

1. Description

1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family:

- Tallensi
- “Speaking the Talni language...” (1p647)
- Gur family language belonging to the Niger-Congo phylum languages. (4p224)

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): 639-3

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

- Longitude: -0.8
- Latitude: 10.7167

1.4 Brief history:

- “The Tallensi people live in the northern part of the modern country of Ghana. They are descended from an agricultural people who inhabited the savanna region of Ghana.” (1p647)
- “Speaking the Talni language, the Tallensi have been closely identified with the Gur language group.” (1p647)

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors:

- Missionaries and Working Life
 - “Attachment to the family and respect for the father remain so strong that educated young men working as clerks, teachers, etc., continue to live in their parental homes and to contribute to the family income just as their fathers did before them.” (8p9)
 - “A Catholic mission is now at work in the tribal area, and other missions have also been busy, especially among Tallensi schoolchildren and older literates. But there is as yet only a handful of adult converts and they are all still too junior in age and status to have any influence in the conduct of family and community affairs.” (8p13)
- Schools:
 - “Nowadays many attend local schools or are away at secondary boarding schools. Older people complain of the disruption this has caused in the traditional farming system by, for example, the lack of herdboys for their cattle, though the increasing use of ox-drawn ploughs in place of hand-hoeing has reduced the need for labour on the land.” (8p7)

1.6 Ecology (natural environment):

- “It has been variously described as ‘parkland’, ‘savannah’, or ‘orchard bush’ country, terms which indicate the sparse and uniform forestation characteristic of this zone. Stretching irregularly and almost right across Africa, between the eighth and the sixteenth parallels N. latitude, it merges into the Sahara on the north and is bounded by the tropical rain forest on the south.” (2p1)
- “The climate of the Sudanese Zone exhibits two clearly defined seasons, a dry season lasting about half the year (October to March) and a wet season lasting the remaining six or seven months (April to October)...A characteristic feature of the dry season is the harmattan, a hot parching wind laden with fine dust which blows from the Sahara, so strongly at times as to obscure the landscape in a haze which limits visibility to a few hundred yards. Heavy dew and mists cause the mornings to be chilly and bracing...4 p.m the sun blazes relentlessly through the faint haze; sunset ushers in a cool and balmy evening; and night brings a relatively marked drop in temperature.” (2p2)
- “Violent nocturnal tornadoes from the east and north-east, accompanied by lightning and thunder, introduce the rainy season, during which the prevailing wind blows from the direction of the Gulf of Guinea, to the south and south-east. During this season the temperature remains fairly stable throughout the day. Though it is never as hot as in the hottest days of the dry season, the humidity makes it at times excessively oppressive.” (2p2)

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density

- Mean village size
 - There can be up to 3500 people per village. Village size often varies because of changes in family ties.
- Density

- 170 people per square mile in settled parts. (7p254)
- Population size
 - “The current population of Tallensi is no more than 300,000.” (1p647)

2. Economy

- “The entire unit of food economy thus draws its main supply of grain, the staple foodstuff, from a common source. But every household, every primary family, and indeed every individual other than young children has a degree of economic independence, which is limited only by the obligations to the bigger unit. An industrious householder usually possesses some poultry and perhaps sheep and goats of his own, supplies a good deal of the minor crops consumed by his own wives and children, and even some grain to augment his wives’ rations from the main store. Every woman, again, adds to the food supply of her primary family by her own efforts. If she is a market trader or potteress, for example, she will have money of her own, will sometimes purchase extra foodstuffs and may invest in live stock which will eventually go to her sons. Her husband has no powers of disposal over her property. If he uses any of it, by her permission, it is a debt which must be repaid.” (7p242)

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

- South of the [Gambaga] scarp a form of shifting cultivation is customary, and yams (*Dioscorea* spp.) are grown on a large scale side by side with millet (*Pennisetum typhoides*, var.), guinea corn (*Sorghum vulgare*), and maize (*Zea mays*). North of it yams will not grow easily and cereal crops form the staple food supply.” (1p3)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

- It is rare for the Tallensi to consume meat/lipids:
 - “A well-to-do compound may have a cow or two, even several cows, or a couple of donkeys, but the ordinary man usually comes into possession of these animals only in the form of bride-wealth, which will as likely as not be used immediately to pay a debt or, more rarely, to make a special and urgent sacrifice. In any case, a cow is never slaughtered specifically for food by the average man.” (7p248)
 - Sheep and goats are owned by all but the poorest; but again, no one would wantonly slaughter an animal for food.

