

*Agricultural land dispute and difficult mediation of religious institutions in the irrigated perimeter of Lagdo (North Cameroon)*

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## **Abstract**

This research finding carries out a mediation analysis in relation to the different religious institutions in the agricultural land conflict opposing the migrant peasants and the agro-industrial society of Benoue (SAIB) in the irrigated perimeter of Lagdo. This conflict awakes some other dormant conflicts among the actors. That conflict permits us to identify the main generator factors of conflict in Northern part of Cameroon. Among others, the installation of the migrants along the project corridors without any land guarantee, the lack of recognition of the individual right on the land, the antagonism of traditional power and the state power in the land issue, the agricultural land system to the peasant within the irrigated perimeter and the modalities of land heritage. This very conflict was put to the knowledge of the traditional rulers, the public administration till the Presidency of the Republic and return to the lamidat (traditional chief) and has given birth to mediation attempt by the religious institutions (Muslim, catholic, protestant, animist) whom only the Diocesan Committee (catholic) has highlighted the peasant will, but was limited. That is because those land conflicts has taken a political brake and engage the state ahead of its responsibilities to apply the legislative law or to revise the said law which will ensure land security in the Northern part of the Country through facilitation and effective decentralization.

**Keywords:** Land conflict, mediation, North Cameroon, Religious institution.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Agricultural development is still one of the major concerns in Africa, South of the Sahara. This development does not only involve lasting social peace, but also the securing of land tenure among the actors (Fotsing, 1995, Chauveau and Le Roy, 2012, Mfewou, 2013). The question of access to land and its resources has long been considered secondary in agricultural development projects or in the fight against poverty. It is now recognized as a central issue, carrying important political, economic, social, traditional and environmental challenges for 80% of Africans (Seignobos and Teyssier, 1997a).

Through multiple interests, it involves traditions that refer to local settlement history, traditional laws, state laws and land reforms (Kamto, 1987; Merlet, 2012). These issues make it a cross-cutting issue that can be found everywhere as we discuss natural resource management, environmental protection, the creation of an agro-industrial society, access to habitat and essential services, decentralization, etc. Land conflicts remain recurrent due to the complexity

between traditional law and modern law in African countries (Seignobos and Teyssier, 1997b; Nach, 2000).

As a matter of fact, Francophone Africa copied the French land law, difficult to transpose and locally apply in front of the still powerful traditional law. Thus, the case of North Cameroon (Map 1), where there is a clearly defined absence of property rights associated with demographic pressure, the new rising generation, land saturation and, for example, the installation of the Benoue agro-industrial society (SAIB) activity in a neuralgic location has nevertheless encouraged the emergence of land conflicts at the irrigated perimeter of Lagdo (North Cameroon). These evolving conflicts have given religious institutions a new role in securing land tenure through mediation. Indeed, these recurrent land conflicts in the irrigated perimeter of Lagdo in the South of the northern region have become rapidly variable between different actors of agricultural development (agro-industrial society, peasants, elite, Lamido, new generation ...), so that the protagonists are present at all apertures: traditional chiefs, agricultural service, Sub-prefect, Mayor of Lagdo, gendarmerie commander, law courts, religious institutions and back ... on the traditional chiefs (lamido) ... of which land mediation can bring the Religious institutions in these conflicts.

