the forbidden things observed in this village are "the prohibition of felling trees or cutting wood at night since, in the opinion of that same GOURMANTCHE, difficulties of birth stemmed from work at night". Lastly, this GOURMANTCHE created a fetish that the inhabitants adored, before the Moslem religion was introduced. The symbols used by the group are scars on both cheeks.

### 3. The Customary Ceremonies

The habitual ceremonies at the time of birth, initiation, marriage and death are those that are dictated by the Moslem religion. Thus, children are baptized 7 days after they are born, during which time the mother is confined to her house. Then a ram is killed for the feast of the 7th day.

A dowry and a trousseau for the bride are given for the marriage.

The group has a very developed sense of honor. The DENDI do not steal, they do not drink alcohol and they do not use drugs. However, in Kargui the CRL notes that this

sense of honor tends to disappear: "the very strong sense of honor existed in the old days, but nowadays it has disappeared with the current generation".

To have a lot of children is the most important thing for the DENDI.

#### 4. Inequalities in the Group

There are inequalities between men and women. Women do not go out unless so ordered by their husbands (KARIMAMA). Women are less esteemed than men. Women are there "for making children". Women do not make decisions, because "they are strictly inferior to men" (CRL Kargui).

The DENDI consider themselves to be more civilized than the others because of their religion and their studies of the Koran (SINENDE). They believe that they are superior to the others (KARIMAMA).

For the Moslem DENDI those who have the most prestige in the group are the Imam and his religious court. In Kargui the greatest prestige is enjoyed by the members of the royal family, because it is "the people of honor who have created the village".

#### 5. System of Mutual Aid

No information was given on this subject.

## 6. Attitude towards Change

The group is quite willing to accept change and innovation because of their numerous contacts with other people through the channels of trade. In KARIMAMA, where they are farmers, they are also open to change.

### D. The PEULH

The PEULH are found in almost all of the regions of ATACORA and BORGOU. They are animal breeders, above all keepers of the herd. In the regions of KEROU and BANIKOARA they also engage in agriculture.

#### 1. The Role of Women

The PEULH practice polygamy, which is a sign of being well off and wealthy. They get honor and pride from this. The women spend their time mainly in selling milk and cheese, whereas the men tend the herds. They also gather produce. As a general rule, the men dominate and women participate very little in the decision-making process. Women have little esteem and their social status is inferior to that of the men.

#### 2. The Influence of Tradition

Tradition influences the life of the group and is denoted by the prohibitions and taboos that have to be respected. Thus, the PEULH group does not weave because this activity is reserved for the GANDO. There is no freedom of marriage, marriages often occur among cousins (SINENDE). A PEULH woman can never marry a man who belongs to another ethnic group.

Men and women wear earrings and bracelets. They like to look elegant. Indelible marks on the face replace the facial scars of the other groups. The dead and the ancestors are held in high esteem. They are implored to bring about healing of the sick. Also if a couple cannot have children, the dead are implored, chicken are sacrificed on the banks of a river, etc.

One of the most important moral rules is to respect the elderly, to respect the father and the mother. Lastly, the PEULH make it a point of honor to flog one another during certain ceremonies. The most important thing for the group are the cattle, followed by the women and children (CRL KALALE).

### 3. The Customary Ceremonies

Seven days after a birth, the PEULH kill a steer which is distributed as follows: the head and hide are reserved for the GANDO; the right leg for the PEULH chief and the left leg for the mother of the baby. The rest is shared by groups of age among all those who came to attend the baptism. During the baptism ceremony the baby is washed with fresh milk (BANIKOARA). This milk is then sold on the market. If it sells well this means that the baby will be lucky.

The PEULH circumcize the boys and excise the girls, at the same time.

The marriage ceremony only lasts one day and is sanctioned by a considerable dowry: cattle, clothes, etc. In the region of BANIKOARA, the PEULH "steal their women". For the ceremonies the minstrels sing the

praises of the two families. According to the CCR of KALALE, after the marriage the young bride stays with her parents for the first 3 months before being reunited with her husband.

The death ceremonies also last only one day and after 7 days the group leaves the camp. The dead person is buried in the Moslem manner, in a rectangular grave covered with white loin-cloth. In the region of BANIKOARA it is the custom to offer a steer to the Imam when someone dies.

One of the current practices in a ceremony, whether this be for a birth, marriage or death, is flogging. This is done by age groups. This is a way to show one's courage and to recall one's dignity in being a PEULH.

#### 4. Inequalities in the Group

Within the group there are first of all the inequalities between men and women, women being considered to be inferior to men. There are also inequalities, however, between the households, and the rich, those who have large herds of cattle, are very highly respected. The persons who enjoy the greatest prestige are first of all the camp chief, then the Imam, then those who have large herds of cattle, and finally the old.

#### 5. System of Mutual Aid

No information was given on this subject.

## 6. Attitude towards Change

The PEULH are not very receptive to changes and innovations. They remain "feudal with respect to the other groups" and look down upon the behavior of the others. They do not marry members of the other ethnic groups.

## E. The GANDO

The GANDO engage in agriculture and animal husbandry. They are both farmers and herders, as the PEULH, to whom they are related as a group.

### 1. The Role of Women

The women only participate in the harvesting work and in preserving the produce. On very rare occasions, and only when no male labor is on hand, the young girls lead the herd and this only in the rainy season when pasture is abundant. Women, therefore, are busy above all in taking care of the house and in doing housework. On very rare occasions, when the woman and the man withdraw from the social group they agree to manage their property. Otherwise the woman is not consulted unless when the issue at stake is selling her own property and even then only if she specifically requests to be consulted. The woman, however, is responsible for the education of their daughters, although their engagement is the exclusive responsibility of the head of the household. The group practices polygamy. The families like to marry their daughter off to a well-to-do family group.

On the social level, the women are in charge of taking care of the children, the cleanliness of the house, selling the produce of the fields to the market. When they are well-to-do they help their husbands pay his civil taxes.

