

Bambara

also known as “Bamana”

Data source: eHRAF

Secondary source

Entered by Emily Pitek, Human Relations Area Files

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Entry tags: Religion, African Religions, Islamic Traditions, Syncretic Religions

The Bambara are a group of people living along both banks of the Niger River in West Africa. They live in independent villages, each composed of several families led by a chief and council of elders. The chief's powers and duties are both secular and religious. The Bambara religion is a hybrid of traditional beliefs and practices (ancestor worship and paganism), with Islamic influence. In the case of the Bambara, the religious group is coterminous with the society itself. This entry focuses on the Bambara living along the Niger River from Segou to Bamako around the time of 1902.



Date Range: 1890 CE - 1923 CE

Region: Niger River, West Africa

Region tags: Africa, Western Africa, Mali

Segou to Bamako on the Niger River, ca. 1902

Status of Participants:

✓ Elite ✓ Religious Specialists ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)

Sources

Print sources for understanding this subject:

– Source 1: Divale, W. 2004. Codebook of Variables for the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample. *World Cultures: The Journal of Cross-Cultural and Comparative Research*.

Online sources for understanding this subject:

– Source 1 URL: <http://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=fa08-010>

– Source 1 Description: Toulmin, C. (1992). *Cattle, Women, And Wells: Managing Household Survival In The Sahel*. Oxford [England]: Clarendon Press ; Oxford University Press.

– Source 1 URL: <http://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=fa08-000>

– Source 1 Description: Adem, T. A. (2009). *Culture Summary: Bambara*. New Haven, Conn.: HRAF.

– Source 2 URL: <http://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=fa08-002>

– Source 2 Description: Monteil, C., & Looney, K. A. (1924). *Bambara Of Ségou And Kaarta: An Historical, Ethnographical And Literary Study Of A People Of The French Sudan*. Paris: Emile Larose.

– Source 3 URL: <http://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=fa08-004>

– Source 3 Description: Henry, J. (Joseph), & Coleman, A. (1910). *Soul Of An African People: The Bambara: Their Psychic, Ethical, Religious And Social Life*. Bibliothèque-Anthropos. Münster I. W.: Aschendorff.

General Variables

Membership/Group Interactions

Are other religious groups in cultural contact with target religion:

– Yes

Notes: "...history shows that for centuries the Bambara have been living in contact with Islam, that they maintain close relations with native communities of Islamic converts, and that they are willing to seek the good offices of marabouts of all races and ranks...paganism and Islamism are not mutually antagonistic dogmas in the minds of the Bambara or of the Sudanese people in general, as many Europeans believe and state it to be. In these regions, Islamization has a counterpart which prepares the way for it and explains it, and that is the 'sudanization' of Islam" (Monteil and Looney, 1924:364).

↳ Is the cultural contact competitive:

– Yes

Notes: "The Bambara were pursued from every side, unable to perform publicly even religious ceremonies in honor of simple genii...As conquerors the Moslems have always ruthlessly opposed idolatry, destroying its temples and overthrowing its altars" (Henry and Coleman, 1910:63).

↳ Is there violent conflict (within sample region):

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 1654 (Pacification) indicates that the Bambara were pacified before the twenty-five-year ethnographic present, so warfare is rare or absent (Ember and Ember, 1992; retrieved from Divale, 2004).

↳ Is there violent conflict (with groups outside the sample region):

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 1654 (Pacification) indicates that the Bambara were pacified before the twenty-five-year ethnographic present, so warfare is rare or absent (Ember and Ember, 1992; retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Does the religion have official political support

Answer 'yes' also in cases where the religious and political spheres are not distinguished from one another, but the religious group's activities are tied up with, and supported by, the functioning of the society at large.

– Yes

Notes: "Although at present the civil and religious authorities are separate in many places, the gnéna-sonnaba, or religious priest, always holds precedence, and self-respecting people call him dougoutigi (head of the village), giving the title of sotigi to the one who has only civil authority. Here we have

further evidence that the organization of the Bambara nation was, at its origin purely religious" (Henry and Coleman, 1910:100).