## **1. Local settlement history in North Cameroon**

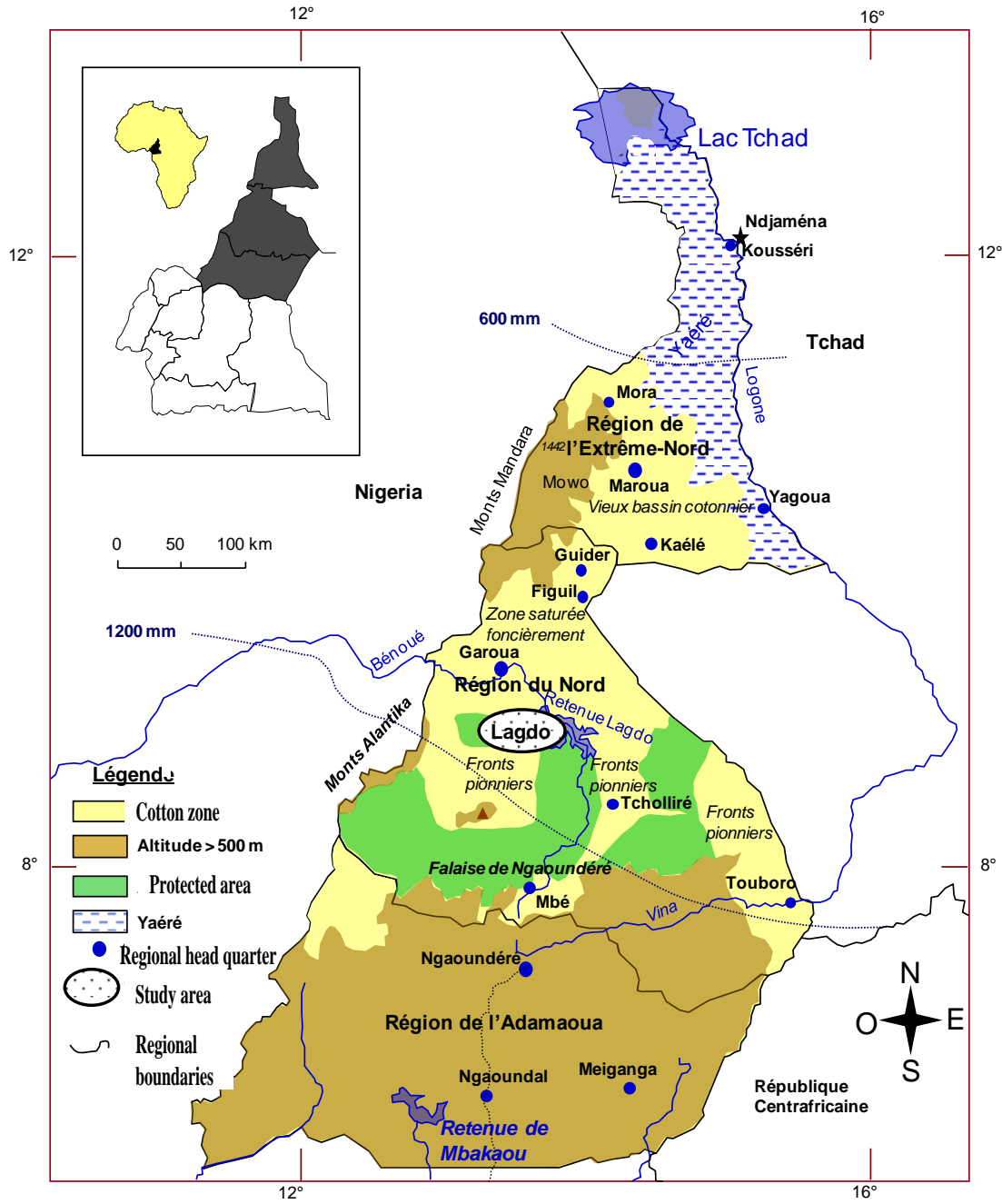
The settlement history of North Cameroon is explained by the great old mobilities of the populations (Mohammadou, 1965). The conquest of the Fulani in the nineteenth century was marked by their military superiority and subjugated immense spaces. The Fulani knew how to organize their conquests and set up a very effective assimilation policy that continues throughout the region.

This ancient mobility was carried out according to a certain number of affinities, both in the religious (Muslim) and dialectical fields, which strengthened the relationship between the different ethnic groups of the northern region.

In order to understand the scope of recent changes in the irrigated perimeter of Lagdo, it should first be noted that the emergence of land conflicts that now prevail throughout North Cameroon is as a result of the long situation of the various indigenes (Toupouri, Mafa, Moundang, etc.) in the context of development projects, without the prospect of obtaining a right of ownership because this part of Cameroon was conquered in the nineteenth century by the "Peule" Chiefs. The Lagdo area, where individual populations from all over lives, politically belongs to the Peul Lamidat of Garoua, placed under the authority of lamido and through the intermediary of ardo (head of territorial unit), the lawan (head of the local administration) and djoro village chief. Finally, the "Elite" as a person belonging to the whole constituted by the notables occupying posts in the highest sphere of the Cameroonian administration or by the rich traders considered as the dominant members of the Peule ethnic group. This term takes up that of the language common in the region, used to name these people.

## 2. Hydro-climatic characteristics of Lagdo

The population of this area is estimated at 60,000 inhabitants, with an area of 3000 Km<sup>2</sup>, Lagdo (map 2) is located in the Northern Region (CTFC, 2013). It is subject to a tropical climate with two seasons: a short wet season (from May to October) and a dry season (from November to March). This climate determines two seasons of agricultural production: from July to September in rain-fed crops, from October to March in irrigated agriculture. The tropical-type hydraulic regime is characterized by a period of high water (from July to October with peak in August-September) and a low-water period (January to May with low water in April). Rainfall increases gradually throughout the region from May (900-1000 mm). The irrigated area of Lagdo is fed by a network of main, secondary and tertiary canals constituting districts. The plots of a district are dominated by a tertiary canal whose length varies in general between 600 and 1 000 m and covers a width of 150 to 200 m. The types of irrigation are: basin submersion for rice growing, vertisols, runoff (skate or board) for polyculture on vertical and light soils.



