

Captions :

« MUNYAL » (patience) You can't eat culture

Photography report by
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Sahel - Niger - 2006 / 2010



Photo 01 - Séfu. Peuls Wodaabe herdsman, Niamey 2006. He came to the city with his wife after having lost all his livestock during the drought of 1984. Now he guards houses. Only one of his three children was born in the bush.



Photo 02 - Altiné. Peuls Wodaabe herdsman, Niamey 2009. For the past ten years he has been coming to Niamey to sell tea and to guard the garage of a landowner. Life is too hard for him in the bush and he dreams of building a house in town.



Photo 03 - Dengui's Wodaabe children, Niamey 2009. Dengui has been in Niamey for the past 8 years, guarding the same property all along. Today his children go to school and he sends money back to his family in the bush when he can.



Photo 04 - Peuls Wodaabe woman, Niamey 2009. « *It's not easy to save money when you live in town. Once you've bought something to eat and another couple of things, there's nothing left. Many people don't even have enough to return to the bush.* »



Photo 05 -

Cabin. Niamey 2009. When the Wodaabe come to town, they live on the property that they guard. The building of their own houses progresses as they earn. Most of the time they live in dirty areas infested by mosquitoes far from the town centre.



Photo 06 -

Rubbish in the street. Niamey 2009.



Photo 07 -

Mohamed's wife, Wodatta market, Niamey 2009.



Photo 08 -

Mohamed and his daughter, Wodatta market, Niamey 2009. He sells tea during the day and, with his wife and brothers, guards a market from thieves.



Photo 09 -

Peuls Wodaabe herdsmen, Tea sellers, Niamey 2009.



Photo 10 -

Hamidou, Peuls Wodaabe, Niamey 2009. Born in the bush, he was sent to Nigeria when he was 12 where he started to work as a security guard. He was wrongly arrested several times in altercations with thieves, and returned to Niamey where he has neither job nor home.



Photo 11 -
The teapot and the sword. Agadès region, 2009.



Photo 12 -
Kila, Peuls Wodaabe herdsman. Agadès region, 2009. That year, the rebellion of the MNJ (National Movement for Justice) raged in the region of Agadès, led by Aghali Alambo. It destabilised the government and led to a rise of criminal activity in the whole area.



Photo 13 -
Peuls Wodaabe herdsman, Abalak region, 2006. Even in the middle of the rainy season, some zones are completely dry because the rain does not fall evenly everywhere. This phenomenon leads to the concentration of nomad communities in the more favoured areas, leading to tension between the herdsmen.



Photo 14 -
Bana, Peuls Wodaabe herdsman, Tanout region 2009. Intensive agriculture is preferred to herding in Niger. The land available to the nomads is more and more restricted and the herdsmen have to keep watch all night to ensure that their animals don't trample the crops in neighbouring fields. Conflicts are frequent between herdsmen and crop farmers, and are often settled by the sword.



Photo 15 -
Peuls Wodaabe herdsman. Tanout region, 2009.



Photo 16 - Peuls Wodaabe woman, Abalak region, 2006. Settlement centres are part way between the bush and the city, and allow families to maintain their nomadic way of life.



Photo 17 - Young Wodaabe girls, Abalak region, 2006. Every camp is sited a few kilometers from a well or from a pond, and it is the children who get the water every day. With the drop in rainfall, it is common to have to walk tens of kilometers to find a source.



Photo 18 - Peuls Wodaabe herdsman, Ingal region, 2009. Settlement centres have started to appear over the past ten years where nomadic families can find refuge in times of crisis. These centres are often aided by associations and NGOs, and provide access to water and to education.



Photo 19 - Peuls Wodaabe herdsman. Tanout region, 2009.



Photo 20 - Altiné, Peuls herdsman, tea seller, Niamey 2009. Not so long ago the Wodaabe managed to save enough money selling tea to be able to buy some livestock. Now however competition is fierce and he earns just enough to feed his wife and himself.