↳ Are the head of the polity and the head of the religion the same figure:

– Yes

Notes: "Although at present the civil and religious authorities are separate in many places, the gnéna-n-sonnaba, or religious priest, always holds precedence, and self-respecting people call him dougoutigi (head of the village), giving the title of sotigi to the one who has only civil authority. Here we have further evidence that the organization of the Bambara nation was, at its origin purely religious" (Henry and Coleman, 1910:100).

↳ Are political officials equivalent to religious officials:

– Yes

Notes: "Their priests are the gnéna-n-sonna or dougoutigi (village chiefs whose jurisdiction is religious and often also civil)" (Henry and Coleman, 1910:21).

Is there a conception of apostasy in the religious group:

– I don't know

Size and Structure

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (estimated population, numerical):

– Estimated population, numeric: 500000

Notes: According to the census referred to hereafter, the Bambara number more than 500,000, thus forming one of the largest population groups in West Africa (Monteil and Looney, 1924:1).

Are there recognized leaders in the religious group:

– Yes

Notes: "Their priests are the gnéna-n-sonna or dougoutigi (village chiefs whose jurisdiction is religious and often also civil)" (Henry and Coleman, 1910:21).

↳ Are leaders believed to possess supernatural powers or qualities:

– Yes

Notes: The high priests are the individuals who communicate with the village god/spirit (Monteil and Looney, 1924:248).

↳ Powers are associated with leadership office they assume:

– Yes

Notes: "The establishment of a village requires the cooperation of several communities,

each represented by its fa. One of these fa will either appropriate the leadership or be chosen as the representative or chief of the others. Sometimes he may be merely primus inter pares; otherwise he may have managed to have his primacy conceded by the rest. It is this chief who treats with the genie in the name of the whole village; thus, he becomes the 'high priest of the genie' (nyana-n-son-na-ba) with the essential function of 'making the offerings' (son') required by the cult. Furthermore, he administers the earthly domain of the genie and is therefore called dugu-tigi (master of the earth)" (Monteil and Looney, 1924:248).

↳ Are religious leaders chosen:

– No

Notes: Leaders are chosen upon the creation of a new settlement, but otherwise the position is heredity. "Elected for life to hold both civil and religious power, he is truly the head of the village, the dougoutigi. His position is hereditary; it passes from brother to brother and, when there are none, goes by right to his oldest son. The one who is to succeed him becomes his aide (siéré), and the heads of families (gouatigi-ou) compose his council; they are always summoned when a question is to be handled or a decision made" (Henry and Coleman, 1910:119).

– Yes

Notes: Leaders are chosen upon the creation of a new settlement, but otherwise the position is heredity. "...the council of family heads meets to choose a leader. This leader is really a priest, for his chief function is to sacrifice in a public and formal manner to the blonda ba sou, the shades of the great entry hut, that is, to leaders and priests who, just like him, held the reins of power, and to the gnéna, genii, spirits, and fetishes, whence come his names of gnéna-n-sonna ('he who sacrifices to the gnéna fetishes') and gnéna-n-sonnaba ('great sacrificer of the gnéna fetishes')" (Henry and Coleman, 1910: 118).

↳ A political leader chooses the leader:

– No

↳ Other members of the leader's congregation choose the leader:

– Yes

Notes: "...the council of family heads meets to choose a leader. This leader is really a priest, for his chief function is to sacrifice in a public and formal manner to the blonda ba sou, the shades of the great entry hut, that is, to leaders and priests who, just like him, held the reins of power, and to the gnéna, genii, spirits, and fetishes, whence come his names of gnéna-n-sonna ('he who sacrifices to the gnéna fetishes') and gnéna-n-sonnaba ('great sacrificer of the gnéna fetishes')" (Henry and Coleman, 1910: 118).

↳ Are leaders considered fallible:

– I don't know

↳ Are close followers or disciples of a religious leader required to obediently and unquestionably accept the leader's pronouncements on all matters:

– No

Notes: "In this office he [the priest/chief] has the help of the council of fa [heads of families], and in important matters he must follow their advice" (Monteil and Looney, 1924:250).

Scripture

Does the religious group have scriptures:

Scripture is a generic term used to designate revered texts that are considered particularly authoritative and sacred relative to other texts. Strictly speaking, it refers to written texts, but there are also "oral scriptures" (e.g. the Vedas of India).

– No

Notes: No evidence for the presence of scriptures among any of the ethnographic sources.