Source : Mfewou, 2010

Figure 1: Map of North Cameroon

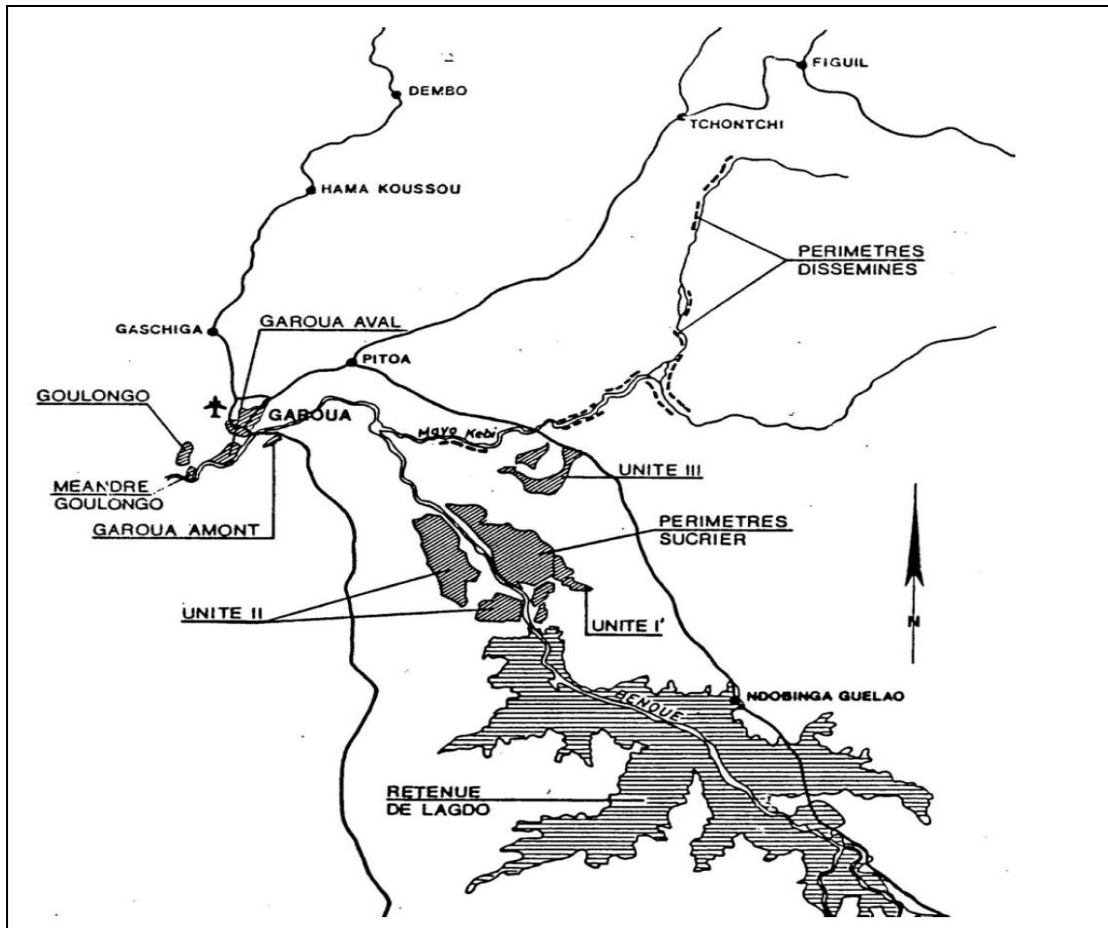
### 3. Research methodology

The survey was conducted based on knowledge derived from a census of the Lagdo population carried out by the Study Mission for the Development of the Upper Benoue Valley (MEAVSB) in 2001. This census was based on a sample of 1,507 farms selected from a population of around 10,000 inhabitants and located around four villages in the irrigated perimeter of Lagdo (Gounougou, Ouro Doukoujé, Bésoum, and Dingalé). Our surveys concerned the same sample of peasant population and were carried out by three investigators working under our supervision.

Data was collected using an individual questionnaire on agricultural production, migration and issues regarding land tenure. The questionnaire was addressed to managers and was therefore concerned with social change over the past four decades.

The general principle of the surveys was to connect, conduct repeated observations to a representative sample, with the aim of making the history of a wide range of situations a reality: migration, agriculture, land disputes and conflict mediation.

The data analysis was made with the SAS software (SAS, Institut 2004) for the treatment of quantitative data. According to our first results, 36.47% of these heads of farms have left the area in conflict; the field surveys cover the 956 heads of farms and then followed by the statistical analysis of the data collected. Descriptive statistics (averages, ratios ...) was also carried out. We observed social changes and mediation attempts in front of problems and their evolution over time.