Women have little esteem in the group. They are isolated in their role of housekeeper. For the woman it is a matter of "reproducing" and feeding her husband and the members of the family. However, they help give their husbands social status: a man who has no wives is considered to be a man worth nothing.

## 2. The Influence of Tradition

Tradition plays a profound role in the life of the GANDO, by giving them the particular standards of behavior that govern their lives. It is a matter of honor to respect the moral rules and customs of the group, such as to bow down when greeting an old person, taking shoes off when entering an important house.

The symbols used by the group are tatoos on the cheeks. The idols are adored. The family gathers around the idols to implore their divine benediction, to request divine intervention in favor of a couple wishing to have a child, to obtain the protection of the ancestors. The ancestors are very important. The "dead are not dead". The soul of the ancestors is commemorated by numerous family ceremonies. Thus, they are given offerings, food and drink are placed on their graves. Their soul is called upon to request recovery from sickness of members of the family. GANDO tradition requires that the children of both sexes be circumcized or excised during the same period, to mark the same generation.

What is important to a GANDO is to feed his family appropriately and to have enough means to be able to meet the expenses of the ceremonies of baptism, marriage, funerals and others. However, meeting the needs for housing, care, clothing and education seems to be a luxury for him.

The GANDO makes it a point of honor to be esteemed in the entire region for his dignity, frankness and honesty.

### 3. The Customary Ceremonies

One week after the birth of a child, there is the baptism ceremony at which the child is given a name. On this occasion a hen is allotted to the newborn child to know his future. If the hen reproduces then the child will be lucky and will succeed in life. Then new searches are undertaken to make the child lucky. When the child grows up he is given a goat, then a sheep, and then a heifer.

The initiation is performed in a convent.

For a marriage, the young girl spends a few days in the convent, from which she can go out without covering her face with a veil. The departure from the convent is the occasion for folklore ceremonies and then she starts to have sexual relations with her husband. In the rural commune of Bouka, the group celebrates a marriage with the agreement of the 2 families. During the start of the marriage week, 7 to 8 chickens are delivered to the in-laws so that they can feed the guests. After a week, the newlywed girl leaves her husband's home to go back to her parents' home in order to prepare the kitchen utensils and the popular events during all of the following week.

The funeral ceremonies vary according to the age of the deceased. In the case of children less than 5 years old, a gourd of "foura" into which fresh milk has been added is offered to the memory of the deceased. As soon as the burial has been completed, the mat as well as the clothes of the dead person are washed and the floor of the hut is brushed with cow dung.

For adults, the laying out of the corpse ceremonies are the same. After 7 days, one or two bulls are sacrificed, according to the deceased's wealth. The meat is distributed to the relatives and friends who have come to attend the ceremonies. In the poorer families, a sheep or chickens are sacrificed.

#### 4. Inequalities in the Group

The inequalities in the group are based on the numerical size of the family group. Households of 50 to 100 members are at the top of the social scale. These inequalities reside in the size of the herd, the size of the fields, and ownership of material goods. The families that are most well-off are the most honored, the most respected, and benefit from all of the advantages of society: agreement of the fiancée, the favor of the superiors, etc.

The result: the well-to-do families feel that they are superior to the others; they have a feeling of pride.

Prestige in the life of the family group is based on age and order of birth. The eldest son has more prestige than the third born. Among the children of the same father and of a different mother, the children of the first wife are considered to be the elder sons (Béré)

of the children born from the last wife and consequently the latter must pay respect to the former. This principle serves as the basis for the allocation of roles to be played within the family and in the allocation of the assets of the family.

Within the group, the descendants of the feudal families and those who possess financial and material wealth enjoy the greatest prestige along with persons of distinction who benefit from a certain degree of dignity owing to their experience and wisdom.

#### 5. System of Mutual Aid

The mutual aid is provided by gifts, or repayable loans and in participation in a given job, such as preparing or building a hut, or working in the fields of sick neighbors. Aid in money or in kind is offered for the ceremonies of baptism, marriage or death.

#### 6. Attitude towards Change

The GANDO group is reluctant to accept changes and innovations. They are distrustful of changes because they fear the judgment of others. They seem "to be closed to the great contemporary changes" (KALALE). They do not accept changes until they have known the experiences of others.

The attitude of the group towards other groups involves at the same time a certain spontaneous hospitality followed by distrust. The group observes the behavior of the others.

**GENERAL ANALYSIS  
ON THE STATISTICAL DATA**

## II. GENERAL ANALYSIS

### A. Integration of the Population in their Village

Some of ways commonly used to measure the degree of integration of an individual into a given group is to determine the extent to which the individual is familiar with, or is unfamiliar with, the organizations that give structure and life to this group and the various levels of participation within these organizations themselves. Concerning BORGOU, the degree of knowledge about the existing civil and social organizations is limited, since 45.2% of the heads of household surveyed state that they do not know any organization in their village, 21.2% know one organization, 14.1% know two, and 19.6% know at least three (Table 1). This degree of knowledge varies greatly from one ethnic group to another and from one district to another. Thus, the ethnic groups can be classified on a scale of knowledge about, organizations by placing at the bottom of the scale the group whose lack of knowledge is the greatest and by placing at the top of the scale the group whose lack of knowledge is the least. The extreme groups, thus, turn out to be the PEULH, at the bottom of the scale, the FON, at the top, followed by the BARIBA:

<u>NATIONALITIES</u>	<u>LACK OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT ORGANIZATIONS</u>
FON	35.3%
BARIBA	40.7%
YORUBA	47.2%
DENDI	52.0%
PEULH	52.6%

It is not surprising to find the FON at the top, since they comprise most of the civil servants of BORGOU, just as ATACORA.

This variation is found among the districts, but any comparison at that level is subject to caution, as the sampling error is very high for certain districts, the size of the sample having been calculated to permit generalizations at the level of the province and not the districts. At this level, therefore, the data obtained yield a value which is only indicative. Concerning the sample itself, however, in one district (KALALE) each head of household questioned knows of at least one organization, whereas at SINENDE, at the other extremity, only 20.9% of the persons questioned knew of at least one organization.