Architecture, Geography

Is monumental religious architecture present:

– No

Notes: "There are no structures in the community that are appreciably larger or more impressive than the usual residential dwellings" (Murdock and Wilson, 1972; Column 6, also SCCS Variable 66).

Are there different types of religious monumental architecture:

– No

Notes: "There are no structures in the community that are appreciably larger or more impressive than the usual residential dwellings" (Murdock and Wilson, 1972; Column 6, also SCCS Variable 66).

Are there specific sites dedicated to sacred practice or considered sacred:

– Yes

Notes: "The altar of the ancestors and of the household gods is found in the blon' [entryway of a dwelling]" (Monteil and Looney, 1924:175).

Are pilgrimages present:

– No

Notes: No evidence for the presence of pilgrimages among any of the ethnographic sources.

Beliefs

Burial and Afterlife

Is a spirit-body distinction present:

Answer "no" only if personhood (or consciousness) is extinguished with death of the physical body.

Answering yes does not necessarily imply the existence of Cartesian mind/body dualism, merely that some element of personhood (or consciousness) survives the death of the body.

– Yes

Notes: "So it is that, for the Bambara, a human being is composed of a corporeal body (su) which serves as the outward envelope (fure) of a fluid element (dya), whose subtle essence (nyama) is merely a part of the universal energy which permeates all nature" (Monteil and Looney, 1924:134).

↳ Spirit-mind is conceived of as having qualitatively different powers or properties than other body parts:

– Yes

Notes: "The dya is a fluid which has its own attributes" (Monteil and Looney, 1924:134).

↳ Spirit-mind is conceived of as non-material, ontologically distinct from body:

– Yes

Notes: (Monteil and Looney, 1924:134)

Belief in afterlife:

– Yes

Notes: "Religion and magic both believe firmly in the dual nature of man; a finite body and a soul which survives this body. When death comes, this soul goes off to join the family of manes, who are bodiless souls like it. From that vantage point the soul continues to watch over the affairs of its relatives still in the world of men" (Monteil and Looney, 1924:153).

↳ Is the spatial location of the afterlife specified or described by the religious group:

– No

Notes: "At the time of death the soul goes into Lahara, a vague word, so vague that a Bambara cannot define it or give you any idea of it. It is the place where the invisible beings live and where everything becomes invisible" (Henry and Coleman, 1910:52).

Reincarnation in this world:

– Yes

Notes: "Further, it appears that the dya [spirit] plays a crucial role in the 'return' (sagi) to life, that is, rebirth, which is one of the most strongly held beliefs of the Bambara. After death, the dya is reincarnated in the same families..." (Monteil and Looney, 1924:133). The Bambara "are also generally unanimous in believing in the reincarnation of young men and women and men and women who die in the prime of life. Such persons have not completed the whole cycle of their existence and must begin it again" (Henry and Coleman, 1910:50).

↳ In a human form:

– Yes

Notes: "After death, the dya is reincarnated in the same families; the Bambara even claim to have positive proof of this fact. Such and such a newborn child has such and such anatomical

peculiarity of the deceased – is this not a proof that the deceased wanted to show thereby that he was re-embodied? If a child dies very young, the body is mutilated in some agreed manner – a finger is broken, for instance – and if later a child is born in the family with a similar deformity, everyone is convinced that the dead child has 'returned': a sagira, 'he has returned'" (Monteil and Looney, 1924:133).

↳ In animal/plant form:

– No

Notes: No evidence for reincarnation in animal/plant form is found in any ethnographic source.

↳ In form of an inanimate object(s):

– No

Notes: No evidence for reincarnation in the form of an inanimate object(s) is found in any ethnographic source.

↳ Reincarnation linked to notion of life-transcending causality (e.g. karma):

– I don't know

↳ Other form of reincarnation in this world:

– No

Are there special treatments for adherents' corpses:

– Yes

Notes: "The Bambara bury their dead..." (Henry and Coleman, 1910:236).

↳ Cremation:

– No

Notes: No evidence for cremation is found in any of the ethnographic sources.

↳ Mummification:

– No

Notes: No evidence for mummification is found in any of the ethnographic sources.

↳ Interment:

– Yes

Notes: "The Bambara bury their dead..." (Henry and Coleman, 1910:236).

↳ Corpse is flexed (legs are bent or body is crouched):

– No

Notes: Corpse is interred extended and laying on the side (Henry and Coleman, 1910:236).