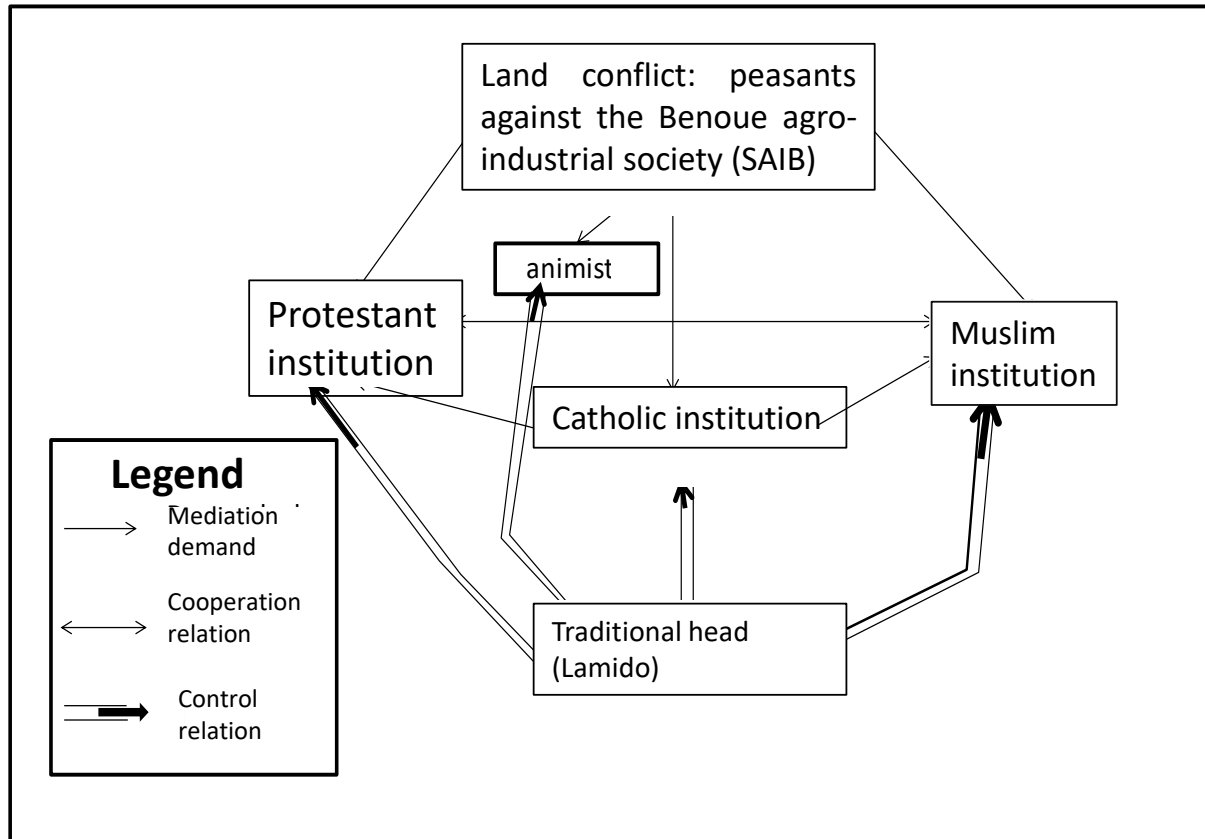
*Source : MEAVSB/SCETAGRI-SOGREAH : Plan directeur, phase III*

**Figure 2: Hydro-agricultural development elements of the Benoue valley**

## Results and Discussion

### 1. Representation of religious groups around the irrigated perimeter of Lagdo

The attempt of mediation by religious leaders (diagram), refers first to the history of the settlement of the ethnic-religious organization. Muslim society in Northern Cameroon is the oldest organisation in the framework of Bornou and its southern satellite; the kingdom of the Mandara, this organization is explained in space and in time throughout North Cameroon.



Source : Mfewou A. (2013)

#### Diagram: mediation attempt in land conflict by religious institutions

In a long wait for the arbitration of the President of the Republic on the main land conflict between peasants and the agro-industrial society of Benoue (SAIB), the diagram shows how the actors turned to religious institutions soliciting their legal help. But the traditional leader remains the one who controls these institutions and the only master on the ground. The question is what influence can these religious men have on land mediation conflict where the land is sacred and belong to the traditional rulers? In our study area, we interviewed the farm managers and registered their religious group, each group has a significant role in the irrigated perimeter.

**Table 1: Religious affiliation of farm managers**

Religion-type	Total population	Percentage %
Animists	301	31,48
Catholics	210	21,96
Protestants	197	20,60
Muslims	125	13,07
Undetermined	123	12,86
<b>Total</b>	<b>956</b>	<b>100</b>

Making reference to Table 1, it reveals that 86.92% of farm heads are non-Muslims, this percentage confirms that a greater proportion of the population that exploit the irrigated perimeter are migrants. The animists are the most represented groups; they refuse to abandon the belief of their ancestors: the Toupouri especially, the Moundang and the Mousgoum who have remained faithful to the ancestral religion always retain the solidarity that binds the members of the community. They often return to their villages of origin during traditional festivals and use the potteries of the ancestors (for the Mafa) and cattle sacrifices. There are 42.57% of Christians against 13.07% of Muslim chiefs operating in the chosen perimeter. The 12.86% did not show up, some answer that they participate in everything that occurs especially during the Christian holidays and with interest on food. They go to church when they eat and drink bilbi (local beer). We have observed that non-Muslims have aligned themselves with the Muslim model, concerning the elements of the material living environment, in particular clothing and habitat. But the fashion of clothing often makes a distinction between non-Muslims by their costumes and western shirts. At the same percentage, Catholics and Protestants pray in the church separately, on Sundays and sometime evenings.