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DISTRICTS	KNOWLEDGE ABOUT ORGANIZATIONS
KALALE	100.0%
SEGBANA	82.8%
BEMBEREKE	82.1%
PERERE	75.0%
GOGOUNOU	75.0%
TCHAOUROU	70.3%
KARIMAMA	59.3%
BANIKOARA	54.1%
N'DALI	47.5%
NIKKI	44.7%
KANDI	42.3%
PARAKOU	36.5%
MALANVILLE	36.2%
SINENDE	20.9%

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Table No. 2 reveals that among the heads of household the men are more knowledgeable about existing organizations than the women: 56.3% of the men know about organizations as against 44.4% of the women. Tables 3, 4 and 5 show that there is but a very weak relationship between the number of organizations known and the age of the head of household ( $r = -.08$ ), between the number of organizations known and the number of years of schooling of the head of household ( $r = .23$ ), between the number of organizations known and the size of the household ( $r = .07$ ). Furthermore, there is no significant relationship between the number of organizations known and the main activity of the head of household (Table 6).

The degree of participation in the social life of the village, measured by belonging to any of these organizations is very low: only 29.3% of the heads of household questioned stated that they belong to one of these organizations (Table 7). This percentage varies greatly from one ethnic group to another, and from one district to another. Thus, the BARIBA are at the top of the scale of participation, with 35.5% (which is still quite low) and the PEULH are at the bottom of the scale, with only 10%.

NATIONALITY	PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPATION
BARIBA	35.5%
YORUBA	55.1%
DENDI	10.1%
FON	17.6%
PEULH	10.1%

A cursory comparison with the table of degree of knowledge about organizations reveals that the FON are not the most active in terms of belonging to various social organizations, although they are more familiar with their existence than any other group. At the bottom of the scale, however, we find the PEULH. At the district level, it is the district of SEGBANA which appears at the top of the scale of participation and the district of SINENDE appears at the bottom. We have not received any information about KALALE.

DISTRICT	PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPATION
SEGBANA	63.3
PERERE	58.5
GOGOUNOU	53.3
TCHAOUROU	50.0
BEMBEREKE	44.4
KARIMAMA	41.4
N'DALI	37.1
KANDI	25.0
NIKKI	19.6
BANIKOARA	17.4
PARAKOU	17.9
MALANVILLE	10.3
SINENDE	0.0
KALALE	0.0

It appears, however, that belonging to these organizations is neither a function of years of schooling (Table 10) nor the size of the household (Table 11). In contrast, Tables 8, 9 and 12 show that a very weak relationship exists with respect to the sex of the head of household: the men participate more than the women ( $r = -.07$ ); to the age: the group of 35 to 39 years of age has the greatest participation ( $r = -.19$ );

and the main activity of the head of household: the greatest percentage of participation is among the farmers ( $r = -.13$ ). Out of the 485 heads of household who said they belonged to an organization, only 250 (25.6%) listed their functions in the organization (Table 13). Of those, 57.5% are part of the management and 42.5% are simply members. In view of the large number of no replies, analysis by nationality and other variables loses all meaning.

## B. Leisure

We have seen that the greatest social event in the villages is the market, which is the main type of leisure, of social relaxation and for exchanging ideas. But what do the people do during those hours of leisure, that is to say after working out in the fields? Table 19 reveals that 30.2% of the people rest, 17.1% engage in secondary activities, 18.7% do small jobs, and 10.1% visit friends. If the ethnic groups are compared, it is interesting to note that all mention rest first, except the YORUBA who work (32.5%) or the PEULH who engage in small jobs (37.5%). During this free time, the BARIBA (19.9%) are at the top for engaging in a secondary productive activity, the PEULH for visiting their friends (18.1%). At the province level, there is no statistical difference between the heads of household, men or women, in terms of how they spend their spare time (Table 20). Likewise, there is no relationship between the way they spend their time and the age of the heads of household (Table 21), their education level (Table 22), the size of the household (Table 23), and the main activity of the head of household (Table 24). This is to say that the way free time is spent is not pertinent to any of these variables.

Concerning how time is spent on Sundays and holidays, we find practically the same results (Table 25). Rest is the favorite pastime (35.6%). Those who apparently rest the least are the

DENDI since 66.2% engage in small jobs or devote themselves to a secondary activity. There is no significant statistical difference between the men and the women as far as the way they spend their Sundays. A very weak relationship exists between the activities undertaken on Sundays, the age of the head of household (Table 27:  $r = .07$ ). There is no significant relationship with the years of schooling of the head of household (Table 28), the size of the household (Table 29) or with the main activity of the head of household (Table 30).

### C. Relations of the Heads of Household with the Outside

The relations with the neighboring villages and communes develop essentially around the markets. It is surprising that 47.4% of the heads of household go at least once a week to the neighboring village (Table 32). Furthermore, 73.6% of the heads of household go there at least once a month, which denotes a very mobile population. Only 13.3% never go at all. Table 33 reveals that the male heads of household go to the neighboring village more frequently than the female heads of household. In terms of the ethnic groups, it is not surprising to state that the YORUBA are the most mobile: 37.5% travel every day and 65.6% at least once a week. The least mobile are the DENDI, of whom only 42.5% go to the neighboring village once a week. A very weak relationship ( $r = .15$ ) exists between the frequency of the trips to the neighboring village and the age of the heads of household (Table 34): the oldest persons travel less often. Likewise, there is weak relationship ( $r = .10$ ) with the size of the household (Table 36): the largest households are the ones who travel the most; and the main activity of the head of household (Table 37) ( $r = -.04$ ): the ones who are devoted to animal husbandry and the civil servants travel more frequently. But there is no significant relationship with the years of schooling of the head of household (Table 35).