↳ Corpse is extended (lying flat on front or back):

– No

Notes: Corpse is interred extended and laying on the side (Henry and Coleman, 1910:236).

↳ Corpse is upright (where body is interred in standing position)::

– No

Notes: Corpse is interred extended and laying on the side (Henry and Coleman, 1910:236).

↳ Corpse is interred some other way:

– Yes [specify]: On side

Notes: "Men lie on their right sides with their heads to the south and their faces to the east; women lie on their left sides with their heads to the north and their feet to the south" (Henry and Coleman, 1910:236).

↳ Cannibalism:

– No

Notes: No evidence for cannibalism is found in any of the ethnographic sources.

↳ Exposure to elements (e.g. air drying):

– No

Notes: No evidence for exposure to elements is found in any of the ethnographic sources.

↳ Feeding to animals:

– No

Notes: No evidence for feeding corpses to animals is found in any of the ethnographic sources.

↳ Secondary burial:

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 1850 (Secondary bone/body treatment: Original Scale) indicates that "secondary contact with the body or bones of the deceased does not occur" (Schroeder, 2001; retrieved from Divale, 2004).

↳ Re-treatment of corpse:

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 1850 (Secondary bone/body treatment: Original Scale) indicates that "secondary contact with the body or bones of the deceased does not occur" (Schroeder, 2001; retrieved from Divale, 2004).

↳ Other intensive (in terms of time or resources expended) treatment of corpse :

– No

Are co-sacrifices present in tomb/burial:

– No

Notes: "At every death the blood of hens, goats, and dogs flows in streams. I would like to be able to think and say with some Europeans that all these sacrifices are an honor paid to the shades of the deceased and the ancestors, but that is impossible for me. Not the slightest sacrifice is offered to a person's soul on the day of death or the day of burial. The Negroes are logical in their beliefs; the soul does not leave the body until after burial, and a dead person has no right to a sacrifice until he is in Lahara, or the world of spirits. Prayers are undoubtedly said. Objects which belonged to the deceased or were used in paying the final respects to him are destroyed and placed as saraka at the corner of land formed by paths that cross. But nothing in all this would be a sacrifice, bloody or bloodless in Bambara eyes" (Henry and Coleman, 1910:237).

Are grave goods present:

– No

Notes: No evidence for the presence of grave goods in any ethnographic source.

Are formal burials present:

– Yes

Notes: See Henry and Coleman, 1910, pages 236-250 for a detailed description of burial practices among the Bambara.

↳ As cenotaphs:

– I don't know

↳ In cemetery:

– Yes

Notes: "Some old men are buried in the inner courts of their dwellings. This custom is not at all widespread, and almost everywhere the cemetery is located around the village, and each one rests in his field of maize" (Henry and Coleman, 1910:236).

↳ Family tomb-crypt:

– I don't know

↳ Domestic (individuals interred beneath house, or in areas used for normal domestic activities):

– Yes

Notes: "The manes (fa su-u) [spirits of the dead] always like to frequent the places where their bodies lived, and that is why one keeps the things that belong to the deceased, why he is buried near his house or sometimes even under the floor, and why some families piously keep the skull of the departed to do it honor" (Monteil and Looney, 1924:136).

↳ Other formal burial type:

– No

Supernatural Beings

Are supernatural beings present:

– Yes

Notes: See questions below for more information on supernatural beings

↳ A supreme high god is present:

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 238 (Religion: High Gods), indicates that "a high god absent or not reported in substantial descriptions of religious beliefs" (Murdock, 1962-1971; Retrieved from Divale, 2004). "A belief in a master of the universe exists among the Bambara, but the belief has borrowed from Islam a degree of precision of which the native substratum seems unaware. In any event, there is no Bambara word for 'God' except the one brought by the Moslems – 'Allah,' pronounced as Ngala. This lack of a Bambara word may be explained by their custom of avoiding pronouncing the name of powerful people for fear of incurring their wrath" (Monteil and Looney, 1924:141).

↳ Previously human spirits are present:

– Yes

Notes: See questions below for more information on previously human spirits

↳ Human spirits can be seen:

– Yes

Notes: "All [spirits] can manifest themselves to the living, and they like to choose a place where their presence and their action will be most useful and where they prefer to receive offerings, as in a grove, on a hill, or near a spring or a tomb" (Monteil and Looney, 1924:136).

