



INVISIBLE FORCES AND EVERYDAY LIFE

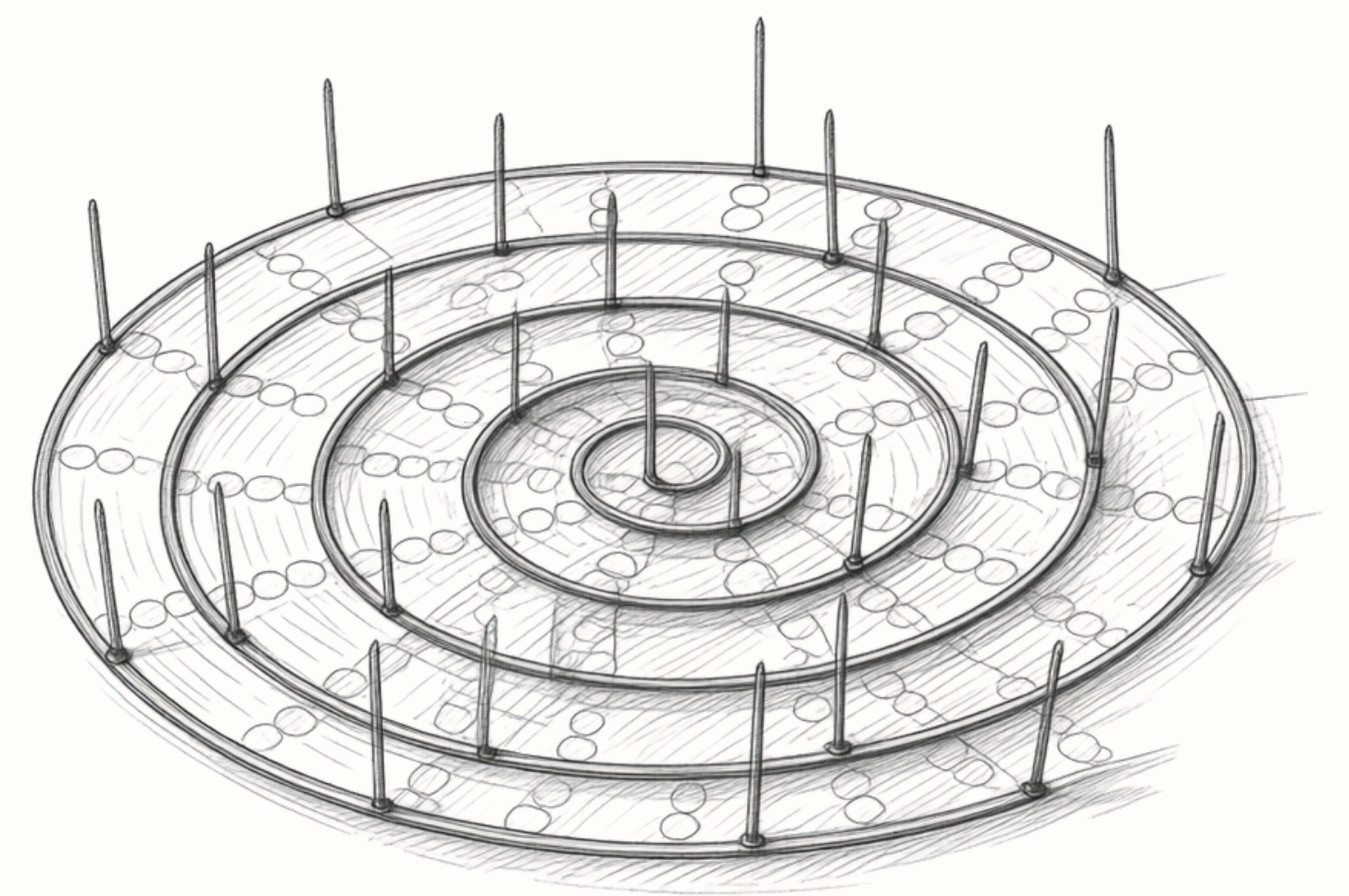
Fieldwork Among the Guiziga of Far Northern Cameroon

Fieldwork:

During eight months in Far Northern Cameroon, I worked closely with Guiziga communities to understand how *sorcellerie* shapes everyday life. Rather than treating it as an isolated phenomenon, I examined it within Guiziga ontology, leaning about divination, spirits, healing, myths and tradition.