Relations with the commune are less frequent than with the neighboring village: 46.9% of the heads of household go there at least once a week, and 82.4% go at least once a month. There too there are differences between the ethnic groups, but interpretation of these differences is a delicate matter because an important variable was not taken into account in Table 38: the distance separating the villages from their commune. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that if a higher percentage of women than men go to the commune everyday, more men go there than women on a weekly basis: 29.3% of men against 17.1% of women (Table 39). Once again, there is a very weak relationship ( $r = .21$ ) between the frequency of trips and the age of the heads of household (Table 40): the older they are the less traveling they do, but there is no relationship between the frequency of trips to the commune and the years of schooling (Table 41). There is a very weak relationship ( $r = .09$ ), however, with the main activity of the heads of household (Table 43): the merchants, craftsmen and functionaries are the ones who travel the most frequently; or the size of households (Table 42). Here again, the frequency of trips to the commune is higher in the large households.

Trips to the district are less frequent than trips to the commune: 23.5% go there every week and 49.9% at least once a month (Table 44). One could think that the 8% who go there everyday live in the district itself, or very near. As a general rule, the percentage of men going to the district is higher than the percentage of women going there on a daily or monthly basis. On the contrary, the women are the ones who go there more often, on a weekly basis: this is probably due to the market where they go and sell their products. At the district level, there is a somewhat more significant relationship between the age of the heads of household and the frequency of trips to the district: ( $r = .27$ ), the older the person becomes the less frequently does that person go to

the district (Table 46). This is understandable because the distances are greater than in the case of the neighboring village or the commune. It is above all in the age group of more than 55 that the frequency of trips declined. There is also a relationship ( $r = -.23$ ) with the years of schooling of the head of household (Table 47): the higher the number of years of education, the more frequently the trips are on a weekly basis. There is no relationship with the size of the household (Table 48). At the level of the activities of the head of household a small relationship appears ( $r = .18$ ): the civil servants are the ones who travel the most frequently to the district (Table 49). The frequency of trips to the headquarters is much less: only 9.5% go there at least once a month, but 63.4% never go there at all (Table 50). This frequency varies according to the ethnic groups, the FON being those who go there the most often 90.0% go there at least once a year compared to the YORUBA 57.7%, BARIBA 25.8%, DENDI 24.3%, and PEULH only 18.4%. This variation can be found at the level of the districts, from 82.9% in KANDI, to 14.3% in SEGBANA, for those who never go there. One might think that the farther the districts are from the headquarters of Province, the lower the rate of frequency of the visit is. But this is not the case, it has been noted that in the district of PARAKOU 60.6% of interviewed households state that they will never go there.

Table 51 shows that the women heads of household go to the Province less frequently than the male heads of household, but this difference is not statistically significant. However, there is a small significant relationship ( $r = .25$ ) between the trips to the headquarters of the province and the age of the heads of household: the older they are the less they travel (Table 52). A relationship exists ( $r = -.34$ ), between such trips and the years of schooling of the head of household

(Table 53), and the main activity of the head of household ( $r = .21$ ). The civil servants and the merchants are the ones who travel most often (Table 55). There is no relationship with the size of household (Table 54). Trips to the other provinces are very limited: 20.0% only go there at least once a year (Table 56). This is above all the behavior of the FON (87.5%) who, since they are originally from the south, return regularly to their province and the YORUBA (37.5%). Trips to border countries are still less frequent (Table 58). At the province level, 73.9% never go there. The YORUBA particularly are the ones who travel (46.4% go there at least once a year) and the DENDI (34.2%). At the district level, the population of PERERE, SEGBANA, and KARIMAMA travel the most to NIGERIA or to NIGER. Regarding travel to other countries, this is a rather rare occurrence, which only concerns 9.8% of the heads of household interviewed (Table 61). This is the case primarily for the DENDI (18.0%).

It turns out that the heads of household are less mobile than in ATACORA, even if they have frequent contacts outside of their village, their commune and their district.

#### D. Psychosociological Attitudes

The living conditions in the north of BENIN are quite difficult, in particular owing to the inadequacy of the roads, sanitary and other infrastructure. There is a lack of work outside of agriculture. Moreover, agricultural jobs pay little and are often arduous because of the traditional nature of agriculture. It is nevertheless interesting to note that 83.4% of the heads of household questioned are satisfied with their present situation (Table 63). A breakdown of the percentage satisfied by ethnic group yields the following results.

NATIONALITY	PERCENTAGE SATISFIED
BARIBA	87.2
PEULH	82.8
DENDI	75.3
YORUBA	71.8
FON	62.5

The most satisfied are the BARIBA and PEULH. The YORUBA and the FON are less satisfied. Regarding the FON, most of whom are functionaries who came from the south, they do not like to live in isolated villages, far from everything and without the amenities of the city. It is therefore not surprising to find that they are among the least satisfied with their situation. The districts with the highest levels of satisfaction are SEGBANA (100%) and PERERE (97.7%) and the one with the lowest level of satisfaction is TCHAOUROU (73.8%).

DISTRICT	PERCENTAGE SATISFIED
SEGBANA	100.0
PERERE	97.7
SINENDE	95.1
N'DALI	92.0
BEMBEREKE	83.6
KARIMAMA	83.3
NIKKI	82.8
BANIKOARA	79.2
KANDI	79.3
MALANVILLE	79.3
GOGOUNOU	78.4
PARAKOU	76.7
TCHAOUROU	73.8
KALAKE	-

The main reason for dissatisfaction found in the district as well as at the ethnic group level is the great poverty of the households (55.5%), and the lack of food (78%) (Table 70). Then comes health problems (6.3%) and having sterile women (3.9%). There is no relationship between the satisfaction level of the present situation and the sex of the head of household (Table 64), the age of the head of household (Table 65). In contrast, there is a small relationship ( $r = .07$ ) between the satisfaction level and the size of the household: the larger the household, the higher the satisfaction rate (Table 67), there is also a relationship ( $r = .21$ ) with the years of schooling (Table 66): the more the heads of household went to school, the more they are satisfied with their situation; and with the main activity of the head of household ( $r = .16$ ): those who practice commerce are more satisfied than the others (Table 68). Also, there is a relationship ( $r = .29$ ) between the reasons for the lack of satisfaction and the sex of the head of household (Table 71). Men complain about poverty, and women about being sterile. But there is no relationship with age (Table 72), the years of schooling of the head of household (Table 73) the size of household (Table 74) and the main activity of the head of household (Table 75).