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?

- There was no specific excerpt about the making of weapons, but the use of bow and arrows is mentioned several times.
 - “In war all able-bodied men turned out carrying their bows and quivers of poisoned arrows, their adzes, and other weapons...” (2p238)
 - “So the following year, at the usual time of fighting, just before the commencement of the sowing season, while the granaries were still full, the then Chief Tongo ‘set up arrows’ again to revenge their defeat.” (2p238)

2.4 Food storage:

- Store rooms
 - “No stores are deliberately built, but structures in disrepair, be they sleeping quarters, kitchens, granaries or grinding rooms, are pressed into service as supplementary storage facilities.” (4p231)
- Fowl coops
 - “Fowl coops are found along courtyard walls. Similar to the fowl coops in the entrance piers, the conical-shaped structures buttress the wall at weak points. The Tallensi have ingeniously incorporated a secondary function, the housing of fowl, to these structural features by creating cavities in their bases.” (4p230-231)

2.5 Sexual division of production:

- Men:
 - “...it is not surprising that the bulk of agricultural labour falls to the lot of men, though women and children help in planting.” (5p39)
 - “This all important agricultural production is organized through the joint family, living in one compound, under the leadership of the compound head. He is responsible for the sorting, selection,

preservation and storing of grain, the control of distribution, the organization of labour, etc. He also holds the land from which the unit of food economy gains sustenance.” (5p39)

- “The men do the heavy work of farming and care for the livestock.” (3p102)

- Women:

- “The most exacting task in a woman’s routine is the provision of firewood and water.” (5p39)
- “...little time can be available for more direct participation in production, especially as cooking, the most important task for the woman, must take up a considerable proportion of her time. She usually prepares two meals per day, and must always provide relish and contrive some variation in the meals.” (5p39)

2.6 Land tenure:

- “Patrimonial land is inherited within the lineage from fathers to sons in order of seniority by generation or by age. It is plain that such land cannot provide for the needs of rapidly-growing lineage, and the records of borrowing, pledging, and sale of land, together with evidence of migration, make this clear.” (5p46)
- “The keystone of the institutional framework of Tale agriculture is security of land tenure... The landowning unit is a segment of a maximal lineage and its property are an aspect of its corporate relationship to the maximal lineage and clan. Within a settlement the stretch of land parceled out into farm plots corresponds to the clan occupying that locality as it segmented into a hierarchy of lineage units. All segments of the clan of the same order are equal to one another. They have an equal weight in the structure of the clan, equal power in its affairs. They have, in consequence equal property rights (though not necessarily equal amounts of property), equal opportunity for holding and farming land (though not necessarily equal achievement), and equal social duties to one another... Just as members of the same clan must not kill one another or abduct one another’s wives, so they must not trespass on one another’s land. For this would wreck the mutual loyalties of segment to segment and make impossible the maintenance of the reciprocity of rights and duties on which their corporate life depends. There is, in other words, a general body of jural and moral norms, binding on all members of the clan and cementing its solidarity, and supported by the powerful sanctions of the ancestor cult and the Earth cult. The security of land tenure is guaranteed by this.” (2p180-181)

2.7 Ceramics:

- None Found

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

- There was one example of sharing written about.
 - “In the hunger months if a woman gets hold of a little grain to cook some food for her children, she calls them all to eat of it and they all sit down together around the dish. The first lessons in sharing equally are learnt in this setting. The 6-year-old, admonished sometimes by his mother, tries not to eat too greedily lest his 2-year-old brother or sister eating with him should not have his fill. The 11- or 12-year-old, copying his parents, will take a mouthful or two and then say he has had enough, leaving the dish to be finished by his younger siblings.” (3p246)

2.9 Food taboos:

- “There are many restrictions and taboos commonly associated with menstruation in traditional Ghanaian thought and practice. There is a widely recognized traditional taboo on a menstruant woman’s cooking food for any man including her husband. It may be thought necessary to protect even crops from her evil influence... She may not be allowed to enter any stream to get water.” (6p35)

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

- None found

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

- Men and Women
 - “Both men and women are of medium stature, the men being slightly taller. Anybody over 5 ft. 7 or 8 in. is considered tall.” (3p7)

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

- Men and Women

- Though they are mostly slight in build, all somatic types with which we are familiar may be seen among these people...Fat men or women, however, are very rare.” (3p7)

