



CALL FOR PAPERS

Colloque Theme :

Fortified Site of ETOO and defensive measures developed by Shabè people and in the Yorubaland

The Association of Yaoui Citizens and Residents (Municipality of Kilibo, District of Ouesse in the Department of Collines) is organizing a scientific and cultural Symposium in collaboration with the Department of History and Archaeology (DHA) of the University of Abomey-Calavi as part of the second Edition of the Yaoui Cultural Symposium to be held in Yaoui from December 18th to 22th, 2019.

1. Background and Rationale

The Shabè people are one of the Yoruba sub-groups living in the hilly Central part of Benin lying between Benin and Nigeria. This people experienced glorious episodes, but they also experienced painful experiences during the vicissitudes of their history. The Shabè have been deeply shocked and disturbed by the slavery trade, the danhomey incursions and razzia by Fulani, Yoruba assaults from Oyo, in addition to attacks and razzias organized by Baatombou of Borgou. These political entities often carried out successful expeditions against Shabe people because they probably had more sophisticated weapons. Moreover, when Africa was colonized in the end of 19th Century by powerful Western countries, they divided the Kingdom of Shabè into two parts by the river Okpara and shared between French and British. The Shabè people who lived on both sides of the river Okpara were subjected to forced labours and all kind and all humiliated activities as a consequence of colonial power abuse.

To face this situation of general trouble and insecurity, Shabè people had developed defence strategies to protect and to counter the advances of their enemies. However, some populations had taken desperately the exod route seeking for

suitable places for refuges. While a caravan of migrants created the ETOO defensive site, which was closed to the contemporary Village of Yaoui, others moved to settle in localities such as Agbassa and Ikemon, which were more strategic sites (Palau Marti, 1995; Igue 2005; 2018: 139; Labiyi, 2018: 119).

This is the reason why a series of communications will be especially devoted to to Ikemon defence system, which enabled its inhabitants to survive from the repeated assaults they were forced to face.

In addition to fortification of human settlements whose traces are still visible in the landscape, the Shabè people had adopted other protection methods, which needs to be highlighted. For instance, they relied on secret societies such as the hunter's brotherhood to ensure the security of the population. The involvement of hunters in the maintenance of stability is a recurring phenomenon in the West Africa subregion and has been demonstrated not only in other Yoruba kingdoms, but also in the ancient Mali. The Shabè people were also reported to have signed non-aggression pacts with peoples and formed alliances with others to fight common enemies. The best known defence system is the construction of *odi* ramparts and *yara* or ditches around the cities. All the yorubaland cities were characterized by this kind of defence system (Igue, 2018:127-128). Unfortunately, all these protection and defence systems not are well documented because they have not been yet subject to appropriate scientific studies.

2. Objective

The purpose of the scientific and cultural symposium is to promote a platform for exchanging and discussing latest research findings on the traditional methods that Shabè people had put in place to defend themselves and to withstand against the invasion of their territory.

This symposium will provide an opportunity to explore and document all the traditional methods used to evolve in their hostile environment. It will be of the utmost interest to document the endogenous knowledge that enabled the Shabè people to resist to the enemies threats that possessed modern weapons and whose leaders demonstrated the will to exterminate them. It will also provide an opportunity to envisage the promotion of this archaeological heritage and its inclusion in the national or UNESCO lists as well as the education of learners of the Shabè people history.

3. Scientific Symposium Axis

Researchers and all those who interested in this call for communication are invited to propose original papers along the following lines of reflexion:

- Environmental exploitation for the protection system during periods of insecurity and

danger in various forms: fortification, walls, pits, rock shelters, use of cover and defence plants, etc. Special attention will be paid to the case of defence system of Ikemon area;

- Secret societies and spirituality: The ancestral legacy to ensure the security and integrity of the territory;
- Alliances between Shabè people and other sociocultural groups: objectives, state of the matter and prospects for the future.

4. Selection of papers

Interested persons are invited to send a summary of their presentation which could be in French or in English language by latest October 30th 2019 to the following e-mail addresses: mamvincent@yahoo.com; or omoegoun@yahoo.fr.

Information on the identity (name, surname, institutional affiliation), postal and e-mail addresses of the principal author must be provided when the abstracts are submitted. A Scientific Committee will be set up to select proposals. The notification to authors will be sent by November 15th 2019.

The texts of the selected contributions are expected to be sent to symposium organizers by November 30th 2019 through the following e-mails: mamvincent@yahoo.com and omoegoun@yahoo.fr.

The proceedings of the symposium will be published no later than February 30th 2020.

Important dates to remember:

- October 30th 2019: Closure of submission of communication summaries
- November 15th 2019: Selection of Communication and notification to presenters
- December 19th and 20th 2019: Holding of the symposium
- January 15th 2020: Reception of the final versions of the communications
- February 30th: Editing and publishing the symposium proceedings

5. Conditions for participating to the Scientific Symposium

The symposium is opened to all:

- Researchers and Teachers/Researchers, of any discipline, organized or not;
- Depositaries of the historical tradition;
- Members and followers of secret societies;
- etc.

Participation fees to the symposium are as follows: Ten thousands (10,000) FCFA for students and Fifteen thousands (15,000) FCFA for lecturers and other paper presenters. In addition, arrangements with transport service providers will be made so that to facilitate group travel and accommodation for participants.

6. Contact persons

Prof Vincent Joseph MAMA: Tel.: + 229 64 39 44 30; mamvincent@yahoo.com

Dr. Nestor LABIYI: Tel.: + 229 64 84 37 87; omoegoun@yahoo.fr

7. Technical Committee of the Scientific symposium

President : Prof. Dr. Ing. MAMA Vincent Joseph, INRAB

Vice-President : Dr/MC YAYI Ladekan Eléonore, Université Abomey-Calavi

Members

Prof. ASIWAJU, J., University of Ile-Ife Nigeria

Prof BIO BIGOU B. Léon, Université Abomey-Calavi, Bénin

Prof OGOUWALE Euloge, Université Abomey-Calavi, Bénin

Prof OREKAN Vincent, Université Abomey-Calavi, Bénin

Prof SAIDOU Aliou, Université d'Abomey-Calavi, Bénin

Dr/MC TOSSOU M. Rogatien, Université Abomey-Calavi, Bénin

Dr/MC N'DAH Didier, Université Abomey-Calavi, Bénin

Dr/MC YABI Ibouraima, Université Abomey-Calavi, Bénin

Dr/MC AFOUDA Servais, Université de Parakou, Bénin

Dr/MC ONIBON Yvette, Université de Parakou, Bénin

Dr/MC VODOUNOU Jean-Bosco, Université de Parakou, Bénin

Dr/MC ADJERAN Moufoutaou, Université Abomey-Calavi, Bénin

Dr/MC AKIYO Ruffin, Université de Parakou, Bénin

Dr ATCHADE CHAMBI Julien, Université de Parakou, Bénin

Dr LABIYI Nestor, Université Abomey-Calavi, Bénin