↳ Human spirits can be physically felt:

– I don't know

↳ Previously human spirits have knowledge of this world:

– I don't know

↳ Human spirits have deliberate causal efficacy in the world:

– Yes

Notes: "If they wish, they can do good, protect men, and grant them favors. They punish and chastise because they are above all responsible for the welfare of humanity" (Henry and Coleman, 1910:21).

↳ Human spirits can reward:

– Yes

Notes: "If they wish, they can do good, protect men, and grant them favors. They punish and chastise because they are above all responsible for the welfare of humanity" (Henry and Coleman, 1910:21).

↳ Human spirits can punish:

– Yes

Notes: "If they wish, they can do good, protect men, and grant them favors. They punish and chastise because they are above all responsible for the welfare of humanity" (Henry and Coleman, 1910:21).

↳ Human spirits have indirect causal efficacy in the world:

"Indirect causal efficacy" refers to not being seen as consciously, directly and actively intervening in the human world, but their overall well being or general attitude has effects on, e.g., quality of harvest, success in war, health, etc.

– Yes

Notes: "...they all have powers superior to those of earthly men over winds and rain, farming and hunting, in short, over all things that constitute the visible world of man" (Monteil and Looney, 1924:136).

↳ Human spirits have memory of life:

– Yes

Notes: "It is sometimes thought that the world of the manes [spirits] may be without light and heat but that otherwise they each continue the existence it had in life with the same passions, the same preferences, and the same animosities" (Monteil and Looney, 1924:136).

↳ Human spirits exhibit positive emotion:

– I don't know

↳ Human spirits exhibit negative emotion:

– Yes

Notes: "The dead suffer from such negligence, become angry and seek vengeance" (Monteil and Looney, 1924:137).

↳ Human spirits possess hunger:

– Yes

Notes: "The one definite belief is in a survival [after death] which the Bambara can only conceive of in terms of ordinary life; the terms used to describe the other world bear this out: the dead eat, drink, dress themselves, wear adornments, etc. – in short, behave exactly like living men" (Monteil and Looney, 1924:137).

↳ Human spirits communicate with the living:

– I don't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings are present:

– Yes

Notes: "A second category [of the supernatural] comprises genii of the place or gods of the earth (nyana dugu-da-siri). There is not a single spot that is inhabited, cultivated, populated or, on the other hand, isolated and deserted that does not have its genie" (Monteil and Looney, 1924:139). "The third class [of supernatural beings] comprises the enormous throng of genii of all sorts included under the vague and general term of nyana" (ibid. page 140).

↳ These supernatural beings can be seen:

– Yes

Notes: "They often reveal their presence by entering into direct relations with someone who is in their vicinity and telling him how they wish to be honored in exchange for protection; on other occasions they are only discovered by a 'seer'" (Monteil and Looney, 1924:139).

↳ These supernatural beings can be physically felt:

– I don't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge of this world:

– I don't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have deliberate causal efficacy in the world:

– I don't know

↳ These supernatural beings have indirect causal efficacy in the world:

"Indirect causal efficacy" refers to not being seen as consciously, directly and actively

intervening in the human world, but their overall well being or general attitude has effects on, e.g., quality of harvest, success in war, health, etc.

– I don't know

↳ These supernatural beings exhibit positive emotion:

– I don't know

↳ These supernatural beings exhibit negative emotion:

– Yes

Notes: "Theoretically, the nyana are all-powerful and are honored the more in proportion to these powers, since, in general, it is their malevolent side that earns them their reputation. Homage is paid to them much more out of fear and terror than because of the kindness sometimes attributed to them" (Monteil and Looney, 1924:141).

Supernatural Monitoring

Is supernatural monitoring present:

This refers to surveillance by supernatural beings of humans' behaviour and/or thought particularly as it relates to social norms or potential norm violations.

– No

Notes: "For the Bambara, however, the next life is merely a continuation of this one and he does not think that he can, by conduct, improve his chances in the next life since it offers no rewards or punishments for his day-by-day actions. Neither his manes nor his genii give him an example of conduct to guide him. Therefore, without thought of the future, he goes along solely concerned with the present; he seeks what will give him pleasure, tries to avoid what seems harmful, and all this in a groping way, as one walks in the dark" (Monteil and Looney, 1924:142).

