

RESTORATION YOUNGO DOGOROU

ASSOCIATION DOGON EDUCATION IN COLLABORATION WITH
FOUNDATION DOGON EDUCATION (SDO)
DECEMBER 2013

RESTORATION YOUNGO DOGOROU

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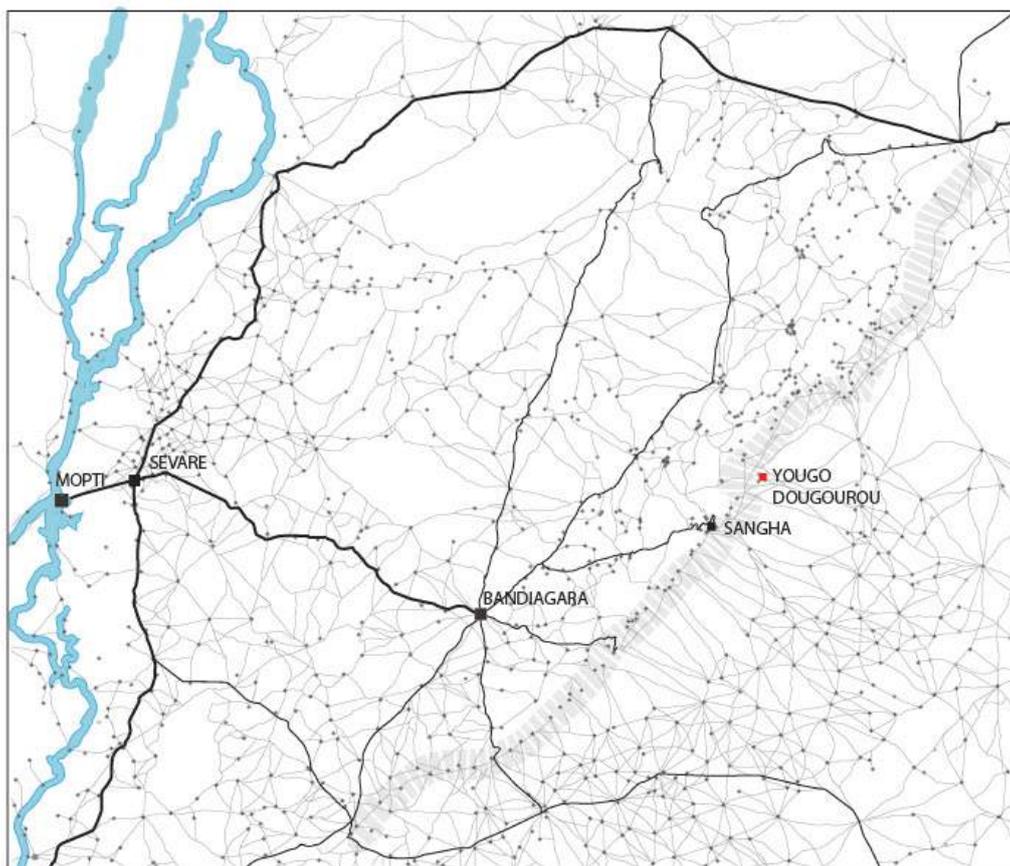
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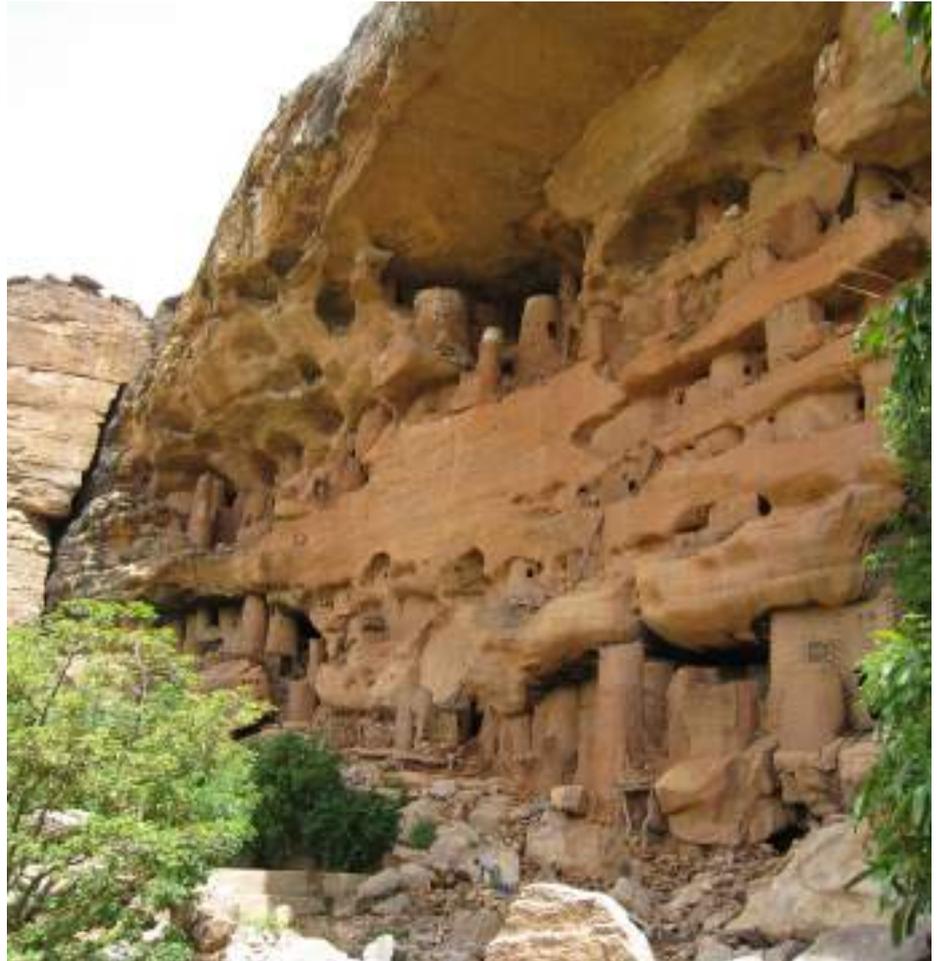
Yougo Dogorou lies about 120 kilometers east of Mopti