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

- “There is evidence that among the daughters of the better placed sections of the population the mean age of menarche is 12.9...In contrast there is evidence that among rural farming populations the age of menarche is somewhat later, the mean age being 15.6.” (6p33)

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

- Women
 - “...In a recent study, first pregnancy was found to occur at the mean age of 18.7, the majority of women bearing at least one child in their teens.” (6p33)

4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

- No exact number was given but there is a large stressor put on women to conceive, especially sons.
 - “During the rituals prayers are said stressing the importance of maternity and fertility. Ten or even thirty children may be mentioned as the goal.” (6p33)

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

- “Sexual relations between husband and wife are prohibited from the time of a baby’s birth until it can run about and feed itself. Thus children are normally spaced at three-yearly intervals, approximately...” (8p9)

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

- A percentage was not found but it is said that men divorcing their wives is rare. It is also said that women are easily seduced into leaving their husbands and entering into a new marriage; this is more common.
 - “A marriage breaks up either through the action of one of the spouses, generally the woman, or through that of the wife’s guardian. The Tallensi have no formal procedure for divorce. If a man wishes to get rid of a wife (which happens very seldom) he generally does so by with-holding the bride-price, so that her guardian eventually recalls her, or he makes her life so uncomfortable that she deserts him. If a woman decides to leave a husband, she simply absconds. She may do so because she dislikes him, or because he does not feed her well enough, or neglects her sexually or otherwise, or, natives say, out of mere caprice. All women, according to the men, are fickle and gullible; a plausible suitor can seduce any woman. So if a young wife goes to visit her parents and stays longer than two or three days, her husband, be he an ardent young man or a sober greybeard, hurries off to fetch her, usually in considerable dudgeon, for fear that she may be abducted by another man.” (3p85)

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

- A percentage is not given but polygyny is not a dying institution amongst the Tallensi
 - “...in West African societies at any given point of time there are more married women than married men (although eventually more than 98% of men and women alike will marry)...In general however, women spend a considerably greater proportion of their lives within marriage than do men.” (9p15)

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?

- “...the bridegroom’s guardian must send the placation gift (lu sendaan) to the bride’s guardian, and must pay a proportion of the bride-price acceptable to the latter. A wife is usually espoused (sol) by paying the bride-price of four head of cattle or their equivalent in installments over a number of years. If he does not fulfil these jural requirements, a man has no rights to and over his wife.” (3p86)

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

- “As a polygamous people who trace their lineage through the father's line, that is, a patrilineal kinship system, the Tallensi value inheritance founded on the principles of father—firstborn son relationships.” (1p647)

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

- “The actual rights possessed by the father are defined as follows: he has full disposal over his son’s labour and skill. He also has an over-right over any personal property his son may acquire by his private enterprise. He decides whether his son shall live and farm with him or set up his own household.” (5p42)

- “It is interesting to note...that the affection of children varies directly with their parents’ function as food-provider. When there is a bumper groundnut crop, he said, children don’t care for their fathers or mothers—they are out all day. But when food becomes short, they are always running in to their mothers for food.” (5p42)
- Taboos
 - Firstborn Son and Father
 - “When a boy is 6 years of age, he may not eat from the same dish as his father. This is a taboo. Other taboos relate to the use of the father's weapons, the father's clothes, or the father's tools. Furthermore, when a son arrives at adolescence, around the age of 12 or 13, he cannot enter the house compound at the same time as his father. If, for some reason, the son violates this taboo, then there must be purification rites.” (1p648)
 - Firstborn Daughter and Mother
 - “The firstborn daughter cannot look into her mother's storage containers, vases, pots, or tubs; this is a taboo.” (1p648)

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

- None Found

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

- “By the rule of lineage exogamy, daughters marry out. Men are born, grow up, and live their lives in the same place and often homestead.” (8p8)

4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these “other fathers” recognized?

- None found

4.14 What is the belief of the mother’s role in procreation exactly? (e.g., “receptacle in which fetus grows”)

- None Found

4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)?