One-fourth of the households questioned (21.1%) hope for having more money, or a better life (16.8%) or happiness (13.3%), or yearn for material success (4.3%) (Table 76). It should be noted, however, that 9.8% of the households do not expect anything from life, or just death (8.5%). These are people who have no hope to see their living conditions improve and who are resigned to their lot. This percentage increases to 12% among the DENDI. The greatest expectation for the BARIBA and the PEULH is to have more money, meanwhile good health is the most important thing for the DENDI. YORUBA and FON hope for happiness and a better life. The greatest expectation by districts, is as follows:

DISTRICT	EXPECTATION	PERCENTAGE
BANIKOARA	money	46.3
BEMBEREKE	to have a long life	22.0
GOGOUNOU	money	26.9
KALALE	-	-
KANDI	nothing	26.1
KARIMAMA	happiness	35.7
MALANVILLE	Health	27.6
N'DALI	a better life	27.9
NIKKI	a better life	40.7
PARAKOU	a better life	23.5
PERERE	money	32.6
SEGBANA	Health	44.8
SINENDE	money	25.6
TCHAOUROU	a better life	30.8

No relationship is significant between the expectations in life and variables such as age (Table 78), the years of schooling of the head of household (Table 79), or the main activity of the head of household (table 81). However, there is a small relationship ( $r = -.08$ ) with the size of household.

The districts could also be classified on a scale of fatalism and resignation, according to the percentage of those who do not expect anything of life. KANDI and BEMBEREKE are way out in the lead, with 28.4% and 22.0%, respectively. The most interesting aspect, however, is to know whether they share the same fatalism concerning their children. For the boys, the replies can be classified into two large categories: the heads of household expect for their boys either a better future (which is equivalent to saying that although they are resigned as to their own lot, they do place their hope in their children's future) or they expect the same situation, that they do not see any possible improvement in the foreseeable future.

At the level of the province, 40.2% expect a better life for their sons and 30.7% do not see any possibility of improvement (Table 82). In the ethnic groups, the FON have the most hope in the future, and the PEULH are the ones who envisage the least improvement in the situation of their children.

NATIONALITY	BETTER FUTURE DESIRED FOR THE SONS %	SAME SITUATION %
FON	66.7	11.1
YORUBA	52.5	0.0
BARIBA	40.3	32.0
DENDI	37.5	25.0
PEULH	31.3	56.7

The districts can also be classified according to the frequency rate of those who expect a better situation for their sons. We thus obtain:

DISTRICT	BETTER SITUATION %	SAME SITUATION %
SEGBANA	57.1	21.4
TCHAOUROU	48.7	5.1
MALANVILLE	46.4	23.2
GOGOUNOU	43.4	28.3
PARAKOU	41.7	10.7
KANDI	40.5	36.9
BEMBEREKE	40.5	46.2
BANIKOARA	40.4	43.1
SINENDE	32.4	50.0
PERERE	30.0	20.0
N'DALI	27.3	61.4
KARIMAMA	24.0	44.0
NIKKI	19.0	25.9

It can be seen that the districts of SEGBANA and TCHAOUROU place the most hope in their children, whereas N'DALI, SINENDE and KARIMAMA do not see any improvement. They look for the same situation for their children, revealing a higher degree of fatalism. There is no relationship between the future desired for the sons and the sex of the head of household (Table 83), the age of the head of household (Table 84), the years of schooling of the head of household (Table 85), the size of the household (Table 86), or the main activity of the head of household (Table 87). It is interesting to place the future desired for the sons against the future desired for the daughters. The categories of reply are very different this time (Table 88). For the girls, the heads of household desire above all that they get married and have good husbands (30.4%), and that they be good housekeepers (20%) and that they have a trade (18%). In the FON, it is the concern over a trade which prevails (58.8%). For the BARIBA and DENDI, the preoccupation is that the girls get married (29.2%). For the PEULH, it is that they are good housekeepers (32.8%) and have good husbands (29.5%) meanwhile for the YORUBA it is that they be happy (20.9%). Adding together these two last categories, it gives the following:

NATIONALITY	EXPECTATION: GOOD MARRIAGE %
PEULH	39.3
BARIBA	39.3
YORUBA	34.3
DENDI	32.0
FON	23.5

That the girls be good housekeepers is desired by 32.8% of the PEULH, followed by the DENDI with 27.8% and the BARIBA with 19.2%. That the girls have a trade is desired by most of the ethnic groups, but in proportions that vary considerably. Thus, 58.8% of the FON express this desire, against only 18% in the PEULH, and 16.9% in the BARIBA:

NATIONALITY	GOOD HOUSEKEEPERS %
PEULH	32.8
DENDI	27.8
BARIBA	19.2
YORUBA	5.3
FON	0.0

At the level of the districts, N'DALI and SINENDE are the leaders, with 48.8% and 45.5%, in the category of marriage and having good husbands, and KANDI, at the bottom of the scale, with 25%. In contrast, concerning the trade as the future desired for the girls, SEGBANA is the leader (50%), followed by TCHAOUROU (28.9%), N'DALI and BANIKOARA which are at the bottom of the scale with 9.9% and 8.3%, respectively.