INTRODUCTION

The Cliff of Bandiagara (Land of the Dogons) was inscribed on the List of World Heritage properties in 1989. It was inscribed as a cultural and natural site on the basis of criteria V and VII, and is one of the largest mixed sites inscribed in the World Heritage List of UNESCO. It extends over 4,000 km² and, as such, is an area where around 500,000 people are living in 289 villages. Nando is one of these villages. Among them, Nando holds a special status due to the unique mosque which lies in the centre of the village.

The land of the Dogon lies south of the river Niger not far from Mopti and Djenne. The region is composed of three zones: the plateau, the cliffs and the lower plains. The plateau rises like an immense fortress to a height of approximately 300 metres above surrounding plains. It is delimited by the Bandiagara escarpment, a cliff of more than 200 km long, which runs from southwest to northeast. Successive waves of immigration have populated the area. Over the ages peoples from different horizons had to share, not often without harm or conflicts, the same territory. Today the originality of Dogon country resides in its ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity. A homogeneous Dogon society does not exist. Like so many other farming societies, the Dogon have no centralized power structure. Political and religious authority belong to the village elders. In line with its diversity, each region of the Dogon land has its own traditions. Variants in belief, myth and history abound.

Just a bit free from the Bandiagara cliffs lie the villages of Yougo; Yougo Piri, Yougo Na and Yougo Dogorou. They are among the most beautiful villages of the Unesco list. The overwhelming awareness of time manifested by presence of the well kept Tellem houses and tombs easily included in the culture and architecture of the Dogon village. Yougo Dogorou has a special status and meaning for the whole Dogon land, this unique cultural position of the villages is based on its role. The society of the masks is based in the village and all the important feasts like de Sirigi every 60 years and the Dhama start here. All funerals for the Hogons, the wholly man in the Dogon society, are held in the village and they are tombed in the highly placed caves.



Yougo Piri, houses built in the cliff

From our first trips since 1972 it was clear that it is extremely difficult to approach the villages of Yougo because of their isolated place. Since 1981 (see picture, on the road from Sangha, passing by Koundou heading for Yougo with Herman Haan) we started making water dams for providing drinking water near to the village. Our last water project is from 2009 in Yougo Na. There have been several plans for renovating parts of the village.

The project presented in this document has been prepared by the Foundation Dogon Education in collaboration with LEVS architects Amsterdam, The NAI (Architectural Institute of the Netherlands) and the Mission Culturelle de Bandiagara, the decentralised government structure in charge of the protection and conservation of the Unesco site. The project will be supported in the future by several partners listed in the credits. The start of the project is an response to

the concerns expressed by the leaders of the village Yougo, the chief of the region Sangha and several other villages and inhabitants of the land of the Dogon. Due to its cultural position Yougo will never be abandoned but that's not a guarantee that quality of the village will continue without support.