Methods:

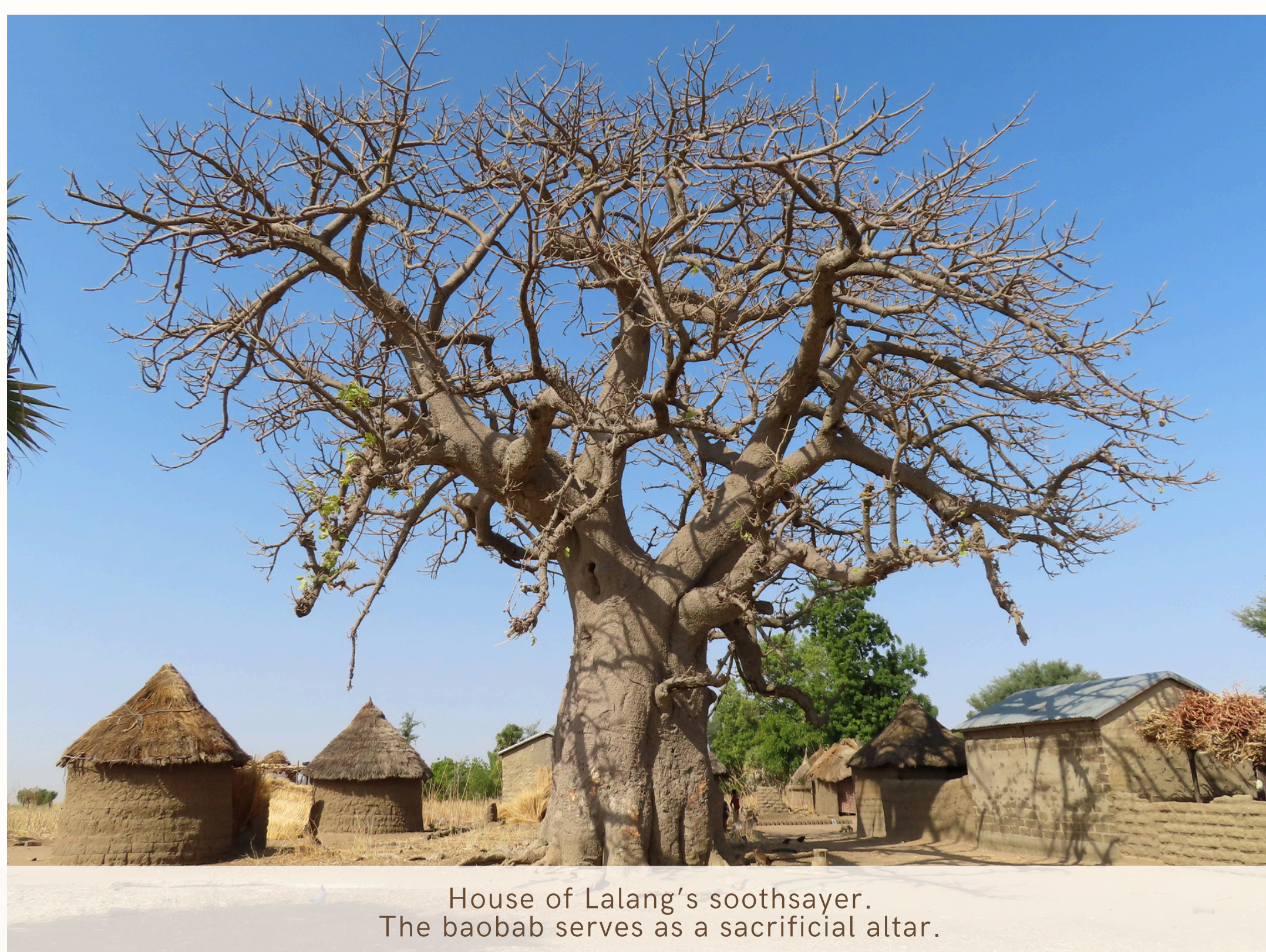
Participant observation, fieldnotes, sketching, informal and semi-structured interviews, local language acquisition, visual ethnography, divination consultation, ritual participation.



Each year, the Masay (the village's highest spiritual authority) draws this on the ground during the annual divination to foretell the coming year.



Masay of Moussourtouk reading my present.



House of Lalang's soothsayer. The baobab serves as a sacrificial altar.



Home protection talisman against *sorciers*.

Results:

- While God is the creator of universal force, spirits have privileged access to it, and a few exceptional individuals may harness it for harmful or beneficial ends.
- When Guiziga use the French term *sorcellerie*, they refer to the harmful manipulation of invisible force, though Guiziga has no single noun encompassing all such practitioners.
- Often associated with jealousy, sorcellerie is a feared aspect of everyday life, linked to misfortune, lack of success, illness, and sudden death. Soul-eating is its most feared form.
- At the same time, ritual specialists work with spirits, ancestors, and divine force to counter these harms and promote healing and protection.