- None found

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape

- There is no statistic on rape or sexual coercion but there is much uproar if it occurs.
 - “If a man’s wife is seduced or abducted by a member of another clan, any of his clansmen will take reprisals, if they get a chance, by seducing or abducting the wife of a member of the offending clan. There were many fights in the old days, as we have learnt, between clans because the wife of one clan was abducted by a member of the other.” (3p109)

4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin)

- None Found

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

- Women do not enjoy sexual freedoms with men other than their husband.
 - “A woman who commits adultery exposes her husband and children to mystical dangers...she is haled to the homestead of the head of her husband’s medial lineage and subjected to the ordeal of entering the gateway. If she confesses she may enter safely. If not, the lineage ancestors will cause her to get ill if she enters the gateway. This is a powerful sanction of marital fidelity among women and is one reason why adultery is not very common.” (2p229)

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring

- There was no mention of gift giving to extramarital partners but men have been found to have extra lovers.
 - “Though a woman cannot prevent her husband from having a clandestine lover, she will resent it as a slight on her sexual attractions if she finds out, and make life uncomfortable for him in revenge.” (3p107)

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?

- It seems as though child-rearing is done by the father and nuclear family in West Africa when the mother is not around.
 - “...her life expectancy at birth seldom reaches 50 throughout the region. Society, in her case, defines many of the tasks of child-rearing as being the responsibility of the father, of older siblings and of relatives beyond the nuclear family.” (9p7)

4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females

- “All the available evidence...would suggest that the excess of males at birth is slighter than in most European populations and that the sex ratio is close to 103.” (9p7)

4.22 Evidence for couvades

- None found

4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older)

- None found

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?

- Parents and Offspring: There is a certain level of respect amongst children to their parents.
 - “A mother has the obedience and the respect of her children. She controls her daughters work in the domestic sphere in tasks such as cooking, fetching water and firewood, and so on...” (3p139)
- Sexual Relationships: Some actions compromise the strength of the clan and should be avoided at all costs.
 - “...sexual intercourse with a sister arouses very strong reprobation, and sexual relations with a brother or a father’s wife is a grave sin.” (2p204-205)
- Co-Wives: There is normally mutual respect amongst them but sometimes problems do arrive.
 - “Women do not, as a rule, object to their husbands having other wives as well.”
 - “When co-wives refer to one another as ‘sisters’ they are using a kinship term in a metaphorical sense to indicate their social equivalence-that is , their identity of role and status in their conjugal home and settlement.” (3p127)
 - “According to the natives, quarrels between co-wives are often due to one or other having an intractable disposition. Men add that women lack self-control and are very prone to petty jealousy; they are apt to quarrel if they think they are being unfairly treated, if, for instance, one wife seems to receive more than a fair share of her husband’s attention.” (3p128)

4.24 Joking relationships?

- Grandparents and Grandchildren
 - “The essential feature of the relationship between grandchild and grandparent is that they can tease and joke with each other and each other’s spouses...Grandparents, reciprocally tease their grandchildren, calling them ‘you ugly thing’, or by similar epithets that would be insults in another genealogical context.” (3p236)

4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations:

- The Tallensi people abide by a patrilineal system of kinship.
 - “The tallensi have one of the most consistent patrilineal and patriarchal family systems as yet observed in Africa. At the peak of the cycle of family group consisting of an old man, his adult sons and possibly son’s sons, together with the wives of these men and all their unmarried children. This is the ideal every man aims at. Three generation patrilineal, polygynous families are common.” (8p8)

4.26 Incest avoidance rules

- “Within this dug sexual relations between a member and the wife of one of his agnates are branded as incest, and produce a serious if not irreparable rupture in the unit; and sexual relations between classificatory brother and sister meet with strong censure.” (2p204)
 - The definition of a dug:
 - “It is thought of as a matri-segment , though named after its founding ancestor, and is described as a ‘room’, dug- ‘the children of one mother- of the house...’ (2p202)

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

- No, there is no formal marriage ceremony but there are a several steps to making a marriage legal.
 - “The suitor approaches the father of the girl, who refers him to his eldest brother, or father, if alive. The suitor brings tobacco to the girl’s father and mother; they show these gifts to the head of the compound. Three or four days later the suitor will bring a dead guinea-fowl and give it to his future mother-in-law...Later, the suitor will send a live fowl and guinea-fowl and corn by messenger...the girl now goes to the bridegrooms town...there she remains three days...after they

return home, the bridegroom will send the ahen with a live cock to the section-head...without this formality the marriage is not legal..." (3p351)

4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?

- None found

4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?)