DISTRICT	TO GET MARRIED AND HAVE A GOOD HUSBAND %	TO HAVE A TRADE %
N'DALI	48.8	9.8
SINENDE	45.5	24.2
GOGOUNOU	42.3	13.5
BANIKOARA	40.7	8.3
BEMBEREKE	37.5	17.9
TCHAOUROU	36.8	28.9
NIKKI	34.5	10.3
PARAKOU	32.9	14.6
SEGBANA	32.1	50.0
KARIMAMA	30.8	7.7
PERERE	29.3	2.4
MALANVILLE	28.1	21.1
KANDI	25.0	21.3
KALALE	0.0	0.0

There is a weak significant relationship between the future desired for the girls and the age of the head of household ( $r = -.14$ ). A careful examination of Table 90 reveals that the older the heads of household become the more numerous they are in desiring good husbands for their daughters. On the other hand, the older they get the less they wish that their daughters have a good trade. This is understandable: the old people have a traditional idea on the role of the woman in society: women have to get married, have a lot of children and raise them. Exercising a trade or a profession, however, is not of their competence. There is no relationship between the desire that the daughters have good husbands and the size of the household ( $r = -.13$ ), (Table 90) the sex of the head of household (Table 89), or the fears of schooling (Table 91).

At the province level, what is most important, what the heads of household consider to be the most important thing in life, is to be in good health (27.0%), to have money (21.5%), to be

successful in his work (16.4%) and to have children (12.4%) (Table 95). Indeed, to be in good health is conceived of as the most important thing for most of the FON (22.2%), the BARIBA (24.8%), the DENDI (47.1%), the PEULH (26.1%) and the YORUBA (21.1%). Money is in second place for each of these groups. At the district level, the following table gives the most important category, with the percentage:

DISTRICT	IMPORTANCE IN LIFE	PERCENTAGE
BANIKOARA	work success	27.2
BEMBEREKE	Health	48.9
COGOUNOU	Money	20.0
KALALE	Money	40.0
KANDI	Health	34.2
KARIMAMA	Money	42.3
MALANVILLE	Health	66.0
PARAKOU	work success	21.3
N'DALI	Health	31.3
NIKKI	work success	28.1
PERERE	Money	47.6
TCHAOUROU	Health	30.0
SEGBANA	Health	80.0
SINENDE	work success	26.8

There is no relationship between what is important in life and the sex of the head of household (Table 96), the age of the head of household (Table 97), the years of schooling of the head of household (Table 98), the size of the household (Table 99) or the main activity of the head of household (Table 100).

The ancestors also occupy a very important place in the life of the households: for most of the households the ancestors are considered as living people who are consulted in case of need, and the ancestors are gods who can intervene to change the

course of events and guides who have to be listened to and honored to live in harmony with the natural and supernatural elements. Thus, for 26.5% of the population of BORGOU the ancestors are considered as guides. For another 35.3% they occupy first place in their lives and 12.7% consider the ancestors as gods. Only for 18.2% of the population the ancestors are of no importance because they can do nothing further for the living. A classification of the groups in accordance with the importance given to the ancestors yields the following:

NATIONALITY	NO IMPORTANCE - %
DENDI	53.8
PEULH	25.0
BARIBA	12.9
FON	12.5
YORUBA	9.4

At the level of the districts, the ancestors occupy first place for GOGOUNOU (81.4%), KALALE (33.8%), PARAKOU (75.7%), N'DALI (56.4%), NIKKI (77.4%), and SINENDE (40%). They are considered guides above all in TCHAUROU (54.2%), PERERE (66.7%), KANDI (33.9%), and BANIKOARA (50.5%). Only in KARIMAMA and MALANVILLE, 73.9% and 58.8% mention that they do not have any importance. There is no relationship between the position of the ancestors and the sex of the head of household (Table 102). There is a weak relationship with the age of the head of household ( $r = .08$ ) and the position of the ancestors in their life: the older they are, the more the ancestors occupy the first place (Table 103). But there is no relationship with the size of the household (Table 105) or the main activity of the head of household (Table 106).

In the descriptive part on the ethnic groups, we indicated how each group moves in a supernatural world where respect for prohibitions provides assurance that these supernatural forces will not be unleashed against man. The most common prohibitions originate in the belief in certain groups that this or that animal saved the life of one of their ancestors and continues to assure their protection. In other cases, eating the flesh of this or that animal is forbidden because in the past to eat the flesh of that animal would have been the cause of certain epidemics and diseases that decimated the population. For 55.3% of the population, certain animals are forbidden and this rule has to be respected. Among these animals are dogs and snakes, lions, tigers or even buffalos. The BARIBA are an ethnic group for which animals represent the most common prohibition (57.6%) (Table 107), followed by the DENDI (56.6%). The second element respected is observance of the moral rules left by the ancestors (13.6%). However, 16.9% declared that they do not respect any prohibition, including 30% among the PEULH.

There is no relationship between the prohibitions respected and the sex of the head of household (Table 108), the age of the head of household (Table 109), the years of schooling of the head of household (Table 110), the size of the household (Table 111) or the main activity of the head of household (Table 112). These variables are independent because this is a cultural phenomenon deeply anchored in the beliefs of the population, shared by all persons of all ages and all conditions.

Associated with respect for these prohibitions there are certain practices that lead to fear because of their supernatural or occult nature. These fears are very numerous and this is why it is the "other" category (Table 113) which is the most important, combining a great diversity of practices,

objects, animate and inanimate beings. At the level of the province, it appears that the most widespread fear concerns sorcerers (10.7%) who can use their power either for good or for evil. The predominant fear for each ethnic group is as follows:

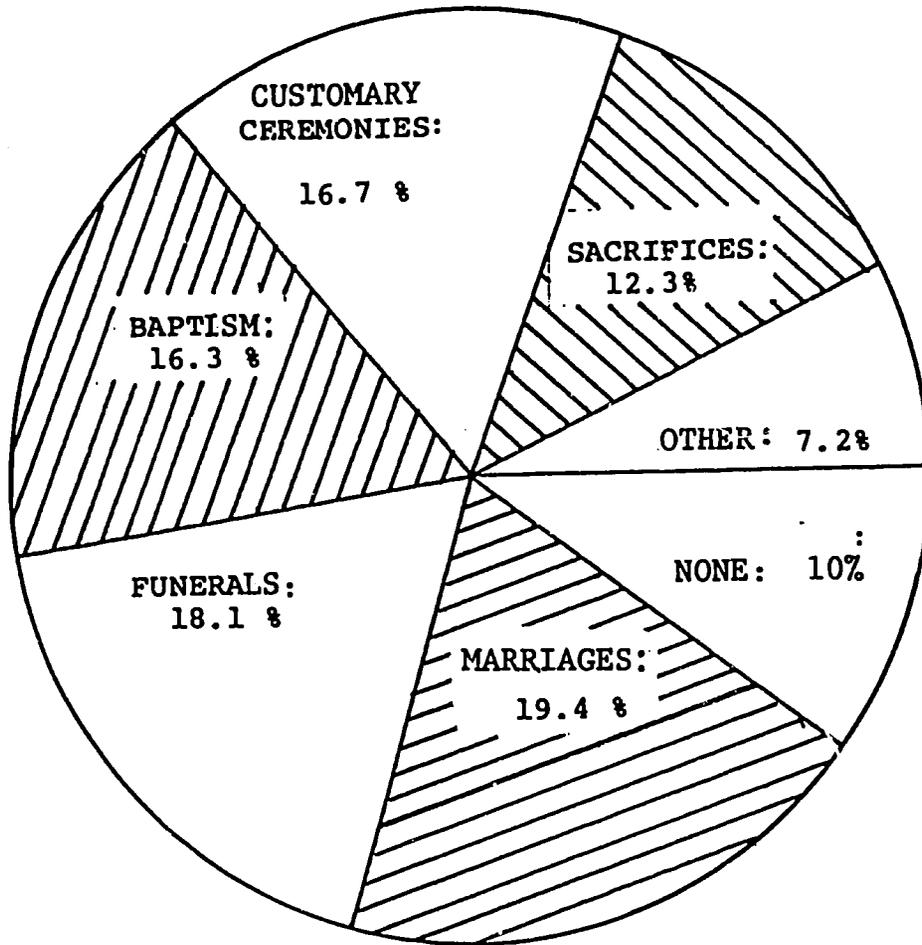
NATIONALITY	FEAR	PERCENTAGE
FON	Sorcerers	23.5
BARIBA	Fetishes	9.8
DENDI	Supernatural beings	20.0
PEULH	Sorcerers	32.4
YORUBA	Fetishes	17.9

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that only 12.2% of the population indicates having no particular fear: the BARIBA are in the lead with 13.9%. At the level of the districts the fears that predominate are the following:

DISTRICT	FEAR	PERCENTAGE
BANIKOARA	Animals	11.1
BEMBEREKE	Fetishes	18.2
GOGOUNOU	Animals	29.4
KALALE	Sorcerers	18.1
KANDI	Fetishes	4.9
KARIMAMA	Sorcerers	24.1
MALANVILLE	Supernatural beings	22.8
N'DALI	Supernatural beings	20.0
NIKKI	Weapons	8.5
PARAKOU	Weapons	22.8
PERERE	Fetishes	26.2
SEGBANA	Fetishes	20.0
SINENDE	Supernatural beings	25.0
TCHAOUROU	Weapons	23.7

In TCHAOUROU, NIKKI and PARAKOU, fear of weapons predominates because most likely they are used by the population to settle their differences. There is no relationship between the fear for certain practices or objects according to the sex of the head of household (Table 114), the age of the head of household (Table 115) the years of schooling of the head of household (Table 116), the size of the household (Table 117). However, there is a weak relationship ( $r = -06$ ) with the main activity of the head of household (Table 118). The ceremonies practiced to reconcile the supernatural forces and to assure the support of the ancestors are numerous and mark not only the great stages of the life of individuals: baptism, initiations, marriage, funerals, but take place at regular intervals, whenever a problem arises concerning health, family, work, or even before making decisions. No important decision can be made without consulting first of all with the ancestors through ceremonies, sacrifices, fetishes, sorcerers or witch doctors. Table 119 gives an idea of the relative importance of the various ceremonies practices, without any distinction, however, between those that mark the important stages of life and the others that take place on a regular basis.

## RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF CEREMONIES



The importance can be seen, of marriage (19.4%) and the funeral ceremonies (18.1%). Customary ceremonies are still common (16.7%), as well as sacrifices (12.3%). In all of the districts these ceremonies have a great importance, with the exception of MALANVILLE and SINENDE. A breakdown by district of the most practiced ceremonies, with their relative importance in percentage, yields the following:

DISTRICT	CEREMONIES	PERCENTAGE
BANIKOARA	Sacrifices	27.5
BEMBEREKE	Funerals	43.5
GOGOUNOU	Funerals	30.3
KALALE	Baptism	27.1
KANDI	Funerals	23.8
KARIMAMA	Baptism	48.3
MALANVILLE	Marriage	28.3
N'DALI	Customary ceremonies	54.0
NIKKI	Marriage	29.1
PARAKOU	Customary ceremonies	26.1
PERERE	Funerals	28.7
SEGBANA	Dances	27.4
SINENDE	Sacrifices	26.8
TCHAOUROU	Customary ceremonies	16.1

We already know that tradition exercises a profound influence on the life of everyone. It is therefore not surprising to note that 44.8% believe that tradition and customs are a good thing and that they should be kept. Only 5.1% consider that tradition is useless, an obstacle to progress, (Table 126). The judgment made of traditions varies from one group to the other. It is primarily the FON who judge tradition in a more negative manner (13.3% of them), whereas the BARIBA and the YORUBA are the most fervent defenders of tradition. There is a weak significant relationship ( $r = -.09$ ) between the sex of the head of household and his judgment on tradition (Table 127): 37.5% of women have no opinion, whereas, only 23.2% men have no opinion. In general, men have more positive opinion. There is also a weak relationship ( $r = -.07$ ) with the age of the head of household: the older they are, the more they have positive opinion about tradition. In contrast, there is no relationship with the schooling years of the head of household (Table 129), the size of the household (Table 130) or the main activity of the head of household (Table 131).