Do supernatural beings mete out punishment:

– I don't know

Notes: Insufficient data to determine with confidence

Do supernatural beings bestow rewards:

– I don't know

Notes: Insufficient data to determine with confidence

Messianism/Eschatology

Are messianic beliefs present:

– I don't know

Notes: Insufficient evidence to determine an answer with confidence

Is an eschatology present:

– I don't know

Notes: Insufficient evidence to determine an answer with confidence

Norms and Moral Realism

Are general social norms prescribed by the religious group:

– Yes

Notes: See Monteil and Looney, 1924:143 for a detailed description of Bambara morality and customs.

Practices

Membership Costs and Practices

Does membership in this religious group require participation in large-scale rituals:

i.e. involving two or more households; includes large-scale "ceremonies" and "festivals."

– Yes

Notes: Circumcision rituals involve entire villages, and in order to be considered Bambara, an adolescent must go through this ritual (Henry and Coleman, 1910:238). For more information on circumcision, see Monteil and Looney, 1924, Chapter 9: Circumcision.

Are extra-ritual in-group markers present:

E.g. special changes to appearance such as circumcision, tattoos, scarification, etc.

– Yes

Notes: "For the Bambara, circumcision is not only the seal of the tribe, it is also a second birth, the entrance into civil and religious life" (Henry and Coleman, 1910:189).



Circumcision:

– Yes

Notes: "For the Bambara, circumcision is not only the seal of the tribe, it is also a second birth, the entrance into civil and religious life" (Henry and Coleman, 1910:189).

Society and Institutions

Levels of Social Complexity

The society to which the religious group belongs is best characterized as (please choose one):

This question refers to the wider society in which the religious group is located.

– A chiefdom

Notes: The Bambara have one level of jurisdictional hierarchy beyond the local community, which is reflective of a petty chiefdom (Ethnographic Atlas column 33, Murdock, 1967; retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Education

Does the religious group provide formal education to its adherents:

– I don't know

Notes: Insufficient information

Public Works

Does the religious group in question provide public food storage:

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 20 (food storage) indicates that food is stored in individual households (Murdock and Morrow, 1970; retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Is public food storage provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 20 (food storage) indicates that food is stored in individual households (Murdock and Morrow, 1970; retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Does the religious group in question provide transportation infrastructure:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Insufficient information on transportation among ethnographic sources.

Is transportation infrastructure provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Insufficient information on transportation among ethnographic sources.

Enforcement

Does the religious group in question provide an institutionalized police force:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: insufficient information

Do the group's adherents interact with an institutionalized police force provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: insufficient information

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized judges:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: insufficient information

Do the group's adherents interact with an institutionalized judicial system provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: insufficient information

Does the religious group in question have a formal legal code:

– No

Notes: "...no code organizes Bambara rules of life, Everything depends upon custom, that mysterious thread, at once fragile and strong, which links the generations one with another and which sustains the individual, though he is unaware of it, to such an extent that he is completely lost without it. Handed down by earlier generations, superstitiously preserved, it is imposed through fear of the punishment which will follow transgression" (Monteil and Looney, 1924:143).

Warfare

Does religious group in question possess an institutionalized military:

– I don't know

Notes: Insufficient ethnographic information regarding warfare during the time this entry focuses on.

Do the group's adherents participate in an institutionalized military provided by institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– I don't know

Notes: Insufficient ethnographic information regarding warfare during the time this entry focuses on.

Are the group's adherents protected by or subject to an institutionalized military provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– I don't know

Notes: Insufficient ethnographic information regarding warfare during the time this entry focuses on.

Food Production

Does the religious group in question provide food for themselves:

– Yes

Notes: In the case of the Bambara, the religious group is coterminous with the society. The Bambara rely primarily on intensive agriculture, with animal husbandry and gathering. Fishing is present as a supplemental source of subsistence. Source of information from Ethnographic Atlas (Murdock, 1962-1971), retrieved from Divale, 2004; Variables 203-207, 232.



Please characterize the forms/level of food production [choose all that apply]:

- Gathering
- Fishing
- Pastoralism
- Large-scale agriculture (e.g., monocropping, organized irrigation systems)

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