- "...a great deal of intermarriage takes place between neighbours and within the local community, since many different clans are represented in the community. Tallensi are more inclined to marry people who live nearby than to take spouses from a distance...marriage between the children on men who happen to be neighbour because of their kinship with a third man, but are themselves not related is very common." (2p223)

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?

- There are some arranged marriages and since the father is technically the owner of his children he is the arranger.
 - "A father has the right to dispose of a daughter in marriage as he pleases and to use the bride-price as he pleases." (3p138)

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

- None found

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

- A percentage was not given, but the Tallensi are not violent people unless they are forced to be. With that said it could be assumed that death by warfare is fairly rare, present day.
 - "But the tallensi are not one of those warlike African peoples who have a hypnotic effect even on anthropologists. Like most peasants who wring bare subsistence from the soil, they have much too prosaic an attachment to their homes, their families, and their farms, and much too lively in appreciation of the perils of commonplace living to overrate the warrior. Not that the Tallensi are lacking in physical courage or combativeness. They are quick to resent a trespass on their rights and readily snatch up a weapon or missile if they are provoked." (2p234)

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

- None Found

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:

- Ingroup
 - "...these wars are also common theme of funeral dirges." (2p234)
- Outgroup
 - "When Tallensi discuss the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos, they often hark back to the wars of former days. There are still old men living who took part in the last of those wars, and many middle-aged men and women tell tales of the fighting they saw as children or heard from their parents..." (2p234)

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations):

- None found

4.18 Cannibalism?

- None found

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

- There can be up to 3500 people per village. Village size often varies because of changes in family ties.

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

- The Tallensi do not seem to be nomadic; this assumption is made by their home structures.
 - "Tale homesteads are solidly constructed pie (puddle mud, tan), and they are built to last." (3p47)

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes):

- The politico-ritual integration of a Tale clan is focused in the politico-ritual office or offices vested in it or in its component maximal lineages. These offices are either chiefship (na'am) (or its equivalent, the senior office connected with an External Boyar) or tendaanship. Chiefship is primarily associated with the Namoos, though not exclusively so, tendaanship with the clans and maximal lineages claiming to be the autochthonous inhabitants of the country, though, again, not exclusively so. Both chiefship and tendaanship are, to the natives, unitary institutions made up of offices distributed among a number of clans and lineages. The range of these institutions is not even limited to Taleland. All chiefs are 'brothers' since they derive their office from a common source, the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu; all tendaanans, similarly, are 'brothers' since their office has the same function and ritual value everywhere in relation to the Earth. The chain of ritual collaboration is one expression of this notion. Among the Tale chiefs the Chief of Tongo ranks highest. He has no political, administrative, or judicial authority over any other chiefs, or any other clan than his own, but his office incarnates the quintessence of na'am. He represents all the chiefs of the country in the ritual attributes of chiefship. Tendaanans, in keeping with the elaborate segmentation of the clans in which this office is vested, are more equal in status. But in every cluster of closely interdependent contiguous clans there is one tendaana who ranks higher than his confreres. The Gbizug tendaana ranks above the tendaana of Zubiun, Gbeog, and Wakii, and the Doo tendaana above the other Tenzugu tendaanans. (2p181-182)
- Chiefs and tendaanans had no political power, as we understand it, before the coming of the white man. They had no administrative, or executive, and only rudimentary judicial powers. They were the leaders and not the rulers, the fathers and not the princes of their clans. (2p182)

5.4 Post marital residence:

- "...kinship relations among occupants dictate how they arrange themselves in space and remodel their compounds." (4p223)
- "One extended family whose male members belong to the same patrilineage occupy different courtyards within a single larger compound...the compound residents form a nuclear lineage which is broken into effective minimal segments each consisting of a single man, his wife or wives and their children." (4p232)
- The setup of the compounds do not necessarily change besides adding a sleeping room for each wife and her children, but kinship does have an impact on proximity of compounds.
 - "Social proximity, defined in terms of patrilineal affiliation, is strongly correlated with residential proximity." (4p234)

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

- "Their country, which, for convenience of reference may be called Taleland, embraces most of the southern half of the district between the two Voltas and the western boundary. On the north it can be demarcated only by an arbitrary boundary which extends in a wavy line from Zuarungu due east to the river. A typical section of the district, Taleland includes the Tong Hills, the vicinity of which harbours the densest and oldest settlements of the country." (3p4)