Only the Catholic mission developed with the Diocesan Development Committee (CDD) a true auxiliary of the migration of the populations of the Far North. It gives a critical eye to the large intervention structures in rural areas (Sodécoton, the PNVRA project, Project Care,



Mission d'Etude ...). This committee is the only one trying to mediate land disputes. The CDD denounced the abuses in land tenure at the agricultural council in Maroua in 1998. It was the only organization that made proposals for the development of land legislation in North Cameroon.

## 6. Attempted mediation by Muslims

The power of chieftainship watches over the religious men, they must do everything to avoid the slippage in the teachings, the djaoro extend the power of the lamido, the modibo who is a religious and offers higher education. He explains the Qur'an and other classical books of Islam, which exercises a strong spiritual influence in his environment. The collective prayer practiced daily strengthens daily social cohesion. In the judgment of social affairs among these religious men one or several alkali directs, the customary court to divorce cases and the sharing of inheritance when the lamido orders them to do so. However, their decisions are based on the rules as prescribed in the Koran. In general, the land dispute falls within the competence of the lamido. But he has a notable specialized in the monitoring of these conflicts. Lagdo's land belongs to the lamidat Garoua. Our study shows that the minority group known as the Peul is not treated in the same way on the question of the right of use, he does not pay a land royalty to the lamido, there are Likewise for the small Kanuri communities present with the Foulbé since the conquest for some. But he pours the zakkat more willingly to the needy as prescribed by the Qur'an. He cultivates the land and can pass it on to his heir, but the non Foulbé Muslim also enjoys the right of use but the only difference is that they pay the royalty after the harvest because this principle is established to all without distinction of religion.

The plot attributed to the peasant can be snatched from him by the djaoro, during the new agricultural season to be given to a new comer. The djaoro can advance a pretext like the delay of payment of the agricultural tax. We noted that the djaoro withdrew to Ndikwa Raymond former migrant in the village Bessous a rice plot for refusal of payment and gave it to the spontaneous migrant Houma haaga from Ngong. The Agro-industrial Society of Benue has encountered obstacles during its installation which led to a crisis situation. The attempt of mediation by the Muslim leaders did not really take place even if the crisis felt. The answer remains that the land belongs to Allah who has asked men to populate the earth and to carry out their activities there.

The argument of the Lagdo Modibo supports this answer: *"No one has received from God the right to command others, it is true that God chose by birth those who must lead the society, and he said we should respect our leaders. They respect you too, a leader must teach morality and citizenship to his people. It is well written in the Holy Koran that the occupation of land is done by donation and the lease of lands that have already been exploited to settle the lease after the harvest and not the virgin land. It is strictly forbidden to sell virgin land. A land can be sold as there are trees planted by the owner on that land and in the course of the sale, the seller must consider, while he sells these trees and not the land because the land belongs to God "*.

Speaking of the establishment of the Benue Agro-industrial Society, it should not come to occupy the lands already exploited by other human beings, *"but as we are Muslim religious men*

*placed by the ardo and djaoro to direct the prayers and to teach the religion of God, our role is limited to this level and even our action on the land issue cannot be taken into account. If we intervene, the ardo and the djaoro will sanction us. The stake is very political and it is a matter of interest of the local elites".* Moreover, migrants are overwhelmingly non-Muslims.

In the irrigated perimeter, occupation of land in relation to other places in the northern region, the right of ax is not recognized. The mediation of land conflicts in all Lagdo fall within the competence of the Garoua lamido. The head of state has no right to disown it, knowing the political support enjoyed by the lamido; the administration must comply with the injunctions of the master of the land.

### Who owns the land?

**Table 2: land ownership**

	<b>Respondents (Yes)</b>	<b>Respondents (NO)</b>
Land belongs to the Lamido	0	3
Land belongs to God	122	0
Land belongs to the State	0	0
<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>3</b>

**Table 3: The land belongs to God, who has entrusted it?**

	<b>Repondents</b>	<b>%</b>
The lands belong to God who entrusted them to men and the lamido is its master	20	16,00
The lands belong to God who entrusted them to men and the State is the master	38	30,40
The lands belong to God who entrusted them to men and the first occupant is master of them	67	53,60
<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>100</b>

Tables 2 and 3 shows that 97.60% of Muslims surveyed responded that the land belongs to God. This affirmation confirms a legal argument at the level of the Holy Koran already evoked by the modibo. Conflicts arise from the absence of a genuine arbitration; respondents refused the assumption that land belonged to the state. They said that man has the right to go and return and to cross borders without permission like a migratory bird.