OUR FIRST VISITS, FINDING THE VILLAGE, ARCHITECTURE AND HERITAGE

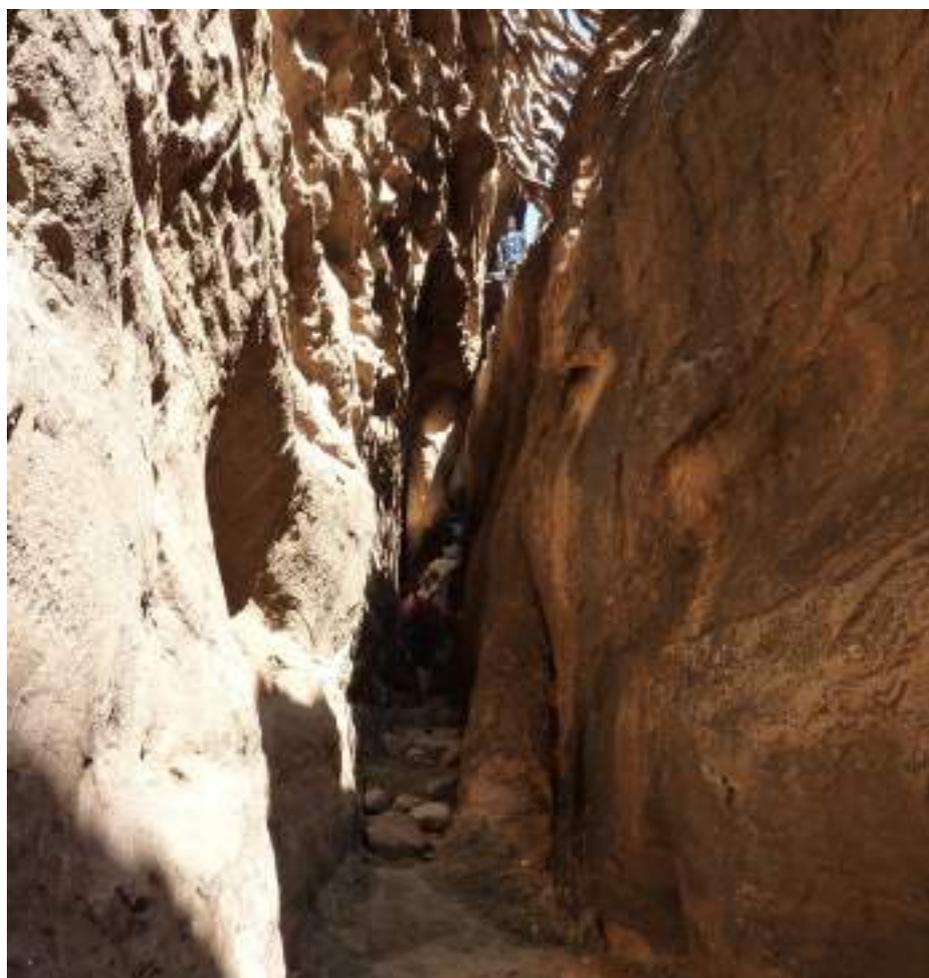
It is difficult to describe the villages and approach of Yougo and its beauty. The village of Yougo Piri is more easy to understand because of its overwhelming moment when you see the houses almost stuck against the wall, after climbing from the plain 300 meters coming from Koundou, Yendouma or Tiogou. When you walk thru the village one comes to "the roof" of the mountain and walks toward Yougo Dogorou at the other side of the freestanding mountain. Walking over bridges made with braches to overcome the several gaps that cut

through the mountains you come to the entrance of Yougo Dogorou. A very narrow steep gap protected for falling by braches you can climb down over typical Dogon ladders towards the cavern with the old Tellem houses nearby. Continuing your walk one finds two dams made by us which holds the water that comes down during the rain period (see next text) at the end one comes at the viewpoint of the most beautifully protected Tellem granaries under the enormous overhang of the rocks. Continuing through the houses of the

village, which are situated in between all the bolder rocks and mostly have several levels, one arrives on the village square with the Toguna, the Giant Baobab. Here all the people of the Dogon land comes for advice and consultation and this is the place where the Sirigi and Dama starts. De villages continue down de slopes. One descends the village on this side of the mountain passing by Yougo Na facing de cliffs of Bandiagarra and Koundou.



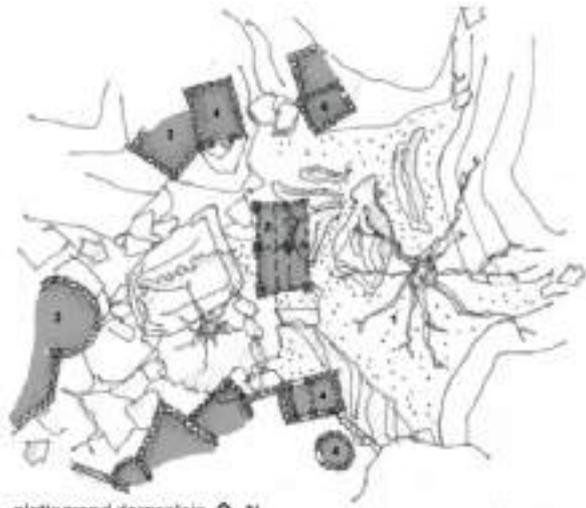
One of the dams wich holds the rainwater



Walk from Yougo Piri to Yougo Dogorou







plattagrond dorpsplein ↗ N

1. dorpsplein
2. raadhuis (togu na)
3. woning
4. voorraadschuur



vooraanzicht raadhuis



wooncomplex vanaf
het dorpsplein

Drawings of Yougo Dogorou (Schijns, Wolf, L'architecture vernaculaire des Dogons du Mali)



THE HISTORY OF YUGO DOGOROU

The patronymic surname of Yougo Dogorou's inhabitants is Doumbo which means "rock". The elderly say this name refers to Bamba, a region where they stayed temporarily before moving to and settling down on the isolated mountain of Yougo. In "Les âmes des Dogons", G. Dieterlen does not mention any Doumbo migration via Bamba. But in "Les Devises des Dogons", S. de Ganay states that the Tige of Bamba is "Bamba dumboo dumbo" meaning "rock, the rock of Bamba". Yougo Dogorou is unique. It is perched next to the top of an isolated mountain separated from the cliff. A gigantic rock, called "the anvil", rises next to the village. Open caves sheltering Tellem and Dogon constructions overhang the village. In ancient times the inaccessibility of the site protected Yougo Dogorou against the outside world. Today its isolation has the opposite effect. Most of the adult population moved to the villages of the Seno-Gondo plains where working conditions are far easier. The village is inhabited by a few families

and some elderly people who are the guardians of the local altars. On certain occasions family members and relatives will visit the village. On the death of an elderly parent, they will gather in numbers and participate in funerary rituals and dances. The face of the cliff to the West of the village is strewn with open caves containing constructions left by the Tellem.