5.6 Social interaction divisions? (age and sex):

Age

- "...a child's life is probably its freest and happiest. Its energies are spent in play or in roaming around the immediate neighbourhood of the homestead in the company of slightly older siblings and classificatory siblings. But children of this age delight in being with their parents too." (3p190)
- "By the age of 7 or 8 the child's world is becoming much more complex; and the shadow of discipline and authority is creeping over it. Until it reaches the threshold of adolescence, at about 12 to 14 years of age, it still remains free to play for much of its time." (3p190)
- "By the age of about 9 or 10 children begin to adopt the sexual division of labour customary among Tallensi, and with it the corresponding division of social roles and ideals. (3p190)

Gender

- "Boys start following their older brothers and take their turn at herding their father's cattle if he has any. They are becoming more skilful with the hoe and by the age of about 12 reach a high degree of proficiency. A 12-year-old boy helps his mother to hoe her ground-nut and may have a small ground-nut plot of his own." (3p190-191)

- “A girl of 9 or 10 is learning from her mother how to cook, how to beat floors and plaster walls, how to carry out all the routine domestic duties of a housewife. She is acquiring the woman's view of life centered on marriage and motherhood.” (3p191)

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

- Grandparents
 - “With it goes an intimacy and mutual trust, more particularly between patrilineal grandparent and grandchild of the same sex, such as is not found between any other kinfolk, close or distant... And as a grandchild grows older this aspect of its relations with its grandparent becomes stronger.” (3p236-237)

5.8 Village and house organization:

- Footpaths
 - “Several well trodden footpaths are associated with the compound. A perimeter footpath girdles the entire compound, dissecting the surrounding compound farm into a number of plots. Some footpaths lead to neighbouring compounds.” (4p228)
- Entranceways
 - The narrow and V-shaped main entrance gate of the compound opens into the cattle yard within the confines of the compound walls. It is generally oriented to the west or south-west away from the prevailing directions of rain squalls and harmattan winds. The entranceway is flanked by two conical-shaped pillars built into the outer wall of the compound.” (4p229-230)
- Cattle yard
 - “The cattle yard is walled space one encounters upon crossing the threshold of the main gate. Cattle, sheep and goats are typically contained in a yard that has a dirt floor, unlike the pounded, plaster-finished floors found throughout the rest of the compound.” (4p230)
- Zong
 - The zong is the only room in the compound that opens on to the cattle yard. Only one zong is built per compound, on to one side of the main gate. A ritual structure, the zong is the setting for communing with the ancestors, conducting funerals and performing fertility rituals.” (4p230)
- Courtyard
 - Passing through the cattle yard, one enters one of possibly several courtyards of the compound. All other structures open on to the courtyard, arranged radially along its perimeter wall. Courtyards have cement-like finished floors. Waist level dips in the 2m high compound walls allow admittance to any other courtyards in the compound; thus all living spaces in the compound are interconnected in a network and in very large compounds, give the impression of maze-like complexity.” (4p230)
- Granary
 - “A bullet shaped structure, typically 1-5m in diameter and 2.5m high, the granary is used to store threshed millet, the staple foodstuff. It has a single orifice, accessible from the top and covered with a removable conical thatched bonnet. (4p230)
- Kitchens
 - ...are frequently a pair of rooms containing swish stoves, one roofed room adjacent to an unroofed structure that may be shaded with a thatched mat. The unroofed kitchen is delineated by a walled partition of the courtyard in which cooking is usually done. The roofed kitchen space also serves as a store, with cooking done within it only during inclement weather.” (4p231)
- Grinding room
 - This is a bullet shaped structure resembling the granary in form and dimensions, but easily distinguishable by its non-removable roof, an access portal at the base, and a circular orifice high up the wall to admit light. One or more is found per courtyard, as each wife should ideally possess her own grinding room. Within the structure is an elevated mud platform into which granite milling stones are embedded.”(4p231)
- Bath house and sanitation