The argument is that God has not established the land boundaries. Everyone must feel comfortable in the world, but we must respect the things of others. These Islamic rules are difficult to apply by men today who run behind selfish interests. And when they have the means, the rich elites always try to grab the land. For example, in the Tongo village which is under the control of the lamido of Garoua in part is exploited by Fulani breeders. These breeders were deceived (2005) by an elite of the community who, with the support of the sub-prefect wanted to move the breeders of the zone and to benefit from the hectares of land, for a redistribution in plot to the farmers under hirings for money. Muslims interviewed as a whole did not get involved in resolving land disputes. They rely on the hierarchy i.e. Djaoro, lawan and lamido who are their leaders.

It appears that 53.60% of Muslim respondents say that the land belongs to God, who entrusted them to men and the first occupant is the master. This percentage marks a difference between the respondents who said: the land belongs to God who entrusted them to men and the lamido is its master. The first answer of the religious in fact questions the right of conquest Peul on the pagans for the occupation of land. But the second answer reinforces the supremacy and the management of the land by the lamido. This percentage confirms the thesis of Binet (1951) and that of Yougouda (2005) who affirm on their side that the African land, of its sacred character appears as a possession entrusted to men by the divinities. The 30.40% of Muslims replied that the land belonged to God, entrusted them to men and the State was their master. These respondents relied on the land legislation of 1974. They wanted the State to assume its responsibility in land disputes without being biased. The national territory belongs to all Cameroonians and the State must watch over the occupation of land by its population and must not resign from its role in the management of natural resources.

## **7. Attempt to mediate by animists**

Animists have kinship groups through the cult of ancestors. The founding ancestors are dissociated from the deities of the earth. Our observations show that all animistic village communities are concerned by this cult, in which only their descendants participate. For example, in the case of the Guiziga, the worship given to the kuli (supernatural force) of the village takes place on the same days and apparently the two parts of the same ceremony, as if to show the strength of the ties between land and the ancestors. They give their power to a multitude of spirits or spirit, good, evil, or ambivalent, whose good graces must be reconciled. Missions have influenced animistic practices that adhere to a single God more clearly than in the past. The members of the village community continue to participate in traditional festivals (mbolom among the Mofou, Mogulzum among the Guiziga, mazazai among the Mouktélé, mogololom among the Mafa ...), these "animists" go every year to celebrate in their village of origin of the Far North on their return to the village a general welcome, follows a new candidate

for migration. Certain ceremony, such as the great divination which takes place at Moutoura among the Guiziga, directly engages all the nationals of the chieftainship. The Guiziga de Lagdo move massively to share in this ritual in their villages of origin.

These animists have lost their power in front of the organization of the Muslim society. They adhere to the way of life of the Foulbé. The conflicts in Lagdo are treated first by the djaoro and all are Muslims. Being the dominant group in the irrigated perimeter, the animists are unable to mediate between the migrants and the Agro-industrial Society of the Benoue. The lack of political organization among animists plays a major role on the absence of any spatial control.

### Who owns the land?

**Table 4: land ownership**

	<b>Respondents (YES)</b>	<b>%</b>
Land belongs to the Lamido	137	45,51
Land belongs to God	12	3,98
Land belongs to the State	152	50,05
<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>100</b>

It should be noted that there is no pure animist. All are more or less influenced by Islam or by missions (Catholic or Protestant). As with the Toupouri, the head of the family says that he is Toupouri as if his identity forbade of him any adherence to a revealed religion. On the other hand, his women are Catholic or Protestant. It is clear from our survey that the "animists" are almost divided on the question of belonging to the land. We recorded 3.98% of those who try to say that land belongs to God, this low percentage confirms their belief in ancestor worship, and others give land to the state (50.0%), in the hope that the State can play its role of arbitrator to limit land disputes which multiply every day in the irrigated perimeter. And the third (45.51%) answer that the land belongs to the lamido, they return everything that happens to them, the one that most often make final decisions.

For lack of a fair judgment and in the absence of the state in the arbitration of conflicts, these well-educated animists know that the state closes the eyes to strengthen the power of the lamido that will watch and prevent them from militating in the parties policies of oppositions. Since the return of pluralism in 1990, a close alliance has been established between the government and the chiefdoms, which remain the main political force in the region.

**Table 5: The land belongs to God who entrusts them?**

	<b>Respondents (YES)</b>	<b>Respondents (NO)</b>
The lands belong to God who entrusted them to men and the lamido is its master	3	140
The lands belong to God who entrusted them to men and the	5	91

State is the master		
The lands belong to God who entrusted them to men and the first occupant is master of them	4	58
<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>289</b>

Considering Table 5 it shows that 48.44% of the respondents responded negatively as compared to Muslims that the land belongs to God who entrusted them to men and the lamido is its master. This percentage refers to the rooting in their space. But they are indeed their "countries" of departure. Their ancestors are not efficient on the land of the Fulani, which is reflected in the importance animists attach to the worship of ancestors. They even transmit these religious principles to the new generation, but this generation sometimes tends towards Christianity and sought to abandon animism. The sons of the migrants, who have benefited from the formal education, put everything in the justice of the state, which is the only one to bring a recognized mediation in land conflicts and to make the law reign. The religion "animist" is a religion of the soil. They are the only ones who "know" that they are on another land, the Foulbe. Those of them who are going to manifest may then have the arguments of the missionaries (those who follow the missions).