The first Dogon migrants from the Arou tribe took up residence at the foot of this cliff. Traces of their passage are still visible. Old foundations can still be discerned and millstones lay around. There are no paths leading to this place. One has to make a way around and over huge boulders. initial place of settlement initial place of settlement As regards traditional belief, two localities in Dogon country are of crucial importance. In both cases the Arou tribe assumes supreme authority Arou is the place of residence of the Hogon whose religious authority spans

the whole land. As a priest of agrarian rites, he represents the Earth, fertility and life. He is to ensure the perpetuation of his people. As regards Yougo Dogorou, this is where commences the Sigui, the ritual that commemorates the first ancestor who died in the form of a serpent. The ritual takes place once every 60 years and symbolizes the renewal of generations. It is also in this village that the sacred cave of Albarga is located, the old man of the myth who was discovered by Yayeme, the lady who confiscated the masks from the Andoumboulou. People come from afar to make sacrifices for protection against sorcery. Also, in case of serious problems having to do with masks, the village elderly will be consulted by visitors and matters will be discussed in the Togu Na bordering the central village square. Marcel Griaule mentions in "Masques Dogons" the existence at Yougo Dogorou of Albarga's walking cane which is used in rites for rain making.



Today this rite is still of actuality. Villages in the region that suffer from severe drought may call for this cane to intervene and block the evildoers who are responsible for the lack of rain. Once every three years, a delegation from Yougo Na, Yougo Dogorou and Yougo Piri will visit those villages that asked for help. By means of the cane the culprit will be ritually uncovered and he will die within the three years that follow. So Still the village that is very difficult to live in will never be abandoned because of this special role in the Dogon land. Today the young people of the village lives in the plain and take care of the harvest while their wife's and the young kids life upon the village to take care of the elderly. the houses and de society of masks that means so much for the whole Dogon area.



Overview of Yougo Dogorou



Traditional Dogon funeral dances

PROJECT DESCRIPTION, RESTORING THE VILLAGE

Starting with water and improving quality of the daily situation

Since 1981 we did several projects for improving the water situation in the villages of Yougo. Dougoro is the most difficult of the three. going down to a nearby well is almost no solution, it takes at least two hours walking and climbing for one canary of water (16 liters) The first project was a small dam in the entrance cavern this worked but was not really sufficient for a long period after the rain season. In 1995 we decided to make a new dam closer to the villages which could contain more water. During the years after this we made several small improvements, while the dam was leaking. In 1999 and 2005 we enlarged the height of the Dam to the almost

maximum because the location is also the entering zone of the village. the two formed water basin with a total length of almost 70 meter contains almost 270 m³ water. This is only sufficient for the period august (beginning of the rainfall until the end of February) the first 3 dry month, after the rain. it means about 8 liter of water for the 120 inhabitants each day) That means that there is still a long period for the women to get the water down to the foot of the hill. For restoring the houses and the village is clearly no time left. For that reason we made a proposition to solve the water problem during the whole year. When this is solved the people can collaborate with us to reinforce the village and the monuments.



