

## ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE PEOPLES OF WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA: GENERAL CLASSIFICATION

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**Abstract:** In this article, the ethnography of West and Central African peoples, the transformational processes in their social structure are scientifically analyzed.

**Key words:** Africa, textiles, crafts, Fulbe, Mandigo, Hausa, blacksmithing, Guinea, copper, plow, clothes, gas, ethnic, social system.

Most of the rural people of West and Central Africa have produced all their tools, household goods, clothing and other necessary products at home since ancient times. Especially in West Africa, handicrafts are extremely developed. In weaving and tanning, the Hausa people had a very high art. A variety of fabrics, fine leather products, all kinds of bags and utensils, shoes, saddles, belts, etc. Made with excellent craftsmanship and exported to faraway countries. Blacksmiths and coppersmiths of the Fulbe, Mandigo, and Hausa peoples produced plow teeth, axes, belts, hoes, scythes, knives, swords, daggers, spears, and various ornaments. Blacksmithing was considered the most respected profession. The peoples of Guinea, Ashanti in Ghana, èruba in Nigeria, and Bamuma in Cameroon have highly developed arts and crafts. They made amazing sculptures out of clay, brass and ivory. Benin artisans are skilled at casting bronze statues of small animals and large statues of kings and ancestors. They were even able to make various paintings, decorations and sculptures that decorated palaces and palaces. Bantu peoples have

achieved great skill in weaving various types of tickets and baskets. In woodcarving, no one surpasses the peoples of West Africa. [1]

Currently, the abundance of mineral resources is important in the economic development of West and Central Africa. Until recently, there was no heavy industry here. After independence, industries began to appear gradually, especially in large port cities. For example, oil production plants in Dakar, Abidjan, Jantil, Luanda, Port Harcourt and Zarri, clay soil plant necessary for aluminum in Guinea, mercury smelter in Nigeria, aluminum plant in Ghana and Cameroon, mining industry and diamond mining in Zoire (in the world the largest diamond mine), lead and gold mines in Congo, manganese and uranium mines in Gabon, bauxite in Cameroon, high-quality iron production enterprises appeared in Gobon and Congo. Finally, the discovery of rich and diverse mineral resources provides the development of the most important industries in this region. In Central Africa, wood production, textiles, and food industries are also developed. The main products of heavy industry are exported. [2]

The people of West and Central Africa live in houses adapted to their lifestyle and natural conditions. Most of the population is located in rural areas due to the fact that all countries have mainly agrarian economy. But West Africa has an ancient urban culture, where there were about 70 cities in the Middle Ages, and in later times, the migration process increased with the increase of cities. In Central Africa, on the other hand, cities are mostly of recent origin, with very low population migration. In general, 70-80% of the population of the region is rural, and in some countries it is even more (93% in Chad, 80-90% in Angola and Zaire, 90-95% in Niger, Liberia, Mali, Guinea-Bissau and Upper Volta). [3]

Houses of different shapes are mainly built of mud and wood. The Mande, Hausa and Western Bantu peoples live in circular mud houses with glassless conical thatched roofs. The Mandingo people living in Mali and Guinea live in several houses surrounded by wooden walls in large families consisting of two or three generations of 30-40 people. Such a house smell is called sukala. Even now, the

nomadic Fulbe tribes live in a circle in the houses, which have been turned into stockades, and live as one family. Houses built in this way are called vuro. A big house was built in the middle of the village for community gatherings. In such community houses, which are often found in tropical forests, men weaved baskets, mats and other items, carved and sculpted, and decided the community court and other important matters. 200-300 people lived in the villages. There are also villages of about a thousand people in the Niger oasis. [4]

The peoples living on the coast of Guinea live in rectangular houses built of wood and rammed with clay, with flat thatched roofs. For example, in Ærugas there are several courtyards with houses facing inwards. The walls of the houses are decorated, the pillars are carved. The houses of the Ghanaian people are divided inside and outside, and the courtyards are surrounded by walls. Nomadic Fulbes and Tuaregs built portable tents made of skins and tickets. The Songai people of Mali live in houses attached to bent stilts with distinctive straw tickets. Such houses are easy to move when there is a flood. [5]

The clothes of the local population are also adapted to the natural conditions. The men of the Sudanese coasts wear loose shirts and sharowars (chalvirs), and the aël is a skirt-like garment consisting of colored chit wrapped several times from the waist down to the ankles. [6] The Fulbe tribes living in the foothills wear shirts and trousers and woolen cloaks from the cold. Most of the population living in tropical forests is limited to the common belt. Shoes are almost never worn, except the tribes in the hot sands of the desert who wear sandals. Tuareg men cover their head with a black cloth. European clothes are scattered in the cities. The food of the agricultural population is mainly rice, oats, cassava and vegetables, rice, mushrooms, vegetables, meat and fish are cooked, oatmeal is made from oats, and bread is made from cassava. The cattle-breeding Fulbe mainly consume dairy products, and eat porridge made from oats and maize and added to it.[7]

Even among the most developed nations of the Guinea group, the remains of the seed system have been preserved. For example, the Ashanti state, which

appeared in the 16th century and was destroyed by the British colonists, was divided into several regions and ruled by a clan-community appointed by the king. The community was formed based on the principle of blood kinship, the throne and the duties of the elders were determined by the mother's clan, and the inheritance was patriarchal. If the head (rais) dies, his sister's eldest son is appointed in his place. According to religious belief, each person inherits soul from father and blood from mother: it is inherited.[8]

In Yoruba country, Aèls were involved in public affairs. A person was appointed as a senior advisor in the palace under the governor-general. She was declared "mother of the tsar", and the real mother of the governor was executed when her son ascended the throne. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century Dagome even had an Aëllar Guard.[9] According to some scholars, most of the peoples of the Sudan-coast have left the patriarchy for the class society and passed the matriarchy. Because in some tribes on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean and the edges of the forest, signs of matriarchy were clearly visible in the clan-tribal system until the 19th century. The typical forms of patriarchal relations were preserved in the nomadic Fulbe tribes, which formed a large political union - the Imamate at the beginning of the 17th century.[10]

In conclusion, the higher the art and crafts of West and Central African peoples, the more developed their oral creativity, games and music. In addition to the wonderful architectural examples, beautiful palaces and palaces, statues and columns depicting legendary figures, examples of cast metal and carved wood art, griots, singers and dancers who have preserved the oral literary heritage from generation to generation are a worthy contribution to world culture. are adding. Even now, professional architects and writers, actors and dancers, musicians and singers, painters and sculptors, who appeared on the ground of folk creativity, show their beautiful art at international festivals, concert programs, and receive applause and respect.

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