Regarding the use of a large amount of money if it suddenly became available to them (Table 132), two thirds of the households would use it to build a house (67.3%); 7.5% would use it to live better and 7.3% to have a large herd of animals. For all of the ethnic groups, the priority is to have a new home built, although for the PEULH, this percentage is much lower with only 42.9%, 27.1% would take advantage of the money to have a large herd of animals. At the district level, the highest percentage falls in the category "to build a house", except in KARIMAMA, where 40% claimed they would use the money to have a better living, and 33.3% for a house.

DISTRICT	HOW THE MONEY WOULD BE USED	PERCENTAGE
BANIKOARA	build a house	69.1
BEMBEREKE	" "	80.0
GOGOUNOU	" "	81.3
KALALE	" "	66.7
KANDI	" "	51.1
KARIMAMA	live better	40.0
MALANVILLE	build a house	64.9
N'DALI	" "	76.5
NIKKI	" "	86.0
PARAKOU	" "	59.8
PERERE	" "	61.9
TCHAOUROU	" "	78.0
SEGBANA	" "	60.0
SINENDE	" "	70.5

There is no statistical difference between the men and the women concerning the use of this hypothetical money: (Table 133). There is no relationship between the use of a sum of money and the age of the head of household (Table 134), the size of household (Table 136), the main activity of the head of household (Table 137). In contrast, table 135 reveals that there is a relationship between the years of schooling of

the head of household ( $r = .24$ ) and the use of money: the more education they have, the more they would use the money for a better living, and help other people.

It is very interesting to note that there is nothing utopian in how the money would be spent. It is quite specific. It may be concluded consequently that to have a house built and to live better are needs that are very real and very much felt by the population. In terms of psychosociological attitudes, this fact reveals a population that is quite realistic and aware of its situation, which does not seek to avoid reality but, quite to the contrary, which hopes for a material improvement in its situation.

We have already mentioned in the section describing the ethnic groups to what extent the role of women, despite their economic importance, is not recognized socially in the entire northern part of BENIN. The social role of women is minimized not only within the collectivity, but even within the household itself, where she is kept practically outside of the decision-making process. Table 138 shows, in effect, that the vast majority of decisions are made unilaterally by the head of household. Only when it concerns nutrition and the education of the children are women associated with decision making, and even then to an extent that is in the last analysis quite small: 9.3% of the women make decisions concerning nutrition and only 6.4% for the education of the children. However, 11.5% make decisions jointly for the education of the children. The final decision is always made by the male head of household.

Table 144 shows that when the heads of family have problems in their family, 33.9% consult first of all with the little brother, and 15.5% with the elderly. When the problem concerns work or farming, 21.3% consult with a member of the family, 15.6% consult with extension agents, 14.8% consult with friends, and 10.6% consult with the elderly (Table 150).

But when they need advice in general, (Table 156), 26.5% consult then with the elderly, and 17.8% consult with friends and 17.4% with other members of the household. It is interesting to note that in the case of particular problems in the family, or on the job, these problems are first of all discussed within the family, but when more general advice is concerned the heads of household consult first with the elderly.

this same phenomenon is observed in practically all of the districts, with the exception of SINENDE and N'DALI, where the elderly are the first consulted, even for family problems. As concerns agricultural problems, in the districts of SEGBANA, PERERE and MALANVILLE the heads of household consult first of all with the extension agents rather than with the members of the family or with friends. Concerning problems of a general nature, first of all the elderly are consulted and, more rarely, friends or members of the household. A breakdown of the districts by percentage of consultation with the elderly yields the following:

DISTRICT	CONSULTATION WITH THE ELDERLY
PERERE	65.1%
SEGBANA	56.7%
SINENDE	51.2%
N'DALI	42.3%
KANDI	37.8%
GOGOUNOU	26.9%
TCHAOUROU	26.8%
PARAKOU	25.6%
NIKKI	25.4%
KALALE	21.9%
BEMBEREKE	19.6%
KARIMAMA	17.2%
BANIKOARA	3.6%
MALANVILLE	0.0%

In MALANVILLE, the friends, the delegate of the village, and the other members of the household are consulted and in BANIKOARA, the other members of the household are consulted (47.3%).

Indeed, friends have a great importance in the social life of the households and are visited frequently. Thus, 64.4% of the heads of household have more than three friends whom they visit frequently, and only 3.6% have no friends. This reveals as a whole a sociability that is quite developed (Table 162). If, therefore, we take the frequent visiting of more than three friends as the criterion of sociability, it can be stated that in BORGOU every group rank high in sociability, since the last group, composed of the YORUBA, has 52.9% of households visiting more than 3 friends.

NATIONALITIES	VISITS TO 3 FRIENDS
FON	70.6%
BARIBA	65.3%
PEULH	63.1%
DENDI	60.3%
YORUBA	52.9%

At the level of the districts, SEGBANA is in first place, with 92.6%, and TCHAOUROU is at the bottom of the scale of sociability with only 43.6%.

DISTRICTS	VISITS TO 3 FRIENDS
SEGBANA	92.6%
N'DALI	79.65
GOGOUNOU	74.5%
MALANVILLE	71.4%
KALALE	67.2%
BANIKOARA	66.3%
KANDI	64.4%
BEMBEREKE	63.6%
KARIMAMA	63.3%
NIKKI	60.7%
PARAKOU	57.1%
SINENDE	55.8%
PERERE	48.8%
TCHAOUROU	43.6%

There is no relationship between the number of friends visited and the sex of the head of household (Table 163), the years of schooling of the head of household (Table 165), the size of the household (Table 166), or the main activity of the head of household (Table 167). However, Table 164 reveals a weak relationship between the number of friends visited and the age of the head of household ( $r = -.11$ ), demonstrating that when they are young is when the heads of household have the most friends.