The construction workers of the Yougo dam, 2005

CURRENT STATE OF THE VILLAGE

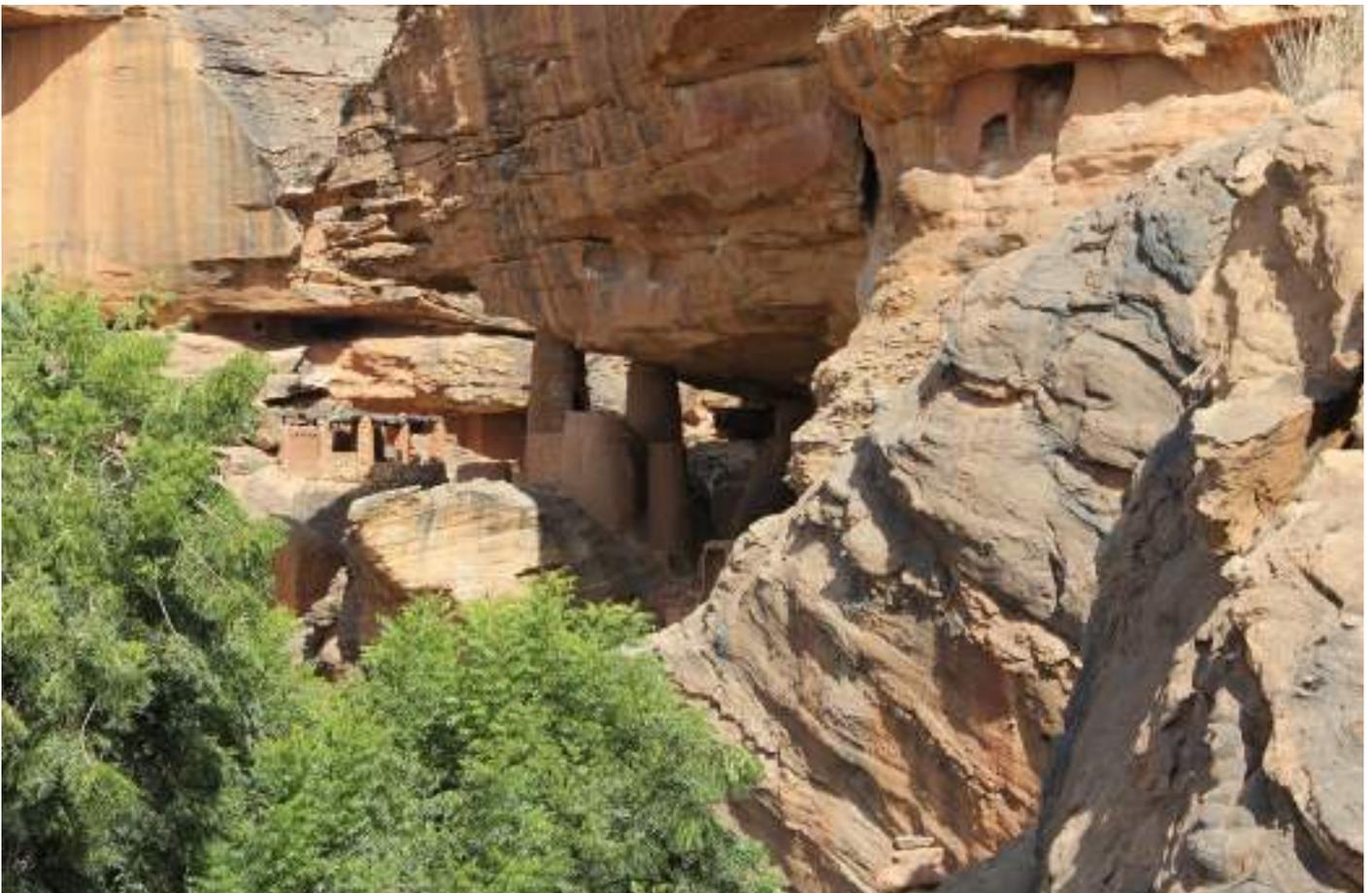
It is difficult to give a good overview of the current situation. There are some families left and their houses are completely collapsed. But there are still 120 elderly, women and children living in the village and still supported by 240 younger man and woman that lives nearby in the Seno. The woman are very well organised and work thoroughly together with several women groups organised in the area. they have a garden project, epic centre, granary and an maternity in the village of Koundou. The houses that are occupied are sometimes partly collapsed, sometimes only the granaries or they need new plastering. The most vulnerable are the old (600 years and more) Tellem houses. During the last

30 years two "towers has completely collapsed and the 3 remaining are in a bad state. Also the several monument is the entrance zone needs reparations. In this village, Wolf Schijns, a Dutch architect and professor at the University of Eindhoven did some documentation and research. Some of the houses he documented in 1999 are now, 2012 , completely collapsed. The aim of the project is of course to stop this not by rebuilding what has collapsed but by renovation and reinforce what is now available.