## 2. Attempted mediation by Protestants

Despite the introduction of the Protestant church in North Cameroon from 1925. The churches have progressed slowly. The church of the Lutheran Brotherhood in Lagdo, represented by 20.60% of the Christians surveyed, does not play an important role in setting up a mediation committee in land affairs. In this organization the pastor and evangelist are limited to an influence within their communities.

It emerges from our investigations that the pastors of the apostolic churches and even of other Protestant denominations have avoided intervening in disputes between migrants and SAIB. They do not even intervene in the mediation of land conflicts in general, we asked the question.

### Land belongs to who?

**Table 6: Land ownership**

	<b>Respondents (YES)</b>	<b>%</b>
Land belongs to the Lamido	15	7,61
Land belongs to God	113	57,36
Land belongs to the State	69	35,03
<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>100</b>

In all of these questionnaires there is a bias in the question "the land belongs" to God insofar as we are dealing with communities that do not believe in God. The opposite would be to demonstrate an incomprehensible amorality.

Referring to Table 6, it shows that 57.36% answer that the land belongs to God this answer confirms the uniqueness of God that Protestants consider as well as Muslims. But the 7.67% reply that the land is a gift of the lamido. All of them naturally turn to the lamido of Garoua, the study mission and chieftdom when acquiring plots at the irrigated perimeter, but the settlement of disputes is treated rather by the chieftaincy. The study mission plays the secondary role placed by the 'State. Indeed, 35.03% answer that the land belongs to the State this is what show that the interventions of the State are very limited and even seems to be very partial in the management of the conflicts.

The apostolic Protestant churches that we meet in the perimeter are vast huts with straw roofs; the faithful sometimes meet in the evenings especially on Sundays to follow the sermons. Interventions are limited to the level of religion. The frequency of the chieftaincies influences the latter who avoid discussing the management of land on the irrigated perimeter at the level of religious services. We asked the question:

**Table 7: The land belongs to God to whom do they entrust them?**

	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>%</b>
The lands belong to God who entrusted them to men and the lamido is its master	98	49,74
The land belongs to God who is entrusted to the State and the State is the master	76	38,57
The lands belong to God who entrusted them to men and the first occupant is master of them	23	11,67
<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>197</b>	

It appears from Table 7 that 49.74% answer that the land belongs to God who entrusted them over to men and the lamido is its master. This answer justifies the rarity of legitimate arbitration and the confusion of responsibilities in land where the state refuses to play its role to strengthen the power of lamido "we must control space to control society". Indeed, 38.57% answer that the land belongs to God who entrusted it to men and the State is master. But almost 50% accept that the manager is the lamido.

These migrants seek to open up the prospects of evolution to obtain the jurisprudence of the State by the introduction of complaints at the level of the administration. But the latter only seeks to appease the tensions between the actors without solving the fundamental problem. Protestant missions are indebted here for their history. They were established by Norwegian, American, Swiss missionaries ... who practiced a policy of avoidance with the colonial

administration. But their teaching is always based on the "gospels: our kingdom is not of this world" and "render to Caesar what is Caesar" in other words, in its application in North Cameroon, pay the royalty to the lamido.

The Lamibé say of them, " these are the good missionaries " compared to the Catholics more anchored in the century and who carry out a 'civic' fight against the abuses of the lamibé and to find a way towards a real security of land.

### **9. Attempt of mediation by the Diocesan Development Committee**

After its introduction in northern Cameroon in 1945, the Catholic mission sought to integrate socio-economic pre-occupations and peace into the activities of the communities. This mission was strongly involved in the accomplishment of agricultural migrations organized up to that of the West Benoue. It has studied the problem of the living conditions of the rural inhabitants of the region and tries to mediate in the conflicts encountered by development actors in North Cameroon. The Catholic mission is the only one to have set up a Diocesan Committee which dates from its commitment to secure land tenure in mediation at the last Maroua agricultural committee in 1988. It has been very active in development in the Benue plain. Studies show that the mediation experiments carried out in North Cameroon have been carried out so far by two operators:

- The diocesan committee for the development of the diocese of Maroua-Mokolo (CDD) and its formalization of land transactions
- The mediation actions carried out by the DPGT project.

The most representative intervention structure for development and mediation between actors is the Ngong Rural Education Center (CERN). This center is about 5 km from Lagdo. CERN was created in 1990 by Father Jean-Louis AUDOUIN; Former head of the Diocesan Development Committee of Garoua (CDD). Through his experience the latter continues to mediate by seeking to bring back peace as an aid to land conflicts. This structure has been working for 17 years in the borough of Lagdo and Chebaa. It fights for the right of man through its status in the framework of justice and peace.