- “Each courtyard has a bath house for bucket showers, delineated by walled partition somewhere along the main compound wall. The bath house has a drainage orifice punched through the wall base to the outside, and so the bath house doubles as a dump for sewage water. Outhouses shielded by mud walls, some few metres away from compound, serve as latrines, which are a new feature of the Tallensi domestic environment, encouraged by civil health authorities.” (4p231)
- Sleeping rooms
 - “Distinct sleeping quarters exist for each husband and each wife with her associated children. Rooms are built along the courtyard walls and open into the courtyard; these may be circular or rectangular, with about 6-12m² of floor area, and have a variety of roofs. Outside the rooms near the doorway one finds the personal shrines with “fetish” pots of every adult in the courtyard.” (4p231)
- Shaded space and ancestral shrines
 - “Immediately in front of the main entrance is shaded space, characterized by a shade tree, a thatch-roofed awning on posts, and ancestral shrines. The space serves as a multifunctional activity, gathering and rest area for the inhabitants, and a point to greet visitors. It constitutes a social space that is similar in many respects to the porch of a Euro-american bungalow. The shade trees tend to have large spreading crowns and are deciduous only briefly through the year.” (4p228)

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens’ houses):

- The zong is one housing unit in every compound in which men are often seen relaxing in.
 - “Male elders of the compound may be seen relaxing in this room. A spyhole on an external wall allows elders to monitor activity outside the compound.” (4p230)

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

- “A raised mud platform is the bed, on which one lays a mat.” (4p231)

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc:

- “Traditional political institutions include the offices of secular chiefs, with limited titular political authority over sections, clans and communities and, in case of paramount chiefs, over entire ethnic groups. Chieftaincy may be a borrowed institution imported by Mossi, Mamprusi and Dagomba invaders in the mid-fifteenth century. Complementary authority resides in the indigenous religious office of the tendaana, or earth priest, which is greater antiquity.” (4p224)

5.12 Trade:

- “All compounds share in the export trade in fowls; wage-labourers bring money back home. Fifty-four percent of compounds own some cattle, which are principally used in marriage transactions, but also serve as a marketable reserve in time of famine, an advantage enjoyed by owners of large herds over others.” (5p50)
- “Livestock are increasingly used as commodities in ordinary exchange, rather than in marriage transactions alone. Great quantities of cloth are imported and must be paid for. Yams and other foodstuffs are imported.” (5p50)
- There are markets in Taleland. In the past the principal one was at Ba’ari; this used to be raided by men from the Tong Hills. Foreign trade was also carried on with caravans on the North-South route...” (5p50)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

- Firstborns showing status
 - “The reason for this strong emphasis on having a firstborn son or firstborn daughter is that a person can never achieve the fulfillment necessary to become a revered ancestor after death if he or she does not have children to carry on rituals. The birth of a firstborn son or firstborn daughter makes a man truly mature and fulfilled, and it represents his ascendance to the highest position in the society.” (1p648)

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6.0 Time allocation to RCR:

- In all of the compounds there is a structure called the zong, which implies that religion is important to the Tallensi if there is a permanent structure dedicated to prayer in their living space.

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

- Diviner
 - “The demands and the claims of ancestors are made known through a diviner. Divination among the Tallensi, in keeping with their generally realistic outlook, is a matter-of-fact business, conducted with the aid of a collection of mnemonic objects. Mediumistic divination by shamans or by priests in a state of possession, as practiced... is unheard of and completely alien to the Tallensi. ...The notion of possession by the spirit of a departed ancestor, a deity, or any other supernatural agency is indeed inconceivable to them.” (8p11)
- Earth priest
 - Earth priests concern themselves with mediation between gods and men, the fertility of the earth, and land allocation. They are closely associated with the predominant traditional religions involving ancestor cults...” (4p224)

6.2 Stimulants:

- None Found

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal):

- Death
 - “...when a person dies, it is the firstborn son or daughter who leads in the ritual ceremonies. Only at this moment can the son actually put on his father's cap and his father's cloth and walk in the father's shoes.” (1p648)

6.4 Other rituals:

- The Arrow Medicine
 - In the ritual of the Arrow Medicine for protection in war, the services of a virgin boy and a virgin girl are required. These children are bound to the medicine by a taboo of chastity in early childhood; but they are released as soon as they approach puberty...” (3p100)

6.5 Myths (Creation):

- None Found

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

- None Found

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

- None Found

6.8 Missionary effect:

- The effects of missionaries are fairly new and many Tallensi have stuck with their old religion and ways of life despite British interference.

6.9 RCR revival:

- There has not necessarily been a revival seeing as though there was no significant decline.

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

- Everything in the Tallensi society works together to maintain this balance between the secular lineage and the ancestral dead. (1p648)
- “From the point of view of their descendants, the ancestors are perpetually demanding recognition, service and propitiation by means of libations and blood sacrifices, claiming the credit for a persons good fortune, sickness and above all death. Being unpredictable, their intervention only gets known after the event, when a diviner is consulted to discover the ancestral agent of an illness or a death.” (8p10)

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

- There is not a taboo in naming the dead, the Tallensi worship their ancestors.