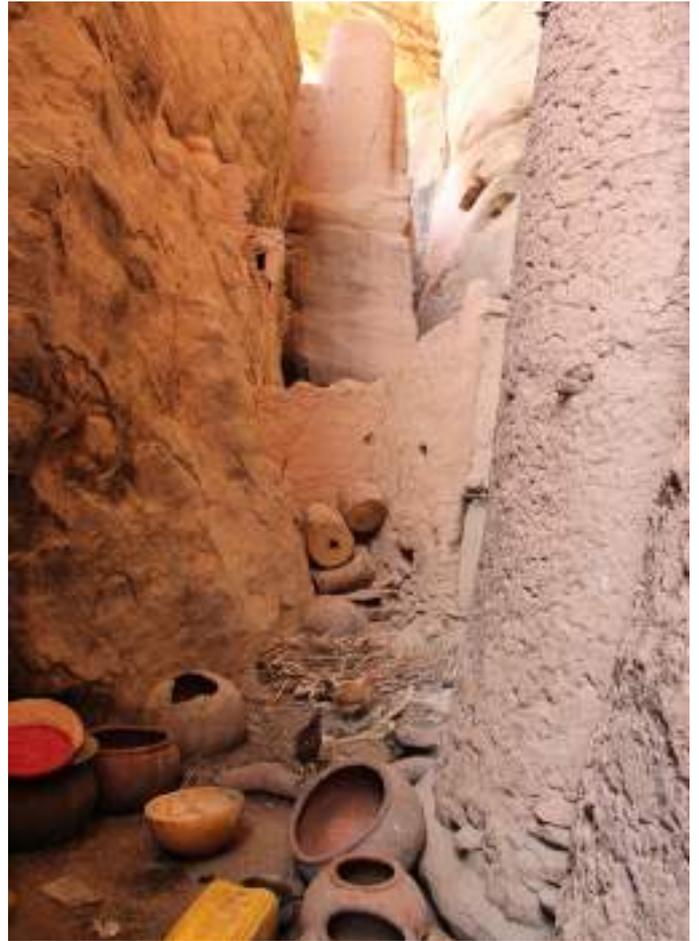




Situation Yougo Dogorou 1981



Situation Yougo Dogorou 2012, a few towers collapsed



APPROACH AND CONSULTATION

The project in Yougo cannot be done with the elderly people who lives there today but they will play an important role in the restoration because of their knowledge. We have already talked about the complete approach of the work, the period of working, and the younger people and teams that will do the work in the future. It is clear that the village will profit by the project but we want also assurance from the village that they can really do the work. For that reason there will also be support from other villages like Yendouma, Tiogou en Koundou.

ACTION PLAN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Based on our experience In Nando and Arou and combined with the experience of the Organizations involved, FDE (SDO), ADI en Mission Culturelle Bandiagara (see background information) and the

Vision supported broadly by the local and national governments, we made an proposal for an action plan for the Period 2013-2017. The Foundation Dogon Education will take the lead in organizing this process. There will be an office, working place in the village of Koundou and Sangha. There is mobile internet available so it is very good possible to communicate with all the partners involved.

Our local team leader Keneko Dara has already experiences with doing renovations. He was responsible for the renovation of the house of the Hogon in Arou under supervision of the Mission Culturelle de Bandiagara. The most important role however are of course the inhabitants of the village Yougo, which will be supported by the villages surrounded by is like Koundou, Yendouma and the young family members living in the Seno. The organization of the pro-

cess will be based on their collaboration. We spoke with the heads of the villages, heads of the family's as well as the major of Sangha. Its seems to them it is possible to renovate the village in 4 years. The work by the village and collaborating villages will been done from October to may, before and after the important harvest period and the rain season. The preparation for the work, documenting the several houses and organizing materials can be done in the period June till October by the other team members.

The goal is also to start building a small practical school (10 classes) in Sangha with some local partners in his school there will be classes in traditional masonry, building with local materials in a new and traditional way and renewal in agricultural techniques. The project of Yougo would fit very well in the curriculum of the goals of the school.





PROJECT PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION TASKS

Tasks of the several members of the projects

Foundation Dogon Education (FDE, or in Dutch, Stichting Dogon Onderwijs, SDO): Responsible for the finance control, final reports, organizing exhibition (travelling) and publication (in English and French). In collaboration with LEVS architects in Amsterdam and Mopti (local office) and if possible students from the technical school Sevaré, and students from the architectural school of Bamako. The project leader of FDE (SDO) will visit the at least 3 times a year the work in combination with other project for reducing the cost for travelling etc. The communication with ADI, the office in Sevaré and Sangha, will be weekly by Skype and

e-mail. The practical program of establishing the renovation will be prepared by FDE but the practical implementation will be done by ADI.

Association Dogon initiative (ADI): Organizing the fieldwork with the local several parties involved in the project with two technical project leaders and one financial and overall project leader. They work from the office in Sangha and Koundou.

Mission Culturelle Bandiagara: Before starting with the projects and the work it will be thoroughly reviewed with the Mission for that reason they will accompany FDE(SDO) during their visits to Yougo.



Results of the project

The first result of the project is of course the complete renovated village of Yougo Dogorou.

The second result we hope to establish in the same period is reinforcement of the economic situation. Organizing schools, water, and improving agricultural methods by working together with IFD (Initiative Femme Dogon) which is already very active in the region of Koundou.

The third result we hope to accomplish with the mission Culturelle de Bandiagara by organizing entrance fees etc like it has been done in Songho and Nombori, tourism as a part of the economic basis for the village, assuming the tourist will return. We assume that the

last result, the rapport and publications will stimulate this.

The Fourth result we hope to establish is the growth of local knowledge and enthusiasm to build with local materials which is important for a durable and sustainable future

The fifth result we hope is the continuation of an unique cultural aspect of the Dogon, the feast of the Dama, Sirigi feast and the society of the masks which is so special connected to this unique culture and part of the Unesco goals.

The last result: Every year there will be a review of the project and a financial report. After finishing the project which is estimated in 2017 there will be a complete review and final financial specification. The

publication shall be made in English and French and broadly available on internet as a learning process en project. The material will also be prepared for an travelling exposition starting of course in Mopti in the Centre for earth architecture built by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture.

Finance

The project budget is based on our information and contacts with our local partners. Important is the total project is that the responsibility for the whole project is for SDO. This organization will make every year an financial and a visual report on the project and is accountable for planning and the results. Important element of the project is that most of the budget is spent locally, or at least in Mali.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Dogon in Mali

Mali is a country situated in the heart of West Africa and a former French colony. The country, more than twice as large as France, exists for 70% of desert and has a population of 14,5 million, divided over about 10 different peoples, of which the Dogon is one.

The Dogon people live in an area south of the Niger, east of Mopti. The area consists of three characteristic landscapes: the Bandiagara escarpment (cliffs of 200 meters high which stretch over 200 kilometers), the plateau (Pinari), and the plain (Seno). The Dogon villages are situated in between the rocks at the foot of the cliff, on the plateau and spread over the plain.