The CDD's approach involves respect for the application of the law, which is accompanied by a number of development proposals submitted to the Prime Minister. The CDD relies on Order 74-1 of July 1974 of Article 17 to seek to translate the will of the peasants who solicit them. Given the magnitude of the difficult confrontation between the migrants and the SAIB of the irrigated perimeter of Lagdo, the CSD avoided attempting to arbitrate between the two parties. According to our information, all the missionaries have avoided mediating this crisis because this conflict is highly politicized and involves the State itself, which must then find solutions. In its work the CSD contacts peasants with each other and with private actors, with the state and with other development agencies in the region, but the case of the irrigated perimeter of Lagdo too has been dismissed. We asked Catholics in the study area to understand how the latter perceived the issue of land.

## Land belongs to who?

**Table 8: Land ownership**

	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>%</b>
Land belongs to the lamido	9	4,28
Land belongs to God	147	70,00
Land belongs to the State	54	25,71
<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>100</b>

By referring to Table 8, it shows that like Muslims, 70% of Christians respond that land belongs to God but question the management of the land by the lamido preferring the administration. The djaoro watch the perimeter. Based on their monopolies on land, all disputes that arise are judged by them or on the contrary by the ardo. This high percentage is explained by the lack and delay of justice by the State. Others reply (25.71%) that the land belongs to the State, these migrants count on the arbitration of the State but its slowness of intervention on the irrigated perimeters led to a loss of confidence. 549 peasants preferred to leave Lagdo for neighboring villages. The answer given by the Christians questioned permitted us to ask another question to make our analysis and interpretation.

**Table 9: If the land belongs to God to whom to entrust them?**

	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>%</b>
The lands belong to God who entrusted them to men and the lamido is the master of them	18	8,57
The land belongs to God who entrusted them to men and the state is its master	156	74,28
The lands belong to God who entrusted them to the men and the first occupant is the master	36	17,14
Number of respondents	210	100



From Table 9, 74.28% answer that the land belongs to God who entrusted them to men and the state is its master. This answer confirms the thesis developed by the State and accepted by the peasants at the beginning of their installation through development projects. For them this is what should happen. But the 8.57% who answer that land belongs to God who entrusted it to the lamido as master; this small percentage is explained by the fatigue that they have on the eyes. The chiefdoms obviously left out of land disputes and these disputes come to reinforce the power of lamido.

## 10. Muslims, Christians, Animists, Catholics and Wandering Plaintiffs

The peasants wrongly give to the administration its hierarchy and its coherences. For them it is a nebula of power called " Gomna "; they then address their representatives according to their comprehensible criteria and affinities felt. Contrary to traditional chiefdoms, the different administrations do not have time to examine the complaints concerning the land with their various actors. Their persistence and complexity of the contexts ... the administrators of the function cannot be burdened with its affairs.

Land requires a solid knowledge of local history. As everywhere else in the Lagdo region, migrant plaintiffs seek to try out all the administrative bodies, where they think they can find the most favorable listening ear according to their ethnic and / or religious affiliation such as: gendarmerie, rural commune, agricultural service...

Muslims, like the Mbororo breeders stick to the traditional chiefdom that seems to be the safest ... if you put the price. The Toupouri and the Moundang preferably address to the gendarmerie. The ethnic origin address to the Sub-prefect and the Mayor is decisive. But the chiefdom, the lamido, proves to be impossible to circumvent. It can be dismissed initially and solicit an administrative wicket, the sub-prefect, gendarmerie ... but, tired by the complexity of the files, he referred the case to the lamido.

## CONCLUSION

In the rest of the northern region, access to land is different in the irrigated perimeter of Lagdo and is allocated or leased. In general, the non-recognition of the final individual rights on land testifies in the North-Cameroon of incapacity of the systems of state administration on land. The constancy of unresolved conflicts has forced some peasants to multiply meetings in groups to seek arbitration at the level of religious institutions. Land disputes are remunerative for those who control these religious institutions (djaoro, ardo, lamido).

The diversity of regulations in the light of observations made in the context of the experience of the Diocesan Committee in the Far North and in Mayo Rey, which only reflects the will of the peasants, cannot be exploited in the case of the confrontation between the agro-industrial society of Benoue and the village community of Lagdo as it emerges from the conclusions that this social crisis has learned a political turning that only engages the State

before its responsibilities to apply the law of the legislator or to revise which will serve as a lever for securing land tenure throughout the north of the country.

Muslim institutions avoid mediation because these men nominated by djaoro or ardo just to direct prayers in mosques and to regulate other non-land conflicts, these religious men refer everything to God of the universe in opposition to the animists who answer that the land belongs to the ancestors for some and for others who prefer the application of the modern law. But chieftainship appears to the peasants as a "default institution", but the only one capable of managing space and arbitrating conflicts. This appreciation confirms the wish of the Protestant institutions, which prefer to give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar. "Our kingdom is not of this world". The latter are better considered by the chiefdoms. But the confrontation between the SAIB and the village community in Lagdo. This does not require a land tax on the part of the peasants; the Peule elite is a shareholder of the company and judges its interest bigger if this industry was in full activity.

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