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

- None Found

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.)

- “Tallensi thought is so dominated by the belief in the supremacy of the departed ancestors that there is little room for other supernatural forces in their cosmology. Supernatural power matching that of the ancestors is attributed to the Earth. But witchcraft and sorcery, so prominent in other indigenous African religions...are marginal in the Tallensi system of belief. The essence of witchcraft and sorcery is that they are maleficent superhuman powers believed to be lodged in or employed by one's living fellow men, most

often, in Africa, kinsfolk or neighbors. The idea of this power exists in Tallensi thought, but it has a role rather like the idea of ghosts or of premonitory dreams among ourselves.” (8p11)

- “They do not divide the universe into a natural and supernatural sphere. The ancestors are integrally part of their social organization. Magical power is lodged in real and tangible objects.” (8p11)

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

- Tattooing
 - During the Da koom an Da men Ceremonies the participants are not allowed to be tattooed, which infers that the Tallensi do tattoo themselves.
 - “A Ten’dan’ must not have tattoo marks...” (3p373)

7.2 Piercings:

- None Found

7.3 Haircut:

- None Found

7.4 Scarification:

- None Found

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.):

- None Found

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

- None Found

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

- None Found

7.8 Missionary effect:

- The effects of missionaries are fairly new and many Tallensi have stuck with their old religion and ways of life despite British interference.

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

- None Found

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system:

- “The key to the social relations of siblings in Tale society and to the effects on the whole social structure of the sibling bond is the principle to which Radcliffe-Brown has given the name ‘the social equivalence of siblings’...Siblings derive their social equivalence- that is, equivalence in jural, ritual, and economic relations, as opposed, for example, to private marital relations- from their common relationship with their parents.” (3p242)
- “The solidarity and social equivalence of sibling are conditioned by a number of factors. Differences of sex and, between like-sex siblings, of age are important. But distinctions of equal or even greater significance are imposed on siblings by the fundamental principles of the social structure.” (3p243)
- “...in the family structure and the economic organization of the household, is not important in childhood, but increases steadily in influence with years. It is the basis of the fission between fraternal descent lines and consequently, of the ramification of a lineage sprung from one progenitrix. How it works out, however, in a particular case depends upon the position of each person in terms of patrilineal descent and maternal origin.” (3p243)

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

- Levirate marriage
 - “This is seen most clearly when a widow remarries. She may be given in marriage to one of her deceased husband’s brothers by the head of his effective minimal lineage, or she may be claimed by her deceased husband brother...” (3p106)

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.):

- None found

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

- Shrines:
 - “Outside the compound walls is a pot set on stones, containing...ground roots and earth. On top of the pot is a head-rest, smeared with the feathers of past sacrifices, and on top of this again, a stone.” (3p352)

Numbered references

1. Asante, Molefi Kete (2009) "Tallensi." Encyclopedia of African Religion Vol. 2. Sage Publications Inc.
2. Fortes, Meyer (1969) The Dynamics of the Clanship Among the Tallensi: Being the First Part of an Analysis of the Social Structure of a Trans-Volta Tribe. London Oxford University Press
3. Fortes, Meyer (1969) The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi: The Second Part of an Analysis of the Social Structure of a Trans-Volta Tribe. London Oxford University Press
4. Gabrilopoulos, Nick. Mather, Charles. Roland Apentiik, Caesar. (2002) Lineage Organisation of the Tallensi Compound: The Social Logic of Domestic Space in Northern Ghana. Cambridge University Press
5. Worsley, P.M. (1956) The Kinship System of the Tallensi: A Revaluation. Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland
6. Oppong, Christine (1974) Notes on Cultural Aspects of Menstruation in Ghana.
<http://archive.lib.msu.edu/DMC/African%20Journals/pdfs/Institue%20of%20African%20Studies%20Research%20Review/1973v9n2/asrv009002005.pdf>
7. Fortes, Meyer. Fortes, S. L. (1936). Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi. Cambridge University Press
8. Fortes, Meyer. Mayer, Doris. (1966) Psychosis and Social Change among the Tallensi of Northern Ghana. Cambridge University Press
9. Oppong, Christine. (1983) Female and Male in West Africa. George Allen & Unwin Publishers Ltd.