The Dogon population numbers between 400.000 and 500.000, divided over four tribes; Dyon, Ono, Arou and Dommo. The Dogon region was declared Unesco World Heritage in 1989 and since 1995, the "Mission Culturelle de Bandiagara" develops active policies for the region.

History, Dogon society, Islam and Unesco

The popularization of the area in the works of Marcel Griaule has generated a number of clichés that are hard to overcome. In popular belief, these clichés manifest themselves in a view of an immutable Dogon culture frozen in time and space, a closed world where every day life is governed by age old myths. Reality is at once much more complex and simple. Any culture is molded by contact with the outside world. Dogon society has always had to adjust its mode of subsistence to an ever changing world. Its history abounds in examples. At first, political instability in the Mandé Empire forced them to migrate in waves to the East. Thereafter, never ending conflicts with the Songhay, Mossi and Fulani drove them toward the plateau and escarpment. Much later still, after a series of holy wars held in the 19th century, Dogon society largely opened up to Islam. Regional pacification under French colonization facilitated its spreading. There was no longer any need for the plateau and cliff area to serve as a safe harbor. Demographic pressure and new found peace caused many people to leave for the Seno plain.

Through time, the Dogon have never stopped finding solutions to environmental changes. The 20th century brought about further unexpected developments that needed to be mastered. Colonial powers started to show interest in African civilisations. Authors like Louis Desplagnes, Maurice Delafosse, Charles Monteil and Henri Labouret made important contributions to early West-African ethnography. Marcel Griaule and his team were quick to discover the originality of Dogon culture. And finally, in 1989 the UNESCO added Dogon country on the World Heritage List. This is how a heterogeneous people living for centuries on the fringes of the great West African empires came into the limelight of world attention. The region has now become a popular tourist attraction. The tourist industry generates income for a variety of local actors: travel agencies, innkeepers, guides and for the villages that organize masked tourist dance performances. But tourism itself is not a solution

to the challenges that are lying ahead. The wide majority of the Dogon are farmers and tourism does not change their financial status in a significant way. On the other hand, climate change takes its toll on most agricultural activities. Apart from those who left Dogon country for good, temporary immigration has become a way of subsistence for many. Seeking jobs elsewhere so as to complement

local revenue has become essential. But the impact of the modern world on Dogon culture has not succeeded in making it disappear. At Sangha, the last Dama to date was held in 2009.

The Dogon and Tellem

The face of the cliff is strewn with open caves. Overhanging rocks prevent the rain from entering. The predecessors of the Dogon sought protection from the elements in these natural shelters. They built cylindrical constructions made of earth which were used, among others, as granaries and graveyards. In the Sixties & Seventies, a team of Dutch archaeologists carried out excavations in the cliff area and brought to the world's attention the existence of two distinct cultures :

The Dogon are divided into four tribes: the Dyon, Arou, Ono and Dommo. According to oral tradition they joined the cliff area near the village of Kani Bonzon. From there, they spread over the plateau, the escarpment and the plains of the Seno-Gondo. Each tribe followed a different itinerary (detailed description of the dispersion of the four tribes in "Les âmes des Dogons"- G.Diet-erlen - 1941). Historical reality seems more complex. Dogon immigration from the Mandé probably occurred in successive waves over a time span of several centuries. To the south of the Seno-Gondo plain lies the Yatenga province. This vast territory is scattered with traces of settlements dating back to a period covering the 10th/15th centuries : ancient water wells, funerary jars, pottery fragments and slag heaps stemming from an old and intense metallurgical extraction activity. Today, the Mossi and Kurumba ascribe these remnants to the Dogon (Kibse in Moore/language of the Mossi). To what do these Kibse correspond? Were they part of the first immigrants from the Mandé who settled down in today's Yatenga? Or are they an autochthonous population who merged with the newly arrived Dogon? Whatever the case is, by the 14th/15th century the Kibse/Dogon left their Yatenga homeland and linked up with other Dogon groups already established up north near to the cliff area. The Mossi and Kurumba took over their territory. The encounter of the Dogon-Mandé with their new neighbours and predecessors brought about a considerable blending of cultures. This is well illustrated by the stylistic diversity of Dogon architecture and sculpture. Long before their arrival from the Mandé, the West of the plateau witnessed the birth of Djennenke/Soninke style sculptures. From the 15th century onwards stylistic extensions appeared in the N'duleri and Bondum regions. Whereas on the other side of the plateau Tellem statuary came into being. All these styles are incorporated into Dogon art. On the other hand, masks are of Voltaic influence. Various Dogon and Mossi masks share stylistic similarities. Their lengthy stay in the Yatenga also explains why the Dogon speak Voltaic related languages. As regards architecture, it reflects a variety of geographical zones, the constraints that these zones impose and the diversity of the people who live there.

Foundation Dogon Education (Stichting Dogon Onderwijs, SDO)

The Foundation has been active in Mali since 1995. The purpose of the foundation is to support and encourage education in the Dogon region. The foundation works in collaboration with local entrepreneurs and the local community to realize school buildings, houses and wells. Proper water supply is the essential start in the development of education.

The government is closely involved to achieve a durable education system with good teachers. By involving the local community and students of the Technical School in Sevaré in the building process, this becomes part of the educational system. The foundation works closely together with the Dogon Women Initiative (DVI) and the local Malines foundation Association Dogon Initiative (ADI). Besides the building activities, the "green desert initiative" has been launched as part of the agriculture and nutrition education. To achieve successful projects, there is a frequent consultation with various governments, the Mission Culturelle Bandiagara and the CAP (organization responsible for the planning of education). www.dogononderwijs.nl

Association Dogon Initiative (ADI)

In June 2010 the foundation ADI was established as a local organization for realizing and organizing all the projects of the Initiative Femme Dogon (IFD, DVI Dogon Vrouwen Initiatief) and FDE (SDO). Today there are besides the board of 3 members, one director and 5 people working for the organization. The take care of the daily work like coaching the groups, making reports and starting up new programs like the green dessert, the well-maintenance program, the female programme, and the finances of the local projects. It is a young organization that uses the new trained and skilled students from Bamako, Mopti and Bandiagara. The supervision of the board has already been working with the board of SDO for 30 years working.

Construction technologies in development, technical school ETJS

The Foundation Dogon Education has used four different construction technologies in the various schools they built in the Dogon region. The first schools are built with traditional blocks made of banco (Amani). The second series are built with the well known African concrete blocks, plastered with a mortar mix based on loam. The third series of schools is built with locally cut natural stone blocks. The most recent schools are built with hydraulic compressed earth blocks, produced with the mobile compressing machine. This last construction method is the most convenient for future projects, as it has many advantages. It results in sustainable buildings of high quality, constructed with locally available materials by local workers. About 1300 students attend the Technical School in Sevaré, built by the foundation in 2005. The mason students work with the compressed earth blocks and are involved in various ongoing projects.

Jurriaan van Stigt (1962, Amsterdam) gained his degree with distinction in Delft in 1989, on Weesper-Wibautstraat, the most beautiful street in Amsterdam. He then began a firm with Marianne Loof under the name Loof en van Stigt Architecten and has since 2005 formed a three-person collaborative partnership with Adriaan Mout, called LEVS Architecten. Besides realizing many notable projects, he is also responsible for the new development of a young offender institution in Den Helder and the renovation of the Ignatius Gymnasium in Amsterdam. Jurriaan is a board member of AetA, editor-in-chief of Forum magazine, honorary member of the Daw'an Foundation by Salma Damluji and chairman of the Foundation Dogon Education.

COMMITTEE OF RECOMMENDATION

Lassana Cissé, former chef de la Mission Culturelle de Bandiagara, today director of the National Museum of Mali
Responsible for the governments tasks for the Unesco area the land of the Dogon he wrote several articles and publications about the country and realised several project in cooperation with the DED. He was personally responsible for the request for putting the Dogon Area on the list for Unesco. Since then he realised several projects like the museum in Enndé, Nombori and the mission culturelle in Bandiagarra.

Professor drs ir Wolf Schijns
Worked for the University of Eindhoven in The Netherlands and made several trips to the land of the Dogon. On request of several people like professor Joop van Stigt he did his promotion on the culture and architecture of the Dogon and made the publication of his work witch shows the variety of architecture and building typology in the Dogon land.

drs. Pierre Maas
Studied architecture at the university of Eindhoven and made his promotion on the renovation of Djenne and the mason society of Djenne. His promotion was reviewed by Professor Joop van Stigt

Behrang Mousavi
Head of collections of the architectural institute of the Netherlands. He was also responsible of taking up the model of Herman Haan--made for his archeological investigations during 1960 in de Sangha region in search for the Tellem--in the Dutch treasure chamber of architecture in the architectural institute of the Netherlands.

Drs ir. Antoni Folkers, Architect
Promoter of the African architecture he started the foundation ArchiAfrica, which promoted the investigation for African architecture on the architectural school throughout the continent. In 2010 he made his promotion at the university of Delft on the modern architecture of Africa. He is still active in the foundation AA maters and architect in FWB architects who realizes projects all over Africa.

Professor Joop van Stigt (06-01-1934/04-11-2011)

Active in the Dogon land since 1972 as a representing the FORUM architecture movement he stays active until his dead in November 2011 working and proclaiming the importance of the Dogon especially or the Dutch architecture chance during the 1970-80. He made several publications on the Dogon. At the end of his work at the university of Delft in 1999 he presented on request of his former tutor and aspirator architect Aldo van Eyck the book "Dogon Art, Architecture and Anthropology and continued his work as architect with his foundation SDO founded with his wife Gonny van Stigt-Amesz.

COLOFON

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Treasurer Gonny van Stigt-Amesz
Secretary Jan Joost Peskens

For updated and additional information visit
www.dogononderwijs.nl

Occasionally there are pictures used which are made by people who have joined on one of the many trips. SDO manages an archive of nearly 50.000 pictures from the period 1972 to present.

Sponsored by LEVS architects Amsterdam.

* Texts "History, Dogon society, Islam and Unesco" and "The Dogon and Tellem" are written by